

**Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary  
Advisory Council  
-November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes-**

**Date:** November 16, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Wisconsin Maritime Museum, 75 Maritime Drive, Manitowoc, Wisconsin

**Meeting Attendees**

**NOAA:** Russ Green, Jean Prevo, Caitlin Zant

**SAC Members:** Brendon Baillod, Josh Bastianello, John Broihahn, Roland Chaloupka, Melissa Gutierrez, Scott Huebner, Jeffrey Lamont, Rich Larsen, Tom Mlada, William Moren, Patrick Neu, Dawn St. George

**SAC Alternates:** Kevin Cullen, James Falkowski, Travis Gross, Letitia Hase, Chris Houghton, Michael Loescher, Jason Prigge, Mike Vandersteen, Vanessa VanderWeele, John Wrostek

**Government Agency and Tribe Members:** Greg Buckley – Two Rivers, Paul Hacker – Manitowoc County, Justin Nickels – City of Manitowoc, Andrew Struck – Ozaukee County

**Guests:** Gabriele Lubach, Courtney Hansen, Philip Knier

**Media:** N/A

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

The meeting was called to order. Cathy Green, Director of the Wisconsin Maritime Museum, welcomed the group to Manitowoc. There are lots of intersections between the sanctuary and museum’s missions. Many opportunities to work together to interpret shipwrecks and preserve State artifacts that help tell the stories. Kevin Cullen will give a more in-depth overview of what is happening at the museum later in the meeting.

Mayor Justin Nickels welcomed everyone to Manitowoc. Throughout the entire journey Manitowoc has been involved in getting the sanctuary designated. Ships are an important part of Manitowoc, it’s who they are. They like to build ships, don’t necessarily like to see them on the bottom of the lake. The stories are what is most important. These stories contain the history of what made Manitowoc. Shipping was their commerce. These stories will live on forever now that the sanctuary is here. He thanked the council for their involvement.

## **SAC BUSINESS:**

The council reviewed the minutes from the September 21, 2023 council meeting. On page 2, Ghost Ships needs to be updated from “Wisconsin Underwater Historical Society” to “Wisconsin Underwater Archaeology Association.” Bill Moren motioned to approve the minutes with the suggested revision. The motion was seconded by Richard Larsen. The meeting minutes were approved.

The Education (K-12) alternate position is still open. Applications will be accepted until December 31, 2023. Please help spread the word so we can get the seat filled.

## **2023 SAC Chairs Meeting – Scott Huebner**

The SAC Chairs meeting was held September 26-28 in Oswego, New York. Oswego is adjacent to the pending Lake Ontario NMS. Scott and Jean attended along with advisory council representatives and advisory council coordinators from all the designated and proposed sanctuaries, along with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), National Ocean Service and National Marine Sanctuary Foundation leadership.

The meeting focused on discussing and presenting relevant topics that impact our protected areas through council actions, membership and community interaction and engagement.

Topics included:

- System Update
- Updates on the Great Lakes NMS
- Indigenous and Tribal Engagement
- Advisory Council Member Engagement
- Offshore Wind Energy and How it Relates to Sanctuaries
- Sanctuary System Expansion

Overall, it was a packed week of good information and networking with other sanctuaries. There were lots of ideas shared.

The purposes of the sanctuaries are very diverse but there are a number of similarities we all face like member engagement and budgets. ONMS staff was very receptive to ideas discussed. The staff repeated continuously how much they appreciate the work of the advisory councils and how valuable they are to the overall success of the ONMS system.

Proposed new National Marine Sanctuaries:

- Lake Ontario (cultural resources/shipwrecks)
- Hudson Canyon off of New York (ecological preservation)
- Lake Erie off of Pennsylvania
- Chumash Heritage Coast off of California (first tribal nominated NMS)
- Pacific Remote Islands between Samoa and Hawaii

A lot of discussion relating to the ONMS budget and the expanding system.

Currently there are:

- 17 administrative Buildings
- 11 visitor centers
- Fleet of 38 small boats
- And staff

While the office of ONMS is committed to growing the system, the budget has been fairly stagnant so there are budget constraints. For example, the National Parks System budget comes out to an average of \$29.76 per acre in their care, National Wildlife Refuge System is at \$25.01 per acre and ONMS is at .14 per acre.

As Matt Brookhart pointed out at our last meeting, it is important to let legislators know how important sanctuaries are to local communities, historically, ecologically and economically.

Joel Johnson the President and CEO of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation presented the current vision of the foundation. He mentioned they can help fund some of the spending gaps but on a small scale.

Not very many sanctuaries have local friends' groups, but those that did felt they were very important.

There was discussion about having advisory councils visit or do virtual meetings with other sanctuaries. Thunder Bay is excited to have members from the WSCNMS council visit in 2024. There was agreement that opening lines of communication between all the sanctuary councils is a good idea. No concrete plan has been developed yet.

Meeting in person or virtual and the length of council meetings was another agenda topic. There were mixed opinions on that. Some councils have meetings that are five to eight hours long.

Russ mentioned that the current ONMS budget is around \$68 million and has flat lined. ONMS is doing what they can to educate congress and others. Russ met with the foundation's director Joel Johnson last week and he is completely dedicated to increasing our budget. That is what he sees as their mission. He wants to raise the money, create the endowments, create the nest egg to support sanctuaries. Great to hear but a long way to go to get there.

Great Lakes Day in March 2024 on Capitol Hill. Great way for council and community members that attend to advocate for the sanctuary. Staff can provide some talking points, but it's up to the member how they carry the message. Advocate for the entire ONMS program but really advocate for Wisconsin.

## **Working Group Reports**

### **Friends Working Group – Jeff Lamont**

After going through a long list of pros and cons the working group is proposing that the sanctuary pursue moving forward with developing a 501c3 friends' group instead of a chapter of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF). Jean emailed the notes from the working group earlier this week for the council to review (attached).

Four communities involved in this sanctuary which will present unique opportunities for raising funds. Timing is critical to get something up and going to raise funds.

At the last working group meeting the group looked at all the different vision and mission statements from other sites around the country. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) was a chapter of the NMSF but decided it wasn't working for them. The email from the FKNMS friends' member really convinced the group that the 501c3 was the better option.

The working group presented a rough draft of a vision statement:

*A healthy, vibrant and sustainable Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary that is recognized as a local, state, and national treasure for its unique maritime heritage, abundant recreational and tourism opportunities, and widespread community support.*

The vision statement needs to be very broad, all-encompassing and flexible so you're not pigeoning yourself into one area like education. The proposed statement was drafted by looking at other sites' statements.

Looking for ideas from people. Does anyone know an attorney that does this type of work? Some lawyers may be willing to do it pro bono or for a very little fee. Email the group if you know of an attorney that has the qualifications to help us establish a 501c3. Jeff Lamont is happy to go to the attorney that he has used with a different non-profit group if nobody has any other suggestions.

Also want to start thinking about a friends' logo and website design. Anyone with expertise with graphic and web design, please email and let the group know.

It was asked why the vision statement didn't mention Lake Michigan? It states what it is, but not where it is? Should that be included? The group felt that the sanctuary itself was a defined area, but it couldn't hurt to be a little clearer. Good suggestion. The vision statement can be changed as we move forward, this was just a draft for the group to discuss.

Jeff Lamont asked for a vote to go to the next step. Brendon Baillod made a motion recommending that sanctuary leadership move forward with pursuing a 501c3. Bill Moren seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**Action Item:** Move forward with the next steps for pursuing a 501c3 Friends of WSCNMS group.

### **Film Festival Working Group – Roland Chaloupka**

Kevin Cullen and Roland Chaloupka met with Stephanie Gandulla from Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (TBNMS). Stephanie is the organizer of the Thunder Bay International Film Festival held annually at TBNMS. TBNMS works with the International Ocean Film Festival (IOFF) to obtain films. There is a \$5,000 yearly fee to use these films.

The group discussed the challenge of doing a film festival in Wisconsin since there isn't a friends group established to collect ticket fees and help pay for the films.

The working group proposed still putting on a film festival, with the potential host location being the Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc. This has not been confirmed yet. The working group proposed Saturday, February 10. After speaking with Stephanie, the group felt that winter is a good time for doing an indoor film festival. The festival would be free but could potentially ask for donations to the Maritime Museum for giving the opportunity for using the location.

Stephanie was going to contact IOFF to see if they might provide with films to us free for the first year. Haven't heard back from her yet. If not, we could offer sanctuary films available to the public online and those would be the films shown at the festival this year. This would be a trial year. Hoping to grow into the other surrounding communities as it grows. Films are a powerful way to convey messages and connect to the sanctuaries.

Russ mentioned that there are ways for us to collect fees or donations on behalf of Wisconsin through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Next year, during the budget planning process WSCNMS could even dedicate some funds to help pay for some of the films. Russ suggested that using the free films this year may be the best way to get started.

The council discussed whether it is doable in 2024 or would 2025 be more realistic? Small event, let's try it.

Could we simulcast with Thunder Bay and partner/share the cost potentially in 2025? Or maybe Stephanie can get two or three short films to use? The group will follow up with her.

Currently, Kevin and Roland are the only members on this working group and would like more help from other members if we are going to move forward with the festival. Please reach out if you would like to join their group.

Another funding mechanism could be grants, but timing would be tough for this year. Sea Grant was suggested, Russ and Kevin will talk with them to see if there is anything available.

After the discussion, the council decided to move forward with the film festival with a date of sometime in February or potentially in April. The proposed location would still be the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Jean will keep the council updated as the working group progresses with their plans.

Let us know if you have 200-300 seat venues in your communities. The local movie theater, the Civic Center, UW Green Bay and the Franciscan Center were all suggested.

**Action item:** Move forward with the film festival planning. Updates to the group provided by Jean.

**Outreach Group** – No report, didn't meet this month. Russ will speak about the Ozaukee outreach event during his presentation.

**Ghost Ship Working Group – Brendon Bailod**

The dates for the 2024 Ghost Ships Festival are March 1-2. Still working on a venue, but have some good options. Committee has been meeting every month.

**Resolution in Support of Sanctuary Facility Strategy –**

Prior to the meeting a proposed resolution in support of the Sanctuary's facility strategy was sent to the council for review and consideration (see attached). This resolution would be used for sending to congress to show that the council supports the sanctuary's facilities strategy.

John Broihahn – was thinking about this again, lots of ideas about the facilities being spread across the four communities and now five working with the Wisconsin Historical Society new history center. These ideas parallel what was discussed during the designation process. Those ideas are very deeply rooted in the original idea of this sanctuary. Second, it is critically important that NOAA has a research facility. It would help attract researchers if there are facilities available. Also important for students and interns to have an economical place to stay.

Andrew Struck – designation process was very inclusive. He proposed an amendment in the fourth Whereas where it talks about communities, would like to include the counties as well as the cities. Ozaukee was also spelled incorrectly on the letterhead. Jean will fix it.

Greg Buckley – would it be helpful for the four cities in the sanctuary to also pass a resolution? Russ - yes it would be. Andrew suggested that the counties could also do the same.

Brendon's name was also spelled wrong on the letterhead. Jean will correct.

Andrew Struck put forth a motion to amend the resolution to include the four counties. Vanessa VanderWeele seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

John Wyrostek put forth a motion to pass the resolution in support of the facilities strategy with the amendments. Kevin Cullen seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**Action Items:** Jean will fix the spelling of the names on the letterhead and email out the final resolution to the council. Russ will submit the resolution to ONMS leadership.

**Potential Thunder Bay NMS Visit – Russ Green**

Potential visit to the TBNMS May 10-13. A visit that weekend would include many opportunities including:

- Regional MATE ROV Competition (students K-12 compete)
- Viking Cruise Ship
- Mallows Bay NMS SAC/Community Members
- Reception with TBNMS Advisory Council and TBNMS Staff
- Possible NMSF Meeting with Joel Johnson

Many members were interested. It was mentioned that May 10<sup>th</sup> weekend is Mother’s Day weekend.

**Action item:** Send out a google poll to gauge interest and a form with some details.

**Off Month Brew Pub Get Together and Shipwreck Highlight – Scott Huebner**

Nothing formal just pick a city and brew pub on our off months to get together for folks to socialize and learn more. Possibly highlight a shipwreck with a handout. Bring a friend to help increase the knowledge of the sanctuary.

Brandon asked about doing it after these meetings? Scott suggested potentially doing both. A coffee location was also suggested as a potential option. Will continue to explore locations for the off months.

**COMMUNITY UPDATE:**

**Manitowoc Tourism Update - Courtney Hansen, Director of Tourism, City of Manitowoc**  
Visit Manitowoc is a new organization working to elevate tourism in the City of Manitowoc the last year and a half. Courtney showed their new marketing video to the council ([Visit Manitowoc Video](#)). The video offered a sample of all the things there are to do in Manitowoc.

About Visit Manitowoc:

- Department of the City
- Created in 2022 to elevate and grow tourism
- Located at 824 S 8<sup>th</sup> street (also a location by the Badger ticket office)
- No membership fees
- Promote all partners, attractions, events, etc.

- Partner in community
- Staff of three:
  - Courtney Hanson - Director
  - RaeAnn Thomas - Destination Sales & Marketing Manager
  - Erika Christel - Media & Special Events Coordinator

#### 2022 Tourism Impact Manitowoc County:

- \$216 Million – Total tourism economic impact in Manitowoc County in 2022 – an 11.4% increase from 2021
- 111 million – Visitors’ trips to the state of Wisconsin in 2022
- \$620 – Amount Wisconsin households would need to pay to maintain the current government services provided without tourism spending

Their big projects have been focusing on social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube) @VisitManitowoc. They have grown their follower base to over 18,000. Multi-faceted strategy that plays into different mediums. Working with influencers to expand their reach.

They recently went through a visual identity and website design process. The new website was launched earlier this year and can be viewed found at <https://www.visitmanitowoc.com/>.

They find huge value in their local and statewide partnerships. They work closely with Travel Wisconsin and all the state the resources there (Chamber, etc.)

They have an events space on their website to promote special events and festivals, so let her know if the film festival does move forward and they can highlight it. Looking forward to partnering with the sanctuary.

#### **Wisconsin Maritime Museum/Sanctuary Collaborations Update - Kevin Cullen, Deputy Director/Chief Curator**

Kevin showed a film about a collection of artifacts which contains over 10,000 items, recovered from 42 Great Lakes shipwrecks. These items were collected by Allan “Butch” Klopp between 1960s and 1980s. These artifacts along with his research have been donated to the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. The museum would like to put it on display for the public both digitally and physically in the museum. Working with universities to help with this project.

March 2023 – November 2023, the museum had the opportunity to host the temporary exhibit “Bringing Shipwrecks to Life” which contained photos taken by Becky Schott. Potential to become a traveling exhibit.



The museum is working on updating the Wisconsin underwater treasurers exhibit in the spring/summer 2024. Revamping floorplan and bringing out artifacts. Also updating digital technology and sanctuary messaging.

The museum has an offsite 25,000 square-foot facility called the Franklin Street Facility located four blocks from the museum. The building is a former car dealership from the 1930s and 1940s, expanded over the years through 1980. The facility houses all of the artifact collection owned by the State of Wisconsin being managed by the museum. Kevin spoke about the plans for renovating the building and the outdoor space which will include a learning garden and public event space.

Worked with the City to obtain some funding for a mural of Captain Edward Carus who lived where this plaza park is going. He was also a photographer that took thousands of photos that are housed in the museum. The mural will include some of these photos. The foundation of his house is still there so this also creates an opportunity to do some public archaeology at the same time as they are breaking ground.

The museum just submitted an Institute of Museum and Library Sciences grant yesterday to help fund phase two – interior storage for the boats and some of the collection.

This building was included in the sanctuary's facilities strategy.

### **SANCTUARY UPDATE:**

Virmond Park Outreach Event – Dave Bennett and the outreach team put together this outreach event opportunity. Great event with many council members on hand to help. Looking forward to building out the outreach calendar to do more of these types of events.

Exhibits Update – At the last meeting Russ talked about starting small scale exhibits in all of the communities, one of these exhibits is on the car ferry *Badger*. Met with them last week, providing some funding to update the current exhibit on board the ferry which will include sanctuary messaging. Working with the museum and the city of Manitowoc and would like to get the city of Ludington involved as well. The ferry provides a captive audience for five hours. Hope to unveil for the first sailing next year.

### **Research Update – Caitlin Zant**

Project Updates – In 2021-2022 researchers and divers came out to dive on the wrecks in the sanctuary to get a baseline analysis and up-to-date imagery of the sites so sanctuary staff can move forward with management. Researchers created many 3d models which can be accessed on the sanctuary's sketchfab site located at <https://sketchfab.com/wishipwreckcoast>.

Researchers came back two different times this summer in June and August to continue the project to capture the baseline data. The team was able to drop in on 12 sites and were able to obtain full imagery of seven sites and partial of three sites due to visibility.

Cailin showed examples of some of the photogrammetric models (*Byron, Henry Gust* and Manitowoc Crane site). These models will be used to monitor the sites and see how they change over time. These models are available on the sketchfab site and can even be printed off as 3d models.

Mooring Buoys – The original plan was to install the new NOAA buoys over the course of this year and next year. Unfortunately, due to many unforeseen circumstances (backorders, ship time, etc.) this project has been pushed until 2024. There are 31 sites identified for buoys, including some shallow water sites.

The buoys will have three different types of moorings to adapt to where they are. Below is the list of sites and mooring systems for the 31 sites.

#### Poly Line Mooring Systems

- *America*
- *S.C. Baldwin*
- *Manitowoc Crane*
- *Henry Gust*
- *Arctic*
- *Francis Hinton*
- *Algoma*
- *Montgomery*
- *Satisfaction (Sheboygan Tug)*
- *Selah Chamberlain*
- *Hetty Taylor*
- *Advance*
- *Byron*
- *Niagara*
- *Mahoning*
- *Northerner*

#### Shallow Mooring Systems (In & Out each season)

- *Pathfinder*
- *Continental*
- *Lookout*
- *LaSalle*
- *Major Anderson*
- *Atlanta*

Deep Water Mooring Systems (cable)

- *Rouse Simmons*
- *Vernon*
- *Floretta*
- *Home*
- *Gallinipper*
- *Walter B. Allen*
- *Silver Lake*
- *Helvetia*
- *Robert C. Pringle*

The sanctuary will partner with the US Coast Guard for deploying the buoys. The photogrammetry data will help determine where the buoys should be placed on each site without damaging the wreck. It will also help place it in a spot that is safe for divers, not too far from the wreck.

Will use marker buoys for shallow wrecks for paddle boarders and kayakers.

Grants - Submitted an Ocean Exploration grant, will know the results in the spring. The idea is to use new and innovative technologies to understand the underwater environment. Partnered with Wisconsin Historical Society and Hibbard Inshore to write this grant to bring a high-tech SAAB Seaeye to the sanctuary to look at 15 different sites and their surrounding lake bottom. Same technology used for the recent 3d model of the *Titanic* that came out earlier this year.

Office of Coast Survey – Conducted a bathymetric survey of the sanctuary’s lake bottom and picked up some shipwrecks, many of which were unknown to us at the time. In working with the State to analyze the data, they identified 10 sites that are known shipwrecks, eight of which have already been recorded by the State, two that are not and then five additional sites in deep water. This summer the State was able to confirm that those five sites are shipwrecks. Planning to go back to these sites to collect more data.

#### **JANUARY MEETING AGENDA DISCUSSION:**

No items were suggested.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

The sanctuary has reached 1,006 followers on Facebook.

Gabriele Lubach – You mentioned being an advocate for funding for sanctuaries. Would it be helpful to send out talking points to use for calling or writing congressmen or senators? Could also provide to dive groups. Russ, said yes, we could do that. We are also working on a two-page document on the facilities strategy that can be shared.

Also, in the future of the film festival – maybe add in grade school or middle school types of films. Could put up posters at the school to help promote.

Andrew Struck– Researcher from University of Wisconsin - Madison lost a surface water ROV in the lake. If anyone has any knowledge, they are still looking for it. Please let him know. It's a four- or five-foot ROV. It went missing at the end of October.

Mike Loescher - Can we get the whale tale off our logo? Maybe a great lakes or fresh water fish or a schooner or lighthouse?

**ADJOURN:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, January 18 at 6pm**, in Port Washington, exact location to be determined.

**Action Items:**

- Move forward with the next steps for pursuing a 501c3 Friends of WSCNMS group.
- Move forward with the film festival planning. Updates to the group provided by Jean.
- Jean will fix the spelling of the names on the letterhead and email out the final resolution to the council. Russ will submit the resolution to ONMS leadership.
- Send out a google poll to gauge interest in TBNMS visit and a form with some details.

**2024 WSCNMS Advisory Council Schedule of Upcoming Meetings:**

January 18 – Port Washington

March 21 – Two Rivers

May 16 – Sheboygan

July 18 – Manitowoc

September 19 – Port Washington

November 21 – Two Rivers