

**Friends of Casco Bay
Board of Directors Minutes
Tuesday, February 20, 2018
Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland, Maine**

Board members in attendance: Dan Brazeau, Chairman, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, Sandy Marsters, Seb Milardo, Ann Thayer, Lori Thayer, Jack Thomas

Board members absent: AJ Curran, Kim Charmatz, Peter LeBourdais, Althea Bennett McGerr, Tollef Olsen, Derek Pelletier, Malcolm Poole, and Joan Benoit Samuelson

Staff in attendance: Mary Cerullo, Ivy Frignoca, Sarah Lyman, and Cathy Ramsdell

Calendar of Events Please mark your calendar for these upcoming events:

March 6 Tue Operating Plan Workshop, GMRI, 3:30-8 p.m., with light fare

March 13 Tue Strategic Planning Steering Committee meeting, UNE, Pharmacy School, 716 Stevens Ave., Portland, Room 28 (basement), 5:00 p.m.

March 20 Tue Community Engagement Committee meeting, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

March 20 Tue Board meeting, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

March 31 Fri FOCB New (Fiscal) Year's Eve Celebration, 4:00 p.m., Andy's Old Port Pub

Summary

- Cathy Ramsdell invited all to attend the March 6 Operating Plan and Budget workshop, where she will provide a nonprofit financials tutorial, describe plans for FY19, and explain how we plan to pay for those efforts.
- Ivy Frignoca discussed the upcoming meeting with the new Region I EPA Administrator Alexandra Dunn in Boston and her plan to showcase efforts in stormwater remediation and integrated planning with our partners at the Portland Water District, Portland's Water Resources Division, and the EPA.
- Sarah Lyman explained the design, components, and purpose of our newly created website, a project she has led for the last year and a half. She emphasized how the Board can greatly enhance our visibility with new audience by sharing information from the website with their circles.

Welcoming Remarks and Business – Dan Brazeau, President

A Minute for the Bay

Pat cited Marjory Stoneman Douglas, whose 1947 book *River of Grass* helped transform public attitudes about the Everglades. Pat noted that the high school attacked in Parkland, Florida, is named for her.

Bud reflected on a walk along Peak Island's Centennial Beach with his dogs the day after the snowstorm: "How wonderful it is to live on this Bay."

Cathy remarked on the strange weather with temperatures predicted to reach high 60s tomorrow.

Review, Reflection and Approval of Minutes—*Action item:* Approved

Cathy congratulated Dan on his award from Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions for speaking and bringing pharmacogenomics into the curriculum of pharmacy schools.

Financial Report—Cathy and Dan for Malcolm Poole, Treasurer

Year to date income is ahead of last year by over \$1,000. Cathy said future fundraising promises to be a challenge. We are starting staff conversations about a campaign for the Bay.

Strategic Planning Update—A smaller group will meet to analyze the raw data and draft a report for the full Board to review.

Community Engagement Committee—*Sandy Marsters, Chair*

Reflection on Volunteer Appreciation Celebration & Annual Members Meeting

Pat said that Mike, Ivy, and Sarah all spoke well. She is still concerned about citizen scientist replacement projects. Ivy and Cathy said that more conversations with the creators of one of the smartphone apps and staff planning meetings are clarifying the new efforts.

Bud thinks the volunteers are energized, not discouraged, to collect data in real time.

Professional photographer Kevin Morris came to the event and took photos for free, an indication of the enthusiasm of our volunteers and colleagues.

Executive Director Update — *Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director*

Cathy encouraged all to attend the Operating Plan and Budget Review Workshop, with a light supper, on Tuesday, March 6. Cathy will offer a tutorial on how to read our financials, then review the draft of FY19 operating plan and the budget to support it. She hopes to bring the Operating Plan to the Board meeting for approval at our March meeting.

We are starting a conversation about a potential special fundraising campaign, likely with a science focus. Bud suggested considering a campaign for our new home as the Mother Ship, where we all live. Needs for a campaign for the future include lab space, additional continuous monitoring station(s), and data management and presentation investments.

Casco Baykeeper Update — *Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper*

Ivy will meet with the new EPA Regional Administrator Alexandra Dapolito Dunn in Boston on Wednesday. Ivy invited Scott Firmin, Director of Wastewater Services, Portland Water District, and Nancy Gallinaro, Water Resource Manager for Portland. Ivy will explain about our science regarding climate change and nutrient pollution, and the collaborative efforts to address nutrient pollution. She is optimistic about getting EPA's support, as the new EPA Administrator has a good understanding of municipal wastewater issues, and others in New England are also meeting with her to discuss nutrient pollution.

Ivy and Cathy attended the Clean Water Act Stakeholders Group meeting with the City of Portland last week. They encouraged other stakeholders to attend, too, as the City chooses how it will move forward with its integrated planning and meeting its obligations to reduce stormwater pollution. Cathy and Ivy were pleased with a triple bottom line assessment the City did that changed the design and location of the Back Cove south storage conduit. Engineers will install a storage tank under the sports field instead of a conduit under Marginal Way. The playing field will be rebuilt at a higher level above the storage tank, in anticipation of sea level rise. Both Cathy and Ivy felt that the delay it took to do the economic analysis will in the long run benefit Casco Bay. The new solution will be less expensive and will better capture and store stormwater until it can be pumped to the EEWTF to receive secondary treatment.

Ivy has completed draft comments opposing offshore drilling, which will be filed in the near future and shared with the Board. The comments focus on economic and scientific analyses completed by the government showing there is no need for oil and gas extraction off the Maine coast. Ivy will attend the BOEM listening session on March 7.

Ocean Conservancy has invited Ivy to Washington, DC March 12-14, to lobby in opposition to NOAA and EPA budget cuts. Ivy was invited to talk to our Congressional delegation about how budget cuts will affect Maine.

Cruising the Website and Sharing our News with Your People: Presentation and Interactive Workshop—*Sarah Lyman, Community Engagement Coordinator*

Sarah explained that the website is the center of all our communications. She noted that more people now access our website through their mobile devices than ever before, and that our website needed to fit this smaller format and look the same across devices.

Sarah emphasized that our website is our story bank. She encouraged the Board to use it as a resource for information about the organization, as a way to explain our work to their friends, and as a vehicle for finding answers to questions Board members or their friends may have. She directed them to the Search Bar at the top of the page. “The Search Bar is your friend.” Typing in a word or phrase will link you directly to all the content on that topic. All of the content of the website has been vetted by all the staff. Jack Thomas commented, “The website is our elevator speech.”

She explained how to navigate the website and the reasoning behind its design. The most important actions we want readers to take are at the top bar: Donate (in red!, which has been shown to increase donations)/ Become a volunteer/ and Get our newsletter. The Community Engagement Committee helped us think about the most important reasons that people would go to our website, which led us to categorize our task bars as Casco Bay/Our Work/How to Help/About Us. She navigated the Board through the web pages and how the webpages are designed to hold the interest of readers, pointing out Get to know us/ Read our stories/Related stories.

Sarah also explained how our emails, website, and social media efforts are integrated. The website is the repository for all of our stories. Each month, we send out at least two stories (mini-electronic newsletters) via email, which are then posted on the website. We choose the topics for our two print newsletters a year by examining the metrics of our most popular posts, following our digital first strategy.

Sarah demonstrated how to share information from the website via Twitter, Facebook, and email. When Board members share our information and our stories, they vastly increase the number of people who learn about our work.

She invited Board members who want to familiarize themselves with using social media to meet with her for an individual tutorial. Several Board members attested to how useful that introduction has been. You can contact Sarah at slyman@cascobay.org with any questions.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.