

**Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council
- July 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes-**

Date: July 26, 2021

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: GoToMeetings Virtual Meeting

Meeting Attendees

NOAA: Paul “Sammy” Orlando, Jean Prevo, Pam Orlando

SAC Members: Eileen Abel, Lee DeCola, Jay Haigler, Dan Hamilton, Alan Miller, Maggie Ostdahl, Joanne Roland, John Stefancik, Lucille Walker, Deanna Wheeler,

SAC Alternates: Paco Blake, Bonnie Grady, Susan Gerbasi, Lolita Kiorpes, Sara Ramotnik, Anne Stark, Ruth Toomey, William Utley, Sharee Williamson

Government Agency and Tribe Members: Paul Anderson, Mario Harley, Susan Langley, Eileen Minnick, Elizabeth Moore

Guests: Brandon Rosario

Media: n/a

WELCOME & SAC BUSINESS:

Eileen Abel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Dan Hamilton motioned to approve the June 21, 2021 meeting minutes. Lucille Walker seconded and the meeting minutes were approved by the entire council. These minutes are available on the website <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/mallows-potomac/involved/meetings.html>.

GET INTO YOUR SANCTUARY UPDATE:

Get Into Your Sanctuary (GIYS) events are held annually during the first week of August. The council discussed possible ways to be involved in the Riverkeeper’s events already happening at Mallows Bay Park on August 7 as part of GIYS. Sara Ramotnik volunteered to help organize the council’s informal involvement at the event. Please contact her if you are interested in volunteering.

At the last meeting Eileen Abel discussed the possibility of having a council get together at her home the afternoon of August 7. She is keeping an eye on the COVID Delta variant and will make a final decision about either moving forward or canceling as the date gets closer.

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

It was suggested at a previous meeting that the council create a Google folder for sharing social media ideas and calendar events. Jean gave an overview of the folder that has been created and can be accessed by the council. She will be emailing the Google folder link along with the instructions to the council members. Please contact her with any questions.

The council discussed other ideas for engaging community members and each other. Eileen Abel suggested that sometime between now and the September meeting the seats and alternates all meet with each other.

Lucille Walker suggested the idea of hosting a Mallows Day. Given the COVID limitations, Sammy said we are not able to do that right now but plan to in the future.

Please continue to share information with Jean that she can send out to the council and other constituents.

Someone suggested a Google calendar that the council can access. Jean and Sammy will look into this possibility but for now we will just collect items in the Google folders. A separate sub-folder in the Google folder was suggested for things like articles, events happening at other sanctuaries, etc.

Action items:

- Access to Google folder for calendar and social media items
- Council members will populate Google folders
- Groups of people and their seats will meet informally to talk a little before the September meeting

SANCTUARY UPDATE:

Sammy gave a short sanctuary update. There have been rumors that some of the COVID-19 travel restrictions will be lifting and there will be opportunity to travel. This would open up a lot of things for us – paddles, community events, in person SAC meeting, etc. Nothing has been made official but we are hopeful that good news will be coming. Sammy will continue to keep everyone updated as things evolve.

Sammy is continuing to work with the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary staff. He is very excited about the opportunities having access to the Monitor staff will bring to Mallows. Sammy plans to begin intersecting with them on programmatic opportunities.

Sammy is also interested in starting to work with the Monitor's advisory council. Susan Langley was a former chair on the Monitor council for three different terms so she has a lot of knowledge about the Monitor site, staff and council. Sammy would like to start intersecting them with our

council. We share many goals with them in terms of heritage, interpretation, using the technologies for virtual visits and the like. There are also business and tourism opportunities that are shared goals between the sites. Can see trying to virtually get together seats of like minds across the two sanctuaries. Sammy suggested that as folks scan through their copies of the management plans to think about ways to intersect with this group.

The new Wisconsin-Shipwreck Coast Sanctuary is now on board. We are extremely excited about this new sanctuary. At the last meeting we also talked about the potential Lake Ontario designation creating another shipwreck site. The public comment period will be opening for them in a couple of weeks. Sammy plans to have representatives from each site present at future council meetings. This will provide opportunities for everyone to start thinking how can potentially integrate with these other shipwreck sites.

Joanne Roland asked if we received any more information on the funding sources? Sammy gave a short update about where we are at in the budgeting process. It starts with the President putting out his version of what he would like to see congress consider for spending and then next to follow is the house. A couple of weeks ago the house did put out a number for the entire federal government and NOAA did well. A little less than the President's request but many of the priorities are the same in terms of marine protected areas, diversity and inclusion, tribal engagement, climate change and many of the priorities that we are trying to do here showed up as well. The senate should come out with their recommendations. Probably won't have final numbers until first of the year. Things are currently looking positive for sanctuaries.

Charles County Maryland Update – Eileen Minnick

Charles County Government has been the recipient of three National Association of Counties awards. Eileen submitted a nomination application for Mallows Bay that highlighted the unique partnerships with the NOAA, the county and the state and how that really is unique and how it works. Charles County was awarded the Achievement Award for that initiative. An award was also received for climate change. The County has a climate change preparedness program that they are rolling forward and will be forming a climate change resiliency board. The county really is serious in addressing what needs to be done locally with climate change, as well as supporting the state and the nation. The third award was regarding the Nanjemoy CommNet Broadband buildout project, which will hopefully mean that by 2023 there will be good broadband internet in the Nanjemoy area.

Maryland Department of Planning Update - Susan Langley

Susan will be taking some folks she met through various talks paddling on September 6th and also in October. Four to six people in each group.

Susan and Tane Casserley from the Monitor NMS will be attending the American Merchant Marines Convention in September. They will be promoting Mallows Bay as a merchant marine site.

Maryland Historical Trust signed a memorandum of agreement with the Florida Public Archaeology Network. Now partners with them, the National Parks Service and Search working on a shipwreck tagging program.

SAC COMMENT:

Lucille Walker gave an update on the national initiative that involves Mallows Bay. She said it's going very well. She testified to congress in subcommittee a couple of weeks ago. Looking for markups coming down the pike. When that does happen, she does want to market with Mallows Bay in some major way and will bring those ideas to the council.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brandon Rosario is an intern for Lucille Walker at the Southern Maryland Heritage Area. He is excited to be working on September 7th along with the group at Mallows Bay. Also looking forward to working with this group and pushing for the preservation of heritage in Southern Maryland. Brandon is a senior at Southern Maryland and interned with Jefferson Patterson Park for a while.

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm. The next regular meeting is **Monday, September 13, 2021 at 6:00pm.**