

Boston Herald

More than \$317,000 awarded to 90-plus groups for free beach events around Boston

By Chris Van Buskirk | June 9, 2023



A beach advocacy group awarded more than \$317,000 to 92 organizations for free beach events and programs on public spaces up and down the Massachusetts coastline.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay plans to announce the grants at a Saturday morning event in Boston about a month after the group released a report focusing on how state officials can better care for local beaches.

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay Executive Director Chris Mancini said the grants help highlight the racial and cultural diversity of the region and amplify a message of public safety, fun, and inclusion on local beaches.

“Above all, we want our beaches to be safe and healthy places for everyone to enjoy. Diverse and welcoming programming is a key piece of that effort,” Mancini said in a statement.

Of the events receiving money, \$2,000 is being used to start the “Drag On Boats” series with the Ohana New England Dragon Boat Team. The event is billed as a performance and education series

on historical and contemporary LGBTQIA-plus stories.

“The series will feature the performer Big Ohh telling the stories of Mary Read and Anne Bonney, the famed 17th-century pirates who dressed as men and are known as some of the most successful brigands in history,” a statement from Save the Harbor/Save the Bay said.

Friends of Wollaston Beach are receiving the largest grant of \$7,500 to put on “KidFest” and a series of concerts.

Funds to support the grants came from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, state officials, and the annual Harpoon Shamrock Splash.

“We heard loud and clear from residents, visitors and neighbors alike that investing in free, culturally relevant programming is one of the best ways to support everyone in our community, so that’s what we’ll continue to do,” said state Rep. Adrian Madaro, who co-chairs the Metropolitan Beaches Commission.