

Friends of Casco Bay Board Meeting
Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 18, 2018
Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Commercial Street, Portland

Present: Malcom Poole, President, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, Sandy Marsters, Althea Bennett McGirr, Seb Milardo, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Ann Thayer, and Jack Thomas

Staff: Mary Cerullo, Mike Doan, Will Everitt, Ivy Frignoca, Sarah Lyman, Cathy Ramsdell

Welcome – Malcolm Poole, President

Malcolm welcomed Board members after the summer break. Malcolm met individually with most Board members during the summer, saying that those conversations provided insights into how to nurture the organization going forward. After, he asked everyone to share a highlight of their summer.

A Minute for the Bay

Joanie commented that pogies were roiling the water this morning.

Changes in the Water Quality Monitoring Program

Althea had a long discussion about changes to the Water Quality Monitoring Program with a longtime volunteer. He said, “You are putting us out to pasture. Volunteers have been the core of the organization.” Althea asked him to do Color by Numbers with her and to just talk. The core of the issue was that volunteers have had comradery among themselves and with staff. Questions included, “How will we see data? What is the science? How will we get together? How will we share the data?”

After spending time talking with him, Althea reported that this volunteer now says, “I love Water Reporter. I can see what you and all are doing. Next thing I want is to see the data.”

Cathy and staff reported some results of Water Reporter to date:

- Angie Brewer, Marine Biologist at DEP, sampled algae when we had posted an image of a large bloom. Ivy and Mike also try to visit reported locations.
- Pam Parker, in charge of DEP’s Pumpout program and vessel sewage prevention, received our Water Reporter photos of fish scales in Portland Harbor and took action against the ship owner responsible for dumping fish waste.
- Dead seal sightings are reported to Marine Mammals of Maine, with time and location.

Minutes and other consent agenda reports in the Board Package: *Action Item*: Accepted

Board Discussion – Malcolm Poole, President

Malcolm passed out Strategic Plan cards—a primer of our future plans. Malcolm hopes that we can devote 15-20 minutes at every meeting to a topic that came up during the Strategic Planning process, such as, Board member roles in making new introductions, connections, and members for the organization.

A productive discussion followed on “Who do I know who might be useful to the organization and how do Board members interest them in Friends of Casco Bay?”

Bud said he invited a new neighbor who is retired from the Coast Guard, to join him on a beach cleanup, where they learned about each other and discovered connections. Bud expressed that he was unsure how best to approach people he knew to bring them closer to the organization.

After she joined the Board, Ann sent letters to neighbors saying why she had joined Friends of Casco Bay. Now whenever there is an issue about the Bay, her neighbors contact her. Ann also sends gift memberships to friends.

Jack engages potential members through the Harraseeket Yacht Club. If you think that someone should be considered as a potential Board member, he recommends, first get them excited about Friends of Casco Bay, and then arrange for them to meet Cathy and Malcolm. Will does his presentation about "Circle of Friends," so bring your circles closer and maybe they will show the passion.

Althea: Color by Numbers and Water Reporter are great ways to get folks involved.

Joanie: Many Bay residents on the Freeport peninsula are only here for a month or two. How do you make people accountable for the health of the Bay? Cathy: keep those names for a possible house party.

Malcom: Find someone to button hole. "Do you know about Friends of Casco Bay? Here's the website." Get to know us and join.

Homework: Conflict of Interest policy and related form to process.

Please return by next meeting.

Community Engagement Committee report – Sandy Marsters, Committee Chair

New time for CEC meetings—First Monday of the month, 5-6:30PM, small conference room of GMRI.

Joining this committee provides a great opportunity into get details on items, so of which will come up at the Board meetings. Many issues are vetted at the Community Engagement Committee first, so you can share points of view and have an influence early on.

Color by Numbers— Sarah reported 643 measurements by 62 active volunteers, which is about the same as last year's number of active Citizen Steward Water Quality Monitors. *Color by Numbers* is in the pilot phase. We will evaluate the project this fall. We will analyze what are we getting out of it, in partnership with Nick Record at Bigelow Lab.

Film Festival – There are fewer than 150 tickets left, 6 weeks out. We need raffle items. Sandy recommended using the poster and postcards as icebreakers to ask businesses for raffle donations. We would like to have the items in hand by October 24. Sandy circulated a form for Board sign-ups to volunteer at the event.

Gift Acceptance Policy – Please review for consideration at October meeting.

Fundraising Metrics – Will Everitt, Communications and Development Director

Will gave an overview of the very diverse revenue stream we have. His presentation focused on the importance of households and individual giving.

Friends of Casco Bay's revenue trends from FY08 to present:

- Government grants and contracts have been decreasing
- Foundation grants income is erratic, very up and down. One of our biggest spikes was from \$100K from Jane's Trust. The funding for large grants such as this from Jane's Trust, is often spread over two fiscal years.
- Biggest change in income stream has been in individual giving. In FY 08 there were 600 households; that figure has doubled over ten years: 1236 households in FY17, 1283 in FY18.

Annual Fund appeal is sent out twice a year, in addition to the annual membership. The Annual Fund is a good way to bring back lapsed members and add new members. Letters are signed by the Executive Director with a handwritten note by a Board member. Average gift from Annual Appeal is \$125. The average amount individual households donate to us over the course of the year is \$250. Thank you all for signing Annual Fund letters. Many board members also sign renewal letters for us. We need more board members to help with signing membership renewal letters.

Will sees many opportunities for growth:

- Opportunity to increase individual giving
- New tax law encourages bundling of gifts. We have seen more charitable gift funds and donor-advised funds
- Growth in family foundations
- Corporate Giving (with caveats) 5-8% of funding is through corporate giving. What companies should we look to for donations? Often corporate donations are given through enlightened self-interest (for example, an outdoor clothing company funding organizations that get people outdoors). Other times, corporate gifts are given with an expectation of quid pro quo—using our logo or brand to make their image look better or to gain access to information about our donors.

Developing our Fundraising Campaign to support our science efforts

Our Strategic Plan calls for us to “identify goals and execute a fundraising campaign to support our science efforts.” At the meeting, there was not enough time for a discussion about launching a fundraising campaign to support our science efforts in tracking a changing Casco Bay through a network of continuous monitoring stations, engaging the public in understanding what changes may mean for us and our community, and for moving protective policies forward. This conversation and the campaign resolution were tabled.

Action Item: Campaign Resolution

Motion made and accepted: Table discussion and continue next month

Baykeeper Report – Integrated Planning in Portland – Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper

Ivy discussed aspects of our work pushing the City of Portland to remediate its sewage and stormwater systems to reduce pollution into the Bay. Both Ivy and Cathy serve on stakeholder task forces. The City has begun the process of combining its stormwater and sewer permits into one integrated plan. This will help the City re-set out its priorities, including making improvements in water quality a top priority, and will help allocate money to do so more effectively. At the same time, the City does not get to skip anything they are required to do to meet Clean Water Act compliance requirements. Under integrated planning, the city can move toward more effective solutions earlier.

Executive Director Update – Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director

Office space search—Malcolm and Cathy have started looking at new office space. Any move would double or triple our current rent. Let us know about any available property with 3500 sq. ft. and plenty of parking. Cathy will talk with the new SMCC president about our future on campus.

Event planning for next year – We may host 3 Casco Bay Matters events: short lectures on news you can use about the Bay. These would be a good way to engage both the public and our former Water Quality Monitors, who want more education and exposure to our work.

Legal intern—Ivy has a year-long legal intern from Maine School of Law. Will Sedlack will look at air emissions from ships, model fertilizer ordinances around the Bay, and other issues.

Oil spill preparedness—Cathy and some of our key volunteers will attend an oiled wildlife rehabilitation certification training by out of state consultants working with DEP.

Gubernatorial debate cancelled—Cathy has served for many months on Maine Association of Nonprofits (MANP) Advocacy Committee, as well as a subcommittee to organize a Gubernatorial Forum on Nonprofits and Philanthropy. The event was cancelled, as organizers could not get Shawn Moody to commit, so Janet Mills pulled out—a sign of the dynamics of politics. MANP will seek to insert the questions that were prepared into other debates, and to post webinars where candidates answer the questions the committee created.

Wrap Up

Meeting adjourned at 7:15.