

**Friends of Casco Bay  
Community Engagement Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

Monday, September 10, 5-6:30 PM  
GMRI, Second floor conference room, Portland, ME

In attendance--Board: Sandy Marsters (Chair of Committee); Malcolm Poole, Derek Pelletier, Pat Ianni, Jack Thomas, AJ Curran, Seb Milardo, Lori Thayer, and Staff: Cathy Ramsdell, Mary Cerullo, Will Everitt, Sarah Lyman

## **Color by Numbers**

**Metrics:** 643 measurements, 211 Signups, 62 Active Participants.

**Data analysis planning:** We are in contact with [Nick Record, PhD, Senior Research Scientist, Ecosystem Modeling, at Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences](#). We had a great meeting with him last year, and when we checked in with him in August, we were excited to learn that he's been paying attention to the amount of color data we have been collecting. His review and analysis of the data will be important in our assessment of the effectiveness of this pilot project, and we will be meeting with him this Fall. We also hope to meet with [Barney Balch, PhD, Senior Research Scientist, Biological Oceanographer](#), since his work involves the study of the color in the Gulf of Maine.

Compared with the number of active Volunteers who took part in the Citizen Stewards Water Quality Monitoring Program last year, we have approximately the same number of active participants.

We will be evaluating the amount of energy invested vs. return in the form of useful results we are getting from this project, in part through our conversations with Barney and Nick. We will be evaluating whether we will continue this project, and if so, in what form. If we do decide to continue, we will continue to explore best ways to recruit volunteers and keep them involved. AJ encouraged Staff to try to increase the number of participants next year by sharing results. Sarah will add a way to quickly add measuring dates to people's event calendars, in the next round of reminders. We continue to experiment with various ways participants can provide and receive feedback on this pilot project.

## **Water Reporter**

**Metrics:** To date, we have 41 Water Reporter Group Members, 87 posts to the group, and 99 posts in our watershed. We will be growing this effort slowly over time, as it potentially has longer legs than the Color by Numbers project (because Water Reporters operate year-around) and it builds its own community. This is a place to post both the good, the bad, and the interesting that you see out on the Bay.

### **Action Items:**

- [Sign up](#) if you haven't
- [Make sure you've joined our group](#).
- And, when posting, please **make sure you are sharing the post with us**, each time. Here's how to do that:

#### **Share your Water Reporter post with Friends of Casco Bay.**

- **iPhone:** Click on the icon with the two figures and then also click on the Friends of Casco Bay logo. You will know you clicked the logo because a small green circle will appear next to it.
- **Android:** Under "Share with your groups" click on the toggle next to Friends of Casco Bay, when the toggle is green it means it will be shared.

You can also go back to any posts you've made and edit them to share with our group. Please consider doing this.

**Groups to target for sign up through the winter:** Through Rick Frantz, owner of Andy's Old Port Pub and daily Casco Bay Lines rider, we are exploring ways to offer a training to Casco Bay Lines staff to use Water Reporter. Ivy and Sarah will also be co-presenting Water Reporter to the [Maine and New Hampshire Area Committee](#), comprised of Coast Guard members and other government officials, industry, and environmental groups which are involved in the preparedness of our region for an oil spill response. This will take place on December 5. Board Members offered to connect us to the following other groups:

Malcolm:  
Construction crew at Custom Float Services

Sandy:  
Sail Maine

AJ:  
Outdoor Discovery School  
Rippleeffect  
Sea Spray Kayaking  
Maine Surfers Union - Falmouth, Charlie

Other suggestions:  
Flyers for each Yacht Club  
Maine Island Trail Association

### **Fundraising campaign planning**

As you know, one of our Initiatives for the Strategic Plan 2018-2022, is to "Identify goals and execute a fundraising campaign to support our science efforts." Cathy and Will have been working to create a plan for the campaign. This campaign will allow us to grow our Continuous Monitoring Station network. As you know, the Bay is changing and changing quickly. We have worked to create a Continuous Monitoring Station that hits the sweet spot of cost and accurate, high quality data.

Staff, including Ivy and Mike, are excited about the potential impact that having three Stations would have for moving our science and policy forward. This effort is not data collection for data collections' sake; this is the continuous data we use in our advocacy and community engagement efforts, data that Ivy and Mike are depending on. The Maine Ocean and Coastal Acidification Partnership participants are looking toward using this data to move ocean acidification and climate change related policy forward. Our station design provides for more rigorous and frequent data collection, which allows us to look at trends in water characteristics over time; and we can use the same equipment to make spot checks in other areas of the Bay, as well.

We are proposing a fundraising campaign to support the program for 10 years. The funds would be used to support 3 stations, including the equipment, redundancy, maintenance (including staff time and travel), and insurance, as well as data analyses and visuals/presentation (again, including staff time). We will be asking the Board to consider setting the goal for this campaign at \$1.5 million. We would raise 80-90% in a quiet phase before going public. The quiet phase would likely take 18-24 months, and we would accept outright gifts as well as pledges that donors could pay over 3 years. Data will likely be used to convey both seasonal shifts and overall trends as well as unusual and newsworthy events, to encourage greater awareness about the health of the Bay and inspire conversations around how our communities could respond to rapid changes in our coastal waters.

There is a rule of thumb in the philanthropic world that the likelihood of being successful in fundraising campaigns, such as this one, is much higher if we have at least one donor who can donate 10% (\$150,000) of the goal.

This will be a spendable fund. We learned that spendable funds raised for tangible purposes work well for us. Our other funds, Baykeeper Boats Fund, Emeritus Fund for Advocacy, and the Baykeeping Fund are spendable. The markets have been building these funds even as we are spending them.

Cathy shared that this campaign will be budget relieving because 75% of our annual budget is compensation, and some of the fund is to be used to cover the staff time needed to maintain the stations and analyze and communicate what we are seeing in the data. In an ideal world, if the economy holds, the budget relief may allow us to both absorb the increased costs of occupancy when we move, and we may be able to add to our science staff. The uniformity of data makes it much easier to analyze, so, either way, Staff members are excited and committed to getting data analyzed and communicated.

Cathy shared that three stations are better than one, allowing us to compare different regions of the Bay while we foster community conversations about those differences. Our current station is in the middle of Bay where circulation and water quality are good. One of the two new proposed stations would likely be near Portland Harbor, an extremely challenged area due to the large population, CSOs, and stormwater inputs, and the other will likely be in Harpswell, which is strongly influenced by the high volume of water coming from the Kennebec River.

Folks shared that the graphics were very helpful and that simple interpretations are very important.

### **Draft resolution for the Campaign**

A draft of a Board resolution to embark on a fundraising campaign for our continuous monitoring science was circulated. This will be considered for adoption at the September board meeting. Board members at this meeting provided feedback on the resolution and then recommend that it be moved forward at the September board meeting. Feedback included: Adding that we plan to have the campaign for 36 months to document; to replace “whereas” with “because” and a series of bullet points; and to simplify the resolution. The committee agreed it would recommend adoption to the Board.

### **Committee formation?**

If the resolution passes at the Board Meeting, Malcolm will bring up the topic of the possible formation of a campaign committee, where details of the campaign would be vetted and report-outs would take place.

### **Name for campaign?**

Committee members were urged to think about possible names for the campaign. Should a campaign committee be formed, that will likely be where names for the campaign would be vetted.

### **Gift Acceptance Policy**

The Gift Acceptance Policy will be brought forward for a vote in October Board Meeting. This document is not for wholesale reorganization or edits, but to give each Board member the opportunity to review it after today’s meeting. Typo corrections are welcome. As you read it, think about what giving options for you and your family might be worth considering. There has been quite a process of work at the staff level on this document, including reviewing 8-10 other policies, working with paid consultants, and reviewing our policy with other nonprofit experts in the field.

### **Film Festival (Saturday, November 3)**

Only 220 tickets are left to sell between now and Nov 3. We expect to sell out in the middle of October. This year’s event will include 15 films inspiring films!

**We really need Raffle items:** The raffle is very popular and raises another \$2,000-3,000 for our work. Last year we had six raffle packages. Will sent around a raffle item request letter today via email. Stop by your favorite restaurants, boat shops, marine supply stores, gift shops, etc., and request items or gift certificates. 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. Bring letter and postcard for in-person asks.

Film Festival Sponsorships are still welcome.

**Board roles:** We are looking for Board Members to volunteer during the Film Festival. We are making some tweaks to the way we run Will Call and Check In based on what we learned from last year's event and the fact that we are selling tickets differently this year. We expect more people to use the Will Call list this year, so we need to prioritize that this year over ticket taking. This year we will be asking Board member to act as ambassadors for us--and the event--in the role of Welcomers after attendees go through Will Call/Check In. More on that below. Here are the Board Member opportunities to volunteer at the film festival:

- **Setup: Noon-2 PM** - Help set up Banners and other things that get the venue ready for the event. Up to four Board Members could help with setup.
- **Welcomer: 1:45-4:30 PM** - New this year. After folks go through Will Call/Check In, they will enter the lobby and need information about saving a seat, the raffle, food, bar, restroom, and when the films begin. We need Board Members to be ambassadors for us and for the event, to be warm and inviting, encourage attendees to save their seats, to get food, and to check out the raffle. (Please note you may miss the first part of films.) Four Board Members are needed for this role.
- **Info/Membership Table: 1:45-7:15 PM** - These tables are just outside the auditorium upstairs and downstairs and are the go-to places for information about our work, event information, and membership opportunities. We need at least 4 Board Members to fill this role. If we get more Board Members interested, we could divide the night into two shifts.

Please note: All of these roles allow you to still buy tickets and attend the event. Let Sarah know if you would like to help at [slyman@cascobay.org](mailto:slyman@cascobay.org)

## Community events

**Falmouth 300 Waterfront Festival, Sept. 8 debrief:** Most often asked question from those who already know us was, How is it was going with Color by Numbers? It was good to be at this event, though not a lot of people signed up on our contact list. Many attendees knew us, and a lot of veteran volunteers were there. It was worth doing.

**Coastal Cleanup, Saturday, Sept. 15, 9-noon, Bug Light Park:** Our second public cleanup of the year, scheduled for International Coastal Cleanup day.

**Take Action Portland Volunteer Day, Sunday, Sept. 23, 9:30-noon, Old Port:** Take Action Portland is recruiting volunteers to help us measure the color of Casco Bay on Sunday, September 23rd, 9:00 a.m.-Noon. We are meeting at the GMRI parking lot, walking over to Becky's upstairs room for coffee and muffins for a meet and greet, and getting everyone registered. Then we will head out on some of the wharves to collect color measurements together. There may be an optional meetup after at Andy's Old Port Pub. Depending on how many folks sign up, Sarah may need help. Sandy offered to help.

**Bug Light Park Field Day on Sat. 9/29:** The event will support the City of South Portland's ongoing efforts to promote organic land care practices. There will be a space designated at Bug Light Park for various organizations to set up tables with educational and promotional materials. They are trying to arrange for goat yoga and build on the success of our current use of goats to control Japanese Knotweed and other invasive plants. Interested in volunteering? Let Mary know at [mcerullo@cascobay.org](mailto:mcerullo@cascobay.org).

## Future CEC meeting time?

This time seemed to work well for many folks, but the next two second Mondays of the month are holidays. The Committee decided it will have its **meetings on the first Monday of each month at this time (5 to 6:30 p.m.) at GMRI**. We were all so excited to have so many Board Members at the meeting!