

**Friends of Casco Bay
Community Engagement Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 26, 2018, 12:00-1:30 p.m.
Friends of Casco Bay, South Portland, Maine**

In attendance--Board: Sandy Marsters (Chair of Committee); Lori Thayer, and Derek Pelletier (via phone) and Staff: Cathy Ramsdell, Mary Cerullo, Will Everitt, Sarah Lyman, Intern: Morrigan

Review of Harpswell House Party (July 17)

Lew and Liz Incze hosted approximately 45 people at their home on Card Cove in Harpswell. Sandy thanked staff for hard work and acknowledged that there were great moments and an engaged crowd. Cathy shared that she appreciated the Board members' work and engagement with the attendees. We expect getting checks through end of year as a result of this event. Received many donations ahead of time, including one \$1,000 gift. The Inczes requested that we not make a direct pitch so we instead encouraged attendees to make gifts through RSVP cards. Cathy, Will, and Seb have a follow up meeting with Nancy West and Geoff Feiss. to see what kind of impression they were left with around the Harpswell group coming together to contribute to the Science Campaign.

Upcoming campaign planning

The Harpswell house party crowd was especially engaged during the Q&A. Unfortunately, we did not anticipate questions about funding the expansion of our Continuous Monitoring Station network, so we did not have snappy talking points regarding it. It was both a wonderful moment, and an awkward one. The good news is that there seems to be local support for expanding our CMS network into Harpswell. We will work on a case statement for a campaign to support our science work. Our goal is to design a budget to support getting three stations started, including the redundant equipment needed, as well as maintenance and data analysis for 10 years. Cathy and Will are developing the budget, talking points and more detailed case statement. This will be shared at the fall board meeting.

Upcoming events

Plogathon (July 26, 6-7 PM, Bug Light Park): This event is today if the thunderstorms do not interfere. Team Long Run Partnered with us to organize this event, and it will be featured on WCSH6's News Center.

Cushing Island event (Tuesday, July 31, 4-6 PM)

This event came together really quickly. We think of this as a "House Party Lite" event. Cushing is a private Island and Bill Meserve invited us out to speak to his family, friends, and neighbors. Bill is trustee of a family foundation that supports our work. Bill's son-in-law is a staff attorney with San Francisco Baykeeper. Bill is expecting 15-50 attendees. They are managing the invites.

Film Festival (Saturday, November 3)

We have been watching films and are looking forward to making this year's selections. Sponsorships have been coming in, including most recently, Cabot Cheese --our in kind cheese sponsor! Media Sponsorships and the visibility they generate for us are key reasons that we do this event.

Will will send around a raffle item request letter again. Stop by your favorite restaurants, boat shops, marine supply stores, gift shops, and request items and gift certificates. A favorite item last year was the basket from the Organic Farm that Lori procured. The earlier we secure these items, the better because then we can publicize the items. We package raffle gifts into bundles valued at \$300 to \$500.

Please note: it is important to check in with Will about sponsorships to make sure we are maintaining our relationships in line with what we know some companies expect. We will work with you to create a personalized sponsorships letter. Lori has a contact at Cool as a Moose and will reach out to Will about soliciting them.

Development Metrics—Review and discussion

Everyone received the Development Metrics via email and saw them at the at last Community Engagement Committee meeting. As you know, Cathy shares the updated Financial Reports at each board meeting; the Development metrics show how we raise funds while the Financials show how much we raise. Since last meeting, Will has included new data on the average gift amount: \$250 is our average Individual gift, the average Foundation grant is \$2,684, and the average Corporate gift is \$538.

Foundation giving bounces all over for many reasons. For example, with some foundations, if we receive a grant one year, we cannot request one the following year. Our focus has been on Individual donors. Individuals tend to donate again and again—especially if they have given two or three years in a row. Some family foundations act like individuals, in that sense. It takes a lot of time, but we focus our grant requests based on the work we plan to do in our operating plan, so we are not chasing money and do not drift from our mission. We can share our general proposals on the new Board Resources page on our website. Given the new tax laws, we will be keeping a close eye on Individual giving.

Science and Community

Ad Hoc Science Review Committee

Sandy shared that the board has been talking about the formation of the Ad Hoc Science Review Committee and that everyone generally seems to think that it is a fantastic idea. Sandy shared that the idea of the committee is to provide tangible support to make our messaging more understandable. Cathy drafted the purpose statement, which was then edited by Derek and Pat. The Committee will be called upon as needed to review our science language, messaging, and data products. We hope to have a meeting this Fall to review some of our Science work and how it ties in with Community Engagement and Advocacy, as well as the fundraising campaign talking points. The Committee will be open to all Board Members.

Coming soon—Talking Points for Board on water quality program transition

Board Members have had questions as they have been asked about the shift in our Water Quality Monitoring Program. Staff are drafting talking points around the changes we have made in our science work and how we are engaging volunteers.

In addition, Malcolm has asked that we set up a Board Resources Page on our website. This password-protected Board resource will include each month's Board Package, resources on trusteeship, the Strategic Plan, Operating Plans, Board Minutes, Financials, and other background material.

Color by Numbers update and feedback

Collectively, volunteers have taken 307 Measurements, with 44 Participants, and 162 Signups. Will shared that in the community organizing world there is the idea of the “Rule of Halves” where at each step along the way you can expect to lose half the participants. We are finding this is true for this project. Board Members shared that it is too easy to not participate as there is very little accountability for volunteers to go out on a particular measurement day. Asking people to pair up may build in more accountability. This project is in the pilot stage; if we continue next year, we are considering adding a second tier that includes Secchi measurements, which then would require volunteers to work in pairs. We are also considering adding in a more social component (meetups/trainings/or gatherings on measuring days). As we evaluate the project this fall and converse with the scientists at Bigelow, we will also solicit feedback from volunteers in as we end this first Color by Numbers pilot season.

Questions we will be evaluating: Is this project reaching the people we want to reach [prospective citizen science volunteers that couldn't participate before]? Is this the low threshold activity we were hoping it would be? Is the data proving viable and useful to Nick Record, the scientist who will be crunching the numbers? Does Barney Balch see value and show interest in the data?

If you hear of volunteers who want one-on-one help, Sarah is available to help them.

Water Reporter—Sign up!

Our Water Reporter project is underway and if you have not done so yet, we encourage you to sign up here: <https://www.waterreporter.org/community/user/register>