

MONITOR NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting – Virtual/Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 19, 2021

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Meeting Location: N/A (Virtual – Google Meets)
Conference call in: 1-402-947-0084 PIN: 559 866 366##

Meeting Objectives: (1) Reports and Updates, (2) Reports from Council Members

Attendance: (see attached attendance roster)

10 community seats present (of 12 filled seats)

5 government seats present (of 8 filled seats (not including alternates))

6 sanctuary and ONMS staff members present

Meeting Notes

Administrative Business and Announcements

★ Chair's Welcome

Jim Tobin welcomed everyone. Welcome to Tina Gutshall and Tim Roberts and thanked them for serving on the sanctuary.

★ Approval of Draft Minutes from previous meeting (12/10/2020)

Joe Poe made a motion to accept the minutes during the roll call. Nathan Richards seconded. The roll was called and all those in attendance answered yes in approval of the June 11, 2020 minutes. Motion to approve passed. Minutes accepted.

★ Brief Council Member Update

Jim Tobin asked if anyone had announcements. No comments.

Public Comment Period

None.

Reports

*** Superintendent's Update**

Russ Green started his segment by saying, “hello, and goodbye,” as this will be his last SAC meeting, rotating out as his detail ends. Russ mentioned that it has been incredible to work with this team, tackling planning and to see what directions we want to go. Russ listed priorities for the site, highlighting expansion and the ups and downs that go along with this process. Always important is *USS Monitor*. Russ wants the staff to always be on the lookout for ways to tell new and deeper stories about *Monitor* and continue to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Another priority Russ mentioned was to reenergize environmental literacy. It is important to carry the story for sanctuaries and it is built into our mission. Always looking for new ways to offer this messaging and to make our ocean healthier.

Russ introduced Mark Losavio, our new media and outreach coordinator. Russ mentioned that MNMS is a small staff and everyone’s plates are full, so with Mark onboard we can now focus on getting the *Monitor* message out even more. Mark introduced himself and said to boil it down, he likes to tell a good story to people. To tell the story of the *Monitor* to as many people as possible and in new ways. Mark was glad to be here and looking forward to meeting everyone and wanted to make himself available to everyone if they had a story they wanted to tell.

Jim Tobin welcomed Mark and was looking forward to seeing him in person and thanked Russ for filling the gap. Will Hoffman said he is excited to get Mark into the lab and build on the content to be shared with the public.

*** Research Coordinator and Field Work Update**

Will Sassorossi started his report by stating that due to the pandemic there were no field projects for 2020. Plans for 2020 got postponed for 2021 and we are looking to make those projects a reality. We continue to work with partner groups who have plans to get out in the field. The Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group (BAREG) is planning to dive on *Atlas*. Will mentioned that last year they had planned for a full project on the site, with recon dives in April and then a full week of work in May, but will move it to this year, with hopes to get a recon dive completed in April. Will said that we hope to join them physically, but not expecting to.

Will continued his report by discussing another partner, Diving With a Purpose (DWP), and potential work with them. Plans are still in the works to dive on the *Portland* out of Beaufort. Will said we are in the early stages of planning for this and are working through lots of logistics. Will stated that at this stage, we are unsure of how the pandemic will affect the summer so we are looking for options for this year but also with eyes toward 2022.

* Expansion, Outreach, and GFOE Project Updates

Tane Casserley started his report by stating that in 2021, exciting things are happening and that although there have been challenges in 2020, it has led to new opportunities. He explained that Monitor staff, working with partners, conducted over ten webinars to highlight the work done at MNMS. Initially, work with Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration (GFOE) was planned for last summer, but it was canceled due to COVID-19. GFOE does mostly ROV work and through a grant program, MNMS will work with them in 2021. There is a possibility of two time periods working off North Carolina on the NOAA Ship *Nancy Foster*: July-August or May 25-June 3. MNMS will partner with National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and the NC Office of State Archaeology. The work will include dives to *Monitor* and World War I and World War II shipwrecks. New features include the addition of a 4K video camera and a new 360° data camera to create a virtual reality video. The expedition will also stream live into 20 partners across the nation from Hawaii to Hatteras. Tane stated that when dates are solid, we will let the SAC know.

Tane continued his report that beyond the GFOE project, we are looking at the 50th anniversary of the sanctuary program. 2022 is also the 160th anniversary of the *Monitor*, and 2025 is MNMS's 50th anniversary. Dave Alberg, Tane, and Will Hoffman will give a lecture series for Time Sifters out of Florida. Tane continued by stating that we have established a partnership with the NC Office of State Archaeology to create an outreach and education program titled, "Submerged NC." This event was originally scheduled for last October, maritime heritage month, to celebrate NC's maritime heritage, but due to COVID-19, the event got postponed, so we decided to do it virtually. Working with Chris Southerly, and John Mintz, we will launch a webinar series with our partners beginning in February 2021 that will run through next October, and possibly beyond, on the third Tuesday of every month.

* Education Update

Shannon Ricles started her report with notes on the Submerged NC Webinar series that included over 450 people registered for the webinar. About 250 people attended, which is really great for a webinar. It is not only a local series, but also across the US and around the world. There are 17 scheduled webinars and will also feature six teacher workshops on topics covering *Monitor*, WWI, WWII, Maritime Archaeology, Marine Debris, and ROVs.

Shannon continued by saying we have re-engaged the education staff at The Mariners' Museum and Park to find ways to partner in education and outreach together. Shannon met with Harriet Smith, their director of education, and the staff had lots of great ideas, including partnering with school districts on future grant opportunities. To that end, Shannon said she is reestablishing relationships with various school districts in the local area. Shannon also discussed the Ocean Guardian Schools. At Cape Hatteras Secondary School, they continue to do the recycling program. At Beaufort Sound elementary School they are working on clearing an area near the school to create a nature path for outdoor education. They will also plant indigenous plants. And they continue to compost, and recycle.

* Conservation Update

Will Hoffman started his report by stating he will be doing a lecture on May 18 for the Submerged NC webinar series. The presentation will outline how much work NOAA did in the recovery. Will listed many of the recovery items, artifacts recovered, and how to conserve it all. Will wants to highlight why the recovery was done and how the artifacts connect to all of us.

Will Hoffman introduced Tina Gutshall, who will serve as The Mariners' Museum and Park's (TMMP) alternate on the SAC. Tina spoke of TMMP hosting the Battle of Hampton Roads and this year it will be virtual with five lectures going forward. One lecture will talk about alcohol in the Civil War navy. Another on the development of European ironclads, food, and art. This will be March 5-6. Tina states she has been at the museum for 20 years and 18 of those years have been working on the *Monitor* project. However, she has transitioned to the development and grants department. Her new position will allow the museum to work with us better on the administrative side.

Will Hoffman continued to update on the conservation effort. The lab is holding off on any big tank work. As COVID-19 slowed it down, and because the labs are separate, the staff shifted the focus to smaller artifacts. They began the disassembly of artifacts and ultimately put them back together. Lots of little pieces in storage. Big shift was to organics, bulk of time is now on the smaller artifacts. Will stated he hopes to finish the ropes recovered from the ships (80 rope fragments) which is a major section of the collection. Will also stated they are thinking about updated programs in their galleries. TMMP completed a ½ million dollar overhaul of lab to make it more accessible to the public. The lab will try 2-person bigger activities as they return to working together.

* Advisory Council Recruitment Update

Will Sassorossi stated that there was a really successful recruitment for the economic development seat. The nominee is up at HQs for final review, and the position should be filled by mid-March. In looking forward, nine of the community members are up for renewal at the beginning of March. Will stated to the SAC that if your seat is expiring, you can apply again, but you have to apply each time. That process begins on March 1. Will gave a list of seats open. All of those whose seats expire can stay on and fill in until a new person is recruited. Since so many seats are open, there won't be another SAC meeting until the June time frame.

* Council Member / Guest Presentations

Kim Keyon, (Conservation seat) gave a presentation about the science of conservation. She began by stating she will be giving a Submerged NC webinar on March 23 on the science of conservation. Kim is the *Queen Anne's Revenge* (QAR) senior conservator and co-principal investigator with Chris Southerly. They are also short staffed, so she oversees many other admin roles, such as social media and the web site.

Kim went into the QAR background and the issues of how to keep retelling the same story to keep the audience engaged. Lure them in with pirates and hope they leave knowing more. It was a slave ship at one time and was on its first voyage when it was intercepted by pirates. After Blackbeard took the ship, he had it six months before he ran it aground. The shipwreck was discovered, but identity was not confirmed. So NC UAB put exploratory trenches across the site to try to determine the ship and date of the ship. The area was known for where Blackbeard lost his ship and size and array of cannons made it definitely Blackbeard's ship. Full 2005 excavation and about ½ so far with 400,000 artifacts raised to date. Large artifacts (30 cannons/24 raised/8 conserved) that are conserved goes to NC Maritime Museum in Beaufort and then they loan them out.

Kim continued her presentation about the artifacts and the conservation process. The water is warm with turbulence and lots of metals that form concretions. X-rays help to tell what the concretions contain. They have powerful x-ray in the lab. They find organic material within the iron concretion. Most of their time is spent deconcreting. They use air scribes to maintain control over concretion and minimize damage. Conservation does not stop in the lab, but also in the exhibition of the artifacts. Once they conserve something, they also periodically monitor them in museums for corrosion.

Kim went over several artifacts, including the discovery of printed paper fragments. Breach blocks plugged and loaded were a rare find. She did research into the origin of the paper and to begin the research, she used the word "Hilo" that was used in the print. She discovered Hilo Peru and then she found its match to "Voyage to the South Sea and Round the World." Not sure why the pages were ripped out from this book and put into the breechblock, but an incredible discovery. Kim finished her presentation by acknowledging partners, and suggested to following QAR and OSA on Facebook.

Jim Tobin said this was fascinating stuff and good work on finding out where the paper came from. Will Hoffman said it is an awesome story, even with large scale projects, the small artifacts are even a bigger story. Kim Kenyon responded that yes, we don't always know what's in concretion and you can tell wonderful stories with so much potential of what is there.

Guest Presentation – Madeline Roth

Madeline Roth gave an overview of the preliminary research and field work going on for the Wimble Shoals Survey. Madeline is a maritime archaeologist, with the NOAA ONMS Maritime Heritage Program (MHP), which operates nationally and also provides support to individual sanctuaries. This past summer, there was to be a remote survey off Wimble Shoals, but with COVID-19, goals changed. MHP partnered with East Carolina University (ECU) to characterize the shoal and identify potential archaeological resources. They looked at seabed sediment. Wimble Shoals is a geologic feature 60 miles off the coast of Rodanthe, NC, and the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station is near. Lots of shifting sediment and shallow water depth (60-80-ft.).

Madeline stated the purpose of the survey was to try and identify the location of *Mirlo*, a World War I tanker. During WWI, U-boats were actively laying mines and they did use torpedoes to sink ships. However, the events surrounding the sinking of *Mirlo* are conflicting. Regardless, the sinking event was a result of an encounter with either a mine or a torpedo and sank.

Madeline described the project. ECU, NOAA, and Duke University came together and conducted a remote sensing survey. They surveyed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Nathan Richards headed the project. The survey did not locate *Mirlo* this year, however, the data collected is still very important and helpful from a resource management perspective. Madeline continued by stating NOAA has taken an active stance on protocols for COVID-19, so there were some setbacks due to personnel limits, social distancing, testing protocols, and no dive capabilities. Hurricane Isaias also caused the project to end early.

Will Sassorossi asked her to speak more about the protocols they had to deal with to work off the boat. Madeline stated that the virus is still influencing field work both this year and perhaps in years to come. The team relied on multiple institutions for support during the pandemic and it has led to discussions due to different protocols of various groups. Duke University already had strict protocols for their vessel. Everyone was quarantined and tested before the project. NOAA set the dive policy, and guidelines were accepted by Duke, and ECU did a good job by providing a lot of equipment for sanitizing, etc. There was limited personnel involvement in certain activities. Madeline finished by stating no one got sick, which was great.

Russ Green thank both presenters for their presentations. Will Sassorossi said that we are always looking at other presentations like this to show how we all tie together and asked for suggestions.

New Business

Jim Tobin said that he attended the SAC chair meeting, which was a two-hour meeting. He said it was very informative to hear what is going on at different sanctuaries, and that you don't realize how much good is happening until you listen to what is happening from the Hawaiian Islands to the Florida Keys.

Joe Poe said that an article will come out in the next issue of Alert Diver magazine that will feature the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.

Jim Tobin wished everyone a happy holiday and said he hopes that 2021 will be better and that he can't wait to get back to face-to-face meetings as soon as it is safe.

Meeting Adjourned

Nathan Richards made the motion to adjourn and Will Hoffman seconded the motion. All were in favor of adjourning.

Meeting Close-Out

Actions to Take:

- ✓ Fill remaining vacant SAC seats for governmental positions.
- ✓ Set date(s) for next SAC meeting.

Attendance Roster:

Community Members		
Jim Tobin	Citizen-at-Large	Present
Kim Kenyon	Conservation	Present
OPEN	Economic Development	-----
Salvatore Mercogliano	Education	Absent
Andre Nabors	Heritage Tourism	Present
Nathan Richards	Maritime Archaeological Research	Present
Ernie Foster	Recreational/Commercial Fishing	Present
Rom Whitaker	Recreational/Commercial Fishing	Present
Matt Landrum	Recreational Diving	Absent
Joe Poe	Recreational Diving	Present
Debby Boyce	Ocean Sports	Present
Will Hoffman	The Mariners' Museum	Present
Tina Gutshall	The Mariners' Museum (Alt)	Present
Jenna Hartley	Student Seat (Non-Voting)	Absent
Government Members		
Dave Hallac	NPS (Primary)	Absent
OPEN	NPS (Alternate)	-----
Chris Southerly	NC DCR (Primary)	Present
OPEN	NC DCR (Alternate)	-----
Jason Peters	NC Dept. Environmental Quality	Present
Steve Poland	NC Dept. Environmental Quality (Alt)	Present
Everette Newton	NC Local Gov't – Town of Beaufort	Present
OPEN	NC Local Gov't – Town of Beaufort (Alt)	-----
Bobby Outten	NC Local Gov't – Dare County	Present
Drew Pearson	NC Local Gov't – Dare county (Alt)	Absent
Lt Devonte Weems	US Coast Guard	Absent
Kate Moore	US Coast Guard (Alt)	Present
Robert Neyland	US Navy	Absent
Alexis Catsambis	US Navy (Alt)	Absent
Samantha Henderson	VA DHR	Present
Tim Roberts	VA DHR (Alt)	Present
Sanctuary Staff		
Russ Green	Acting Sanctuary Superintendent	Present
Paul Ticco	Northeast Regional Coordinator	Present

Tane Casserley	Permit Coordinator	Present
Will Sassorossi	Research Coordinator	Present
David Dodsworth	IT Coordinator	Absent
Shannon Ricles	Education/Outreach Coordinator	Present
Mark Losavio	Media/Outreach Coordinator	Present
Guests/ Public/Other		
Blair Atcheson	US Navy	Present
Madeline Roth	ONMS MHP	Present