

**Friends of Casco Bay**  
**Community Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Monday, June 3, 2019, 5-6:30  
Gulf of Maine Research Institute

**In attendance**

Board: Co-Chairs Sandy Marsters and Seb Milardo, Steve Bushey, Pat Ianni, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Lori Thayer

Staff: Cathy Ramsdell, Will Everitt, Mary Cerullo

**Pumpout Launch and Christening, Monday, June 10, 5-7 p.m., Portland Yacht Services**

This event is a great opportunity to bring anyone you know who might be interested in our work. Will welcomed all comers, whether or not they make a donation to the Pumpout Program, as is stated on the registration form. We have about 60 RSVPs to date with more expected. Remarks will be outside if nice weather; inside the boat shed if not. Christening will be performed by DEP's Pam Parker. There is plenty of parking; we will encourage people to come from the west to be able to make a right-hand turn into the upper part of the parking lot. Board can help at welcome table and at the bar; other volunteers will direct parking. Will plans to send a reminder email about the event, with details about parking and best route to avoid traffic on Commercial Street.

**Water Reporter Training event, Mon., June 24, 5-6:30 p.m. Port Harbor Marine Dockhouse, South Portland**

Cathy reported that Sarah Lyman is hosting a training event on the Water Reporter app at Port Harbor Marine/Spring Point Marina Dockhouse at the end of Broadway. Sarah will provide informal, remedial help for those who may be having trouble using the app, as well as training for newcomers. All are welcome. This is another opportunity to recruit friends, family, and colleagues who are interested in ways to help protect the health of the Bay. Details on how to sign up to be a Water Reporter are on the website [you may also use this webpage to see Water Reporter posts, even if you are not a Water Reporter!]: <https://www.cascobay.org/water-reporter/>

**Cumberland House Party, Wed., August 7, 5-6:30 p.m. home of Brian and Carolyn Clement**

Will said this site is large enough for us to erect a tent, providing plenty of room for anyone you may want to invite. Our house parties are important opportunities for recruiting new members and donors, and there is no requirement that attendees must donate. It is a great way to introduce people to the organization and its members. This venue in Broad Cove in Cumberland is next to the location where the staff has been investigating the source of an algal bloom reported last week.

**Preparation for our June Board meeting, June 18, 4-8 p.m., Port Harbor Marine Dockhouse**

Cathy plans to distribute copies of the case statement prior to the June 18 Board meeting. As you review the case statement, we encourage you to pick out key talking points that resonate with you. What inspires you about our climate change work? Consider how you might start a conversation about the campaign.

**Evolution of our Communications and Media Work**

Will explained how our communications work is planned through a yearly calendar. Sarah, Will, and Mary meet weekly to discuss topics and timing for emails (one or two topic stories about our work that are released nearly weekly) and social media, calling on Cathy for advice and consent, then on Ivy and Mike for more information. Cathy explained our stories, in any form, go through a rigorous though fluid process to ensure accuracy and appropriate timing for release.

As we develop topics, we think about several audiences: members and others who have just signed up for our emails, who follow us through emails, followed up by Facebook and Twitter posts. Some members only receive printed newsletters and other mailings. At any given time, only 30 percent of our email subscribers open our emails (which is above the normal "open" rate) so it is important to repeat for reach and frequency.

Mary described how we cultivate reporters. We send out targeted media alerts to encourage a reporter to do a story on a newsworthy win or action. We send out broader media releases for events or when we have a story we want to get out directly. While we try to plan out our communications and media work, we spend a significant amount of time responding to inquiries and requests for comment or media interviews on what we call “over the transom” issues or inquiries.

Will said that we want to do more video. Stories on video have broad appeal, and we have great public speakers; the challenge is carving out the time to make them. Board members suggested enlisting a high school student or SMCC or MECA students to do videos around the Bay.

Because of the popularity of our emails featuring “Did you know” and factoids, we traded ideas for quick, eye-catching messaging such as on bumper stickers on coffee mugs.

**Other topics that we shared information on**

SoPo/ Portland One Climate Future: Cathy is on an advisory committee for this joint initiative.

Clean Water Week events sponsored by Portland Water District include a lecture by Curtis Bohlen and a walking tour of Back Cove and the East End Water Treatment facility.