

Bay State Council of Divers

Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2015

Meeting held at the SSN's Clubhouse, Quincy, MA 7:35-8:47 PM

Attendees:

John	Blackadar	SSN
Jim	Brady	OCA
Angelo	Correnti	SSN / BSC President
Teresa	Czerepica	SSN
Ken	Hayes	SSN
Mary	Howard	NSF / BSC Secretary
Ross	Kessler	DMF
Vin	Malkoski	DMF / Sea Rovers
Ted	Maney	Salem State University
Victor	Mastone	BUAR
Joe	McAndrew	SSN
Mike	Vaughan	SSN
Jeannine	Willis	SSN
Carl	Yngve	SSN

Organizations represented include:

MA Board of Underwater Archeological Resources (BUAR)
MA Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF)
MetroWest Dive Club (MWDC)
North Shore Frogmen's Club (NSF)
Old Colony Amphibians (OCA)
Salem State University
Sea Rovers
South Shore Neptunes (SSN)

Beach Access issue

Guest tonight is Ross K. Kessler, Public Access Coordinator for the Recreational Fisheries Program of the Division of Marine Fisheries for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. His role is more for the fishing public than divers, but access issues for divers would also impact recreational fishermen.

John Blackadar described the access issue as it relates to divers. He used to go to town meetings and ask to be able to dive, and that worked. Then we had the free the beaches court case. But since then, there have been more problems. Pegotty beach has signs for four parking spaces for non-local use, which sometimes are removed. There are a lot of rich people and politics now, so we have a hard time getting rules changed. But we have a lot more people in the state who do

not live on the beaches who should be able to use the beaches. If there is federal funding for sea walls, etc, then people should have the right to access. It is not right that individuals do not have access to beaches.

Ross: The easiest ways to water are public access ways. Then no parking signs go in, so you cannot park. Rockport has a "mile path" with access along the beach. Park somewhere and then drop gear, etc. Chatham does not want money because they don't want to allow people access. Often there are no trespassing signs that look real, but are only for one property. Sometimes towns or residents don't maintain public access points so you can't tell where they are.

John: It will take a lot of work. We need to get people concerned, then get them to a meeting to discuss how to approach the problem. The problems won't be solved overnight.

Ross suggests getting together with Mass Bass, surfers, birders, public citizens groups, as well as divers. (Scott Morris is from a beach buggy group.) Will need to get politicians involved. Best thing he can do is give us contact info for other groups.

Next phase will take place at Sea Rovers. See if we can encourage representatives of these groups to attend a meeting there.

Town Plat Maps show public access sites

Suggestion: Bring plat maps with you to every dive site. They show public access sites, etc so if you have it with you and run into difficulty with local residents or police, show them the map, show them you know you have a right to be there.

Put copies on club websites.

Many towns have all this information on their websites.

CZM may have published a book of maps. Victor, Vin and Ted will look into this book.

Action Items related to Beach Access:

Mary to send minutes to Ross Kessler

Ken Hayes will contact Hull and Weymouth.

John Blackadar will talk to Pembroke

Ted will look for the CZM book

Mary will check Rockport website

Ted will talk to Jim D'Urso about checking websites since he is now retired.

Other Items of Interest

SSN's party is Jan 30; it is their 60th anniversary.

There is a reef going in off Harwich, using remnants of the old high school, 1000 tons of stuff, about 30 + feet deep, re-permitted Yarmouth tire reef (NO MORE TIRES). – It will not be restricted. 1/3 of fishing license money goes to Ross's division for public access and fishing.

Next meeting: January 20, snow date Feb 3, second snow date Feb 17