



Wilmington Harbor Enhancement Trust

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, January 10th, 2012

In attendance:

Directors: Jim Bitto, Nancy Bullock, Jay Dilley, Gene Merritt, Brian Metzger, Bruce McGuire, Bob McKoy and Ed Oeters.

Administrative: Stephanie Fornes

Directors Absent: Lynda Ballard, Jody Dilley and Mike Loch.

President Bob McKoy called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

President Bob McKoy welcomed the new board members and each introduced themselves and gave a brief summary of their background and their interests in downtown Wilmington and the Cape Fear riverfront.

Approval of Minutes: Meeting minutes from December 13th, 2011 were approved without discussion or revisions.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Nancy Bullock reported a balance of \$4,100 in the WHET treasury. She also reported two membership renewals and receipt of \$348 from R.A. Jefferies for beer that was not sold in October during the Pirates' Ball. There was a question about upcoming expenses that will have to be covered. In the first half of the year, the major expenses anticipated are the Annual Meeting in May, renewal of Directors and Officers Liability Insurance and nominal administrative costs. Continuing income from membership renewals are expected, and will possibly increase in light of some of upcoming events.

Potential New Board Members: Bob led a discussion about the possibility of enlisting some additional board members. With eleven positions filled, there are four positions available. Several potential candidates were discussed.

*"Shaping and implementing a vision for boating, beautification
and balanced development along the Cape Fear River."*

2012 Focus: Bob set out two interrelated priorities for the organization for the year – increasing use of the docks and enhancing dock security. Bob distributed information received from dockmaster R.T. Jones that showed 750 docking reservations in 2007, 486 in 2008 (Hilton docks were reconstructed), 594 in 2009, 650 in 2010 and 512 reservations in 2011. It is believed that the decline in reservations is partly due to the economy, but also due to a perception among boaters that the nighttime security at the docks is insufficient. There is a fear that this perception is becoming a reality in the minds of transient and recreational boaters. WHET is currently working on a joint resolution with the Cape Fear Sail and Power Squadron that will make recommendations to the city for a special ordinance that imposes tougher penalties on persons who board docked vessels without authorization or are observed disturbing dock lines. Jim Bitto is on a Wilmington Downtown Inc. committee that is also working to improve downtown safety and security this year and he invited Bruce McGuire to sit in at their next meeting and discuss the actions that WHET is taking concerning the docks. All agreed that making improvements in dock security and getting the word out about those improvements will help to increase the usage of the docks.

Tall Ships Report: Bruce McGuire was appointed as the Tall Ships Chair by the Executive Committee, and he is working on assisting with some scheduled visits. The Tall Ships Challenge is taking place on the east coast again for the first time since 2007 when Prince William visited. This creates more opportunities for tall ships to make stops in Wilmington even though we are not an official port of the event. 2012 is also the bicentennial celebration year of the War of 1812 which will create an increase in tall ship traffic throughout the year.

HMS Bounty is scheduled to visit from Friday, May 18th through Sunday, May 20th. WHET will coordinate with WDI for some shore side activities to increase interest and ship tours.

Lynx is currently in Mystic, CT and would like to visit at the same time as Bounty. Currently there are logistical problems with docking both ships at the same time.

Pride of Baltimore II has also expressed interest in a late May visit.

Long Range Project: Gene Merritt again spoke of the viability of an In-Water Boat Show downtown. The idea was discussed many years ago when the facilities for such an event did not exist. Some members spoke of trailered boat shows in mid-90's that were very successful. Gene offered to head up a committee to further explore the project and assess the degree of interest from potential vendors and other participants. Bob McKoy made the following motion which was seconded and unanimously approved:

To form an Advisory Group, Chaired by Gene Merritt, to explore the possibilities of having a Downtown boat show (in and out of the water) in 2013. Members of this group to be from WHET membership or individuals, that will join WHET.

Gene agreed to give a progress report at the June board meeting.

Other Business: Bruce McGuire made a motion that the organization make a Memorial Donation to Cape Fear Hospice and Life Care Center in honor of John C. Bullock, Jr. - a long time downtown advocate who recently passed away. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Date & Location of Next Regular Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 14th at 5:30 pm at The Basics restaurant, North Front Street, Wilmington, NC.

The meeting was adjourned by Bob at 6:30 pm.

Bruce McGuire

Secretary