

Bay State Council of Divers
Meeting Minutes for June 10, 2009

Meeting held at the SSN's Clubhouse, Quincy, MA

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:37 PM. (*Minutes taken by Mary Howard*)

Attendees:

Paul	Adler	East Coast Divers
Al	Bozza	NEADC / BSC VP
Jim	Brady	OCA
Roy	Chamberlain	SSN
Angelo	Correnti	SSN / BSC President
Theresa	Czerepica	SSN
Mary	Howard	NSF / BSC Secretary
Chris	Hugo	MWDC
Matthew	Lawrence	SBNMS
Vin	Malkoski	MA DMF / Boston Sea Rovers
Holly	Martel Bourbon	MA DMF / Boston Sea Rovers
Victor	Mastone	MBUAR
Dave	Millhouser	
Michael	Prange	NEADC / BSC webmaster
Paul	Sauvageau	NSF
Steve	Smith	
Matthew	Sposito	
Dave	Stillman	Cape Ann Divers
Mary	Stillman	Cape Ann Divers

Clubs and organizations represented include:

Boston Sea Rovers
Cape Ann Divers
East Coast Divers
Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archeological Resources (MBUAR)
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fishers (MA DMF)
MetroWest Dive Club (MWDC)
New England Aquarium Dive Club (NEADC)
North Shore Frogmen (NSF)
Old Colony Amphibians (OCA)
South Shore Neptunes (SSN)
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS)

Minutes from April 29, 2009 meeting accepted as amended. (Amendment from M. Prange, correct email address for BSC announcements is announce@baystatecouncil.org .)

Things that have happened since the last meeting

Board meeting on May 13. The Board went over things in preparation for the Treasure Hunt.

There were 35 participants in the Council dive event – 28 paid participants, 25 of which were diving, the rest participated in the snorkel event only. – There was a cost to the Council of \$65 (coffee, donuts)

4 teams participated in the team snorkel event – The Boston Sea Rovers placed 1st, 2nd place was earned by the East Coast Divers team, 3rd place by the NSF team, and 4th place went to the NEADC team.

Everyone who participated went home with something, at least one of the donated prizes. The pictures will be on the website soon. Angelo will write an article within the next couple of weeks to go on the website with the pictures (before next Board meeting).

Atlantic Marine Fisheries: June 3, Angelo Correnti attended the Atlantic Marine Fisheries Panel where he was updated on the status of lobsters. A lot of areas are “in trouble”; the whole southern area of New England to Long Island has crashed. Although stock has crashed, there is no overfishing. The Panel is still trying to research the reasons. If the gauge increase is passed, there will be no fishing at all in that area.

Within the Outer Cape to Georges Bank, the ratio of female to male lobsters is changing. In the meantime, there have been record landings in Gulf of Maine. Area 514 stock is depleting, Gloucester and south. This might be due to temperature changes, depleting areas for lobster nurseries, overfishing and/or disease. Also alternate fisheries, draggers, etc. are affecting the population by bycatch.

It was noted that there is not one big stock in the gulf of Maine, rather there are local variations; Cape Cod bay is self-supporting. Eventually, it may take very drastic measures to bring stock back. A technical committee is still discussing the issue. In general the stock better as you go north.

Division of Marine Fisheries: Vin Malkoski noted that the southern New England stock of Flounder has essentially crashed, south of the Cape. There are real temperature issues, fishery issues.

BSC Goals

- Ted Maney wrote up a short piece for Clubs to include in their newsletters. It was suggested that someone more seasoned with the Council would need to flesh out the piece with some accomplishments of the BSC, so people would be reminded of what the Council could do if something came up for them. We could pick a couple of the better issues.
- Membership list is a work in progress.
- Treasure hunt. Several people thought it would be much better in September than in May. Request was to make this change. Paul Adler originally liked it in May, but has changed

his mind thinking the change might increase numbers dramatically. We will add to agenda for the next Board meeting. Could advertise other club events, etc.

- Finalizing planning for the dive flag law poster. Plan to post it at various locations: boat registration locations, marinas, yacht clubs, including where the power squadron classes are held. The poster does not downgrade local laws, it only states what the Massachusetts state law is. If you have a problem, let the BSC know as we have an attorney on retainer for this. Conduct yourself with the utmost respect with law enforcement. (At OGB, the town has put a lovely chain and landscape plants around the cement platform where divers usually have prepared for diving.) Law enforcement in the area knows what the law is and are not enforcing the Gloucester law. Target print date for the poster is before July 1, so it will be out before the 4th. 100 is a good number to get to see how it goes, how they are received and whether they stay up. Follow up will be needed. The poster can also be sent out electronically.

Action item: Mary Howard needs to get a better logo for the NSF to Al Bozza for the poster.

- Scituate Beach Access Issue: through FEMA with the blizzard of '78, Scituate had to open a number of parking spaces to non-residents. Might we be able to make this happen in Gloucester too if they have received FEMA funding? It may be worth looking into. It was suggested that Dave Stillman might look into that since he is local. In all towns, rights of way are slowly disappearing.

Paul Adler thinks that we should have a **dive shop owner or manager on the BSC Board**; it would be helpful to have the perspective of a dive shop on the Board. We would accept a nomination, to be considered at the next Board meeting. Suggest we send a letter out to all the dive shops to see if anyone would be interested. Paul suggests if possible we should get someone other than him to fill this role since he is already involved in what the BSC is doing. If no one else steps forward, he will accept nomination.

Angelo received a phone call – from Anita Richardson – part of City of Boston, Dept of Senior Citizens. There is a **TV program about senior citizens** who participate in extreme sports. She is thinking about SCUBA diving. Al Bozza said he will call her.

Dive Kulture – has called Angelo. They will be going to the Aquarium Dive Club meeting next week. If your club is interested in getting involved with them, contact Vinnie or Al. They have worked with United Divers, and are looking for more Club involvement, and would work well in a city like Brocton. They have a website: www.dive-kulture.org.

Paul Blanchette passed away diving on a rebreather off the Polling, with 3 other divers. No concrete information on cause to date. He was one of the divers who dove on the Portland last summer.

Things coming up in the future

Victor Mastone / BUAR: This Sunday – meeting at the Quincy Yacht Club at 8:30AM – the Council is trying to put together a boat dive to Minot light, to see if they can find any parts of

the old lighthouse where a couple of lightkeepers lost their lives in 1851. This was started as a project with the Coast Guard two years ago. The lighthouse was knocked over in a gale. They have found the cast iron legs. Vic is trying to define the site and find more of the remains of the lighthouse. How often do you get to dive on an old lighthouse? It is now a popular lobstering site. CG divers are not wreck divers, and Vic is hoping to use the experienced eyes of sport divers to see what looks different and is out of place in order to define where the light was. He is also looking for a memorial plaque that was placed there by the CG. Vic thinks it is there; when they put it down the CG were sure it was where the bridge of the boat was.

For this weekend, there will be three SSN boats, and Vin will bring his boat. It will be low tide at 10:31, so low just about when they get out there. We can bring the lines and weights we had for the reef project. Also, bring marker floats in case you see something. Names will be acknowledged in the minutes.

Hoping this is a pilot project, Vic would like to do surveys on other “wrecks” with trustworthy divers. He has no budget. Not all shipwrecks are historic, but would like to increase recreational opportunities.

Vic is also still working on the dugout canoe project in Lake Quinsigamond. Very few people are allowed to dive with him at that site.

Vic is on the Federal Marine Protected Areas board. If there is an opportunity, as divers, send a comment in.

Artificial Reef Project: Vin Malkoski and John Blackadar are still trying to get a time to look at the area by the Pinthas for artificial reef, to do preliminary surveys. The idea about going near the Pinthas is that it is pretty boring bottom, with a known wreck. From the perspective of competing uses, this is already not used by fishermen, etc. Dave Stillman asked what we are looking for when speaking of an artificial reef, acknowledging that we need to look for an active bottom that would not be disturbed.

It takes a very concerted effort to get a ship made into a reef what with permitting, cleaning, etc. When the price of metal goes up, this becomes more expensive and more difficult. With dying fish stocks and other environmental issues, that may increase our chances to put down a reef.

Club events coming up - Announcements

Matthew Lawrence – **SBNMS** – Nothing much is new, but he has “diving in the Sanctuary” flyers with him tonight. The Management plan is still actively being worked on. Researchers are doing research in the Sanctuary and no one has been stopped from diving in the Sanctuary.

Michael Prange – **BSC website** – anything that goes to the announce@baystatecouncil.org email address is reviewed and posted. If you have anything that is meant for broad distribution, send to that email address. Michael will post updates on Paul Blanchette memorial fund on the website also.

Clubs should send in a descriptive bit about themselves for the website also.

NSF had an impressive show at their beach meeting last Thursday – 200-250 people in attendance.

Steve Coren was at a lot of the **flag law meetings**. He said the BSC has not dropped the ball. Harbormaster, police and waterways com all said the Gloucester “law” was not enforceable.

Al Bozza – NEADC

- **Fish Count is July 25**, based at Stage Fort Park. They will have the high school parking lot available to park in and will shuttle people back and forth. Information for the GAFC is on the NEADC website and on BSC calendar. REEF is now encouraging people to do online data entry at www.REEF.org, and they have launched a new format online for northeast. It is really nice because it is fast. Holly will find out how to handle this for the GAFC.
- **July 15 – fish ID course at the NEADC meeting**. Bob Michelson will be giving a Fish ID course at the NEADC meeting. It would be great to have a demo of the REEF website at that event, to show people how to use the website.
- **Tropical fish rescue**: September 12.

Gloucester/Rockport: Dave Stillman – OGB has a lot of new fencing and plantings for “erosion control” which is in the way of divers. Probably some of it is to deter divers. Angelo requests that if you find any restricted access, please let the Council know.

Old Colony Amphibians – 50th Anniversary Dinner meeting on June 25; cocktails at 6:30, dinner 7:15, Benefit Street, Pawtucket, RI; see info on the website at www.ocascuba.org.

SSN – Victor Mastone will give presentation on Lake Quinsigamond, next Tuesday.

June 17, Crane Library in Quincy – Vic Mastone on Minot Light.

Upcoming meetings scheduled:

July 22 – next BSC Board meeting

Sept 9 – BSC open meeting

Dec 9 – BSC open meeting

Meeting adjourned 9:34PM.