

**Friends of Casco Bay
Board of Directors
Minutes
Tuesday, April 17, 2018
Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland, Maine**

Board members in attendance: Dan Brazeau, President, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, Peter Le Bourdais, Sandy Marsters, Althea Bennett McGirr, Tollef Olson, Derek Pelletier, Malcolm Poole, Ann Thayer, Lori Thayer, and Jack Thomas

Board members absent: AJ Curran, Seb Milardo, 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:

April 30 Mon	Beta testing by Board and friends of new Color initiative, noon, FOCB office
May 15 Tue	Community Engagement Committee meeting, 4:00-5:00 p.m., GMRI
May 15 Tue	Board meeting, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
June 19 Tue	Board/Staff Social, location TBD

Summary

- Cathy Ramsdell noted that the subject of handling issues that come in over the transom arose during the Operating Plan workshop. She provided a brief list of items that were addressed in the past month to illustrate the diversity of requests that are not part of our regular program work but are key to us living up to our values of Community Engagement, communications, and credibility.
- Ivy Frignoca described research projects she and Research Associate Mike Doan will engage in this year: water quality monitoring by land and by sea, from April through October, and a research cruise in September.
- Sarah Lyman explained the philosophy behind our “digital first” communications strategy, and she provided metrics on our social media: email, Facebook, and Instagram, all of which are designed to direct users to our newly revamped website.

Welcoming Remarks and Business – Dan Brazeau, President

Welcome – Dan

Dan remarked that he had heard that this was the coldest April in over 50 years.

A Minute for the Bay

Tollef commented on the clear demarcation of currents in the Bay after the recent storms; water from the Presumpscot River looked like chocolate flowing into the Bay.

Bud said the winds this past weekend kept growing all day along the outer side of Peaks, leaving the seashore covered in deep seafoam.

Malcolm just returned from sailing around Tortola, where he observed that most of the vegetation was ripped away by the recent hurricanes. About 65% of the islands were destroyed.

Review, Reflection and Approval of March 2018 Minutes—Action item: Approved

Financial Report—Malcolm Poole, Treasurer

Malcolm referred Board members to Cathy’s financial reports, noting we have an exceedingly strong balance sheet.

Cathy said that she had just engaged the Executive Committee in authorizing the purchase of a second pCO₂ sensor for the Continuous Monitoring Station, allowing data collection to continue uninterrupted, as our only pCO₂ sensor has to be sent out of state for recalibrating. Total cost was under \$7,000, less than what we had anticipated, and was expensed in the year just ended March 31, 2018.

Community Engagement Committee—*Sandy Marsters, Chair*

2018 House Parties

We will host a relatively small house party on Tuesday, July 17, at the home of Lew and Liz Incze in Harpswell. With no space to put up a tent, there is room for 40-60 guests in the house should the weather turn bad. We expect that a limited number of staff and board will attend. There is a dock for people who want to come by boat.

We would like to find a site for a second house party, ideally somewhere on the water where we could put up a tent to accommodate more guests. Suggestions welcome!

Online Communications Metrics Preview

Sarah Lyman previewed with the Committee, an overview of our online presence and philosophy. She asked Committee members to anticipate questions that people may want to have explained at this Board meeting.

Rolling out the Color Initiative—Board Beta Testing

Board members and friends are invited to participate in beta testing our Color by Numbers initiative on Monday, April 30. Anyone who can attend should meet at FOCB by noon. The initiative uses a smartphone app to take a photo of the water and compare the color to the Forel-Ule scale. Board members will receive an email ahead of time, with instructions to download the Eye on Water app and register their device. Sarah welcomes feedback on the download process, and she will observe and assist as we test the app on April 30.

Casco Baykeeper Update — Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper

Water quality monitoring by sea and by land this summer

Ivy and Mike Doan did water quality monitoring together all last summer. It made gathering data easier for Mike, helped Ivy better understand the science, and increased visibility for Friends around the Bay with our boat, truck, and staff shirts. This year, they will start earlier in the spring and monitoring and sampling will extend later into the fall. They plan to collect data at several historical water quality sites, sampling on back-to-back days, one day by sea at 9 sites from surface to bottom, and the other day by land at 14 sites, surface water only. The at-sea sampling includes our three sentinel sites, plus areas of the Bay that our data had identified as challenged. These data sets continue the spatial monitoring that we have done for 26 years. In addition, the Continuous Monitoring Station will continue to provide hourly data.

Nutrient Sensor Challenge

We are working with other researchers, through a small grant made to the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, to evaluate nutrient sensors, which will enable the group to seek funding for up to \$150,000 for further nutrient work. They will deploy equipment for three months, ideally before and after the East End Sewage Treatment Facility conducts experiments to denitrify its wastewater.

Research cruise in early September

Scientists from the University of New Hampshire, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, Island Institute, Bowdoin College, and Friends of Casco Bay will take part in a research cruise aboard the UNH vessel to visit all the partners' continuous monitoring stations. They will use a control set of monitoring equipment to determine how the various stations' measurements correspond to a known standard and with one another. The purpose is to ensure that data collected at each station is

comparable and to enhance efforts to collect data on ocean acidification. The cruise will continue up the Kennebec River, and may help illustrate ways the river impacts Casco Bay.

Sewage treatment facilities to do nitrogen testing

This is the first year of nitrogen testing at South Portland and Yarmouth sewage treatment plants and a second year of testing at Portland's East End Sewage Treatment Facility.

Executive Director Update — Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director

Cathy shared a sampling of issues and requests that come in "over the transom," which she acknowledged is actually "business as usual": review draft pesticides/fertilizer ordinance for Falmouth, comment on proposed public art project for Back Cove, advise on Back Cove Yardscaping demo garden redo, brainstorm ideas for an anti-pesticides campaign with longtime supporter Eddie Woodin, who is featured in the May 2016 issue of Maine Magazine, along with Ivy and Mary, coastal monitoring of a new algal bloom in Brunswick with Dan Devereux, fulfill requests for letters of support, engage in helping to plan the gubernatorial forum on nonprofit issues, attending a meeting at Bigelow Lab with DMR on shellfish poisoning to prepare for harmful algal outbreaks this year.

Be on the lookout for our upcoming print newsletter, which will feature historical data from our sentinel sites that show a warming trend in late summer and into early fall, over the past decade.

Communications with Our Community – Sarah Lyman, *Community Engagement Coordinator*

Our Process for Producing Communications Products

As we all agreed during the Strategic Planning process, "Communications is Job 1."

We are using stories for our fundraising and outreach to build relations with the community.

Our "Digital First" strategy evolved after our *Changing Casco Bay* report not only told us we needed to collect data differently, it told us we need to communicate more frequently.

Our website is at the heart of our communications. All of our different communications channels point back to our website. Its goals are to inform and educate, build our email list, sign up volunteers, encourage donations.

Online Communication Metrics

Sarah presented data on the use of social media, website, and email.

Comparing metrics from March 2017 to March 2018 showed good growth in all four ways we communicate via social media: email, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

How people are accessing our website: Year to year comparison showed a 21.5% increase through mobile devices (phone); 8.9% on tablet, 68.6% via desktop device (computer). The increased use of mobile devices to access our website is the result of Sarah working hard to build a seamless interface among all devices. We saw a 21% increase in people using Twitter to reach our website.

Interactive Social Media Exercise showed how to access our website through various platforms.

Closing Remarks – Dan

Dan's wife Gayle has accepted the position of Dean of the School of Pharmacy at Marshall University in Huntington, WV. Dan has been offered a position there as well. He starts on June 1, as a professor in both the Pharmacy and Medical schools. He will return for the June 19 Board /Staff Social.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.