

Friends of Casco Bay Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 21, 2019

Gulf of Maine Research Institute

Commercial Street, Portland

Present: Malcolm Poole, President, Jack Thomas, Treasurer, Pat Ianni, Clerk, Steve Bushey, Bud Higgins, David Kaufman, Sandy Marsters, Seb Milardo, Tollef Olsen, Ann Thayer, and Lori Thayer

Absent: AJ Curran, Peter LeBourdais, Althea Bennett McGirr, Derek Pelletier, and Joan Benoit Samuelson

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

Welcome – Malcolm Poole, President

Malcolm said that the Board of Directors slate of officers for 9/17/19 to 9/16/20 will be voted on at September 17, 2019 Board meeting. He encouraged Board members to invite a colleague to learn about Friends over coffee with him and Cathy.

A Minute for the Bay

Bud remarked on the cleansing northwest wind that was coming across the Bay today. Tollef said it is seaweed harvesting season and that hundreds of pounds of nitrogen are being taken up by seaweed cultivation. Seb reported that lobstermen are concerned about the low harvest so far this spring and worry that there may not be enough lobsters for the Memorial Day weekend. Jack said that was not unusual in such a cold spring.

Introduction and election of nominee Steve Bushey to our Board: Action Item: Approved.

After the Board and staff members introduced themselves to Steve, he shared some of his background and why he is happy to join the Board at this time. Steve has lived in South Portland for 30 years. A civil engineer by trade, he is knowledgeable about stormwater management laws and is familiar with many of the issues that Friends of Casco Bay is confronting. He has worked on several waterfront projects, including Canal Landing with Phin Sprague and Union Wharf with Malcolm and Charlie Poole. Steve concedes that he is “a freshwater guy” who recognizes that whatever impacts a stream will flow into the ocean. He hopes to “bring the younger generation into the organization.”

Board Consent Package (minutes and financials): Action Item: Approved.

Jack reported that when Cathy closed the books for the fiscal year that ended on March 31, 2019, we were \$8,000 in the black before depreciation, a noncash item. As usual, donations in the first few months of the new fiscal year are slow. He noted that even after we bought new sondes and had a three-paycheck month, we are in good shape and ahead of income at this time last year. The endowment funds have rebounded from last December, given Maine Community Foundation’s conservative-investor-approach.

Board Round Table Discussion: What are the advantages and risks, pros and cons, obligations and restrictions we face when we collaborate with other organizations?

Malcolm introduced the discussion, using the definition of collaboration that Cathy shared with the Board: “Two or more people working together towards shared goals.” He invited Board members to share their own experiences to describe the pitfalls of collaboration. Bud observed that in today’s political situation the word “collaboration” only is used when you agree with each other. Friends of Casco Bay has not operated that way. Tollef said sometimes there is a perceived quid pro quo in “collaboration” when you take someone’s money, and our organization has been careful not to let that happen. Ivy said we do not go into a conversation with a hard and fast position; Cathy added that we define our policy approach by identifying the most important things we want to accomplish. Jack: In his experience, Friends of Casco Bay is always clear, consistent, and leads from a position of strength.

David sees a huge opportunity for collaboration with marketing and media people to get the story out about the organization and protecting Casco Bay. Ann: Key words for our approach center on our priorities, empathetic listening, and being prepared to move our position.

Community Engagement Committee —*Sandy Marsters, Committee Co-Chair*

Sandy noted highlights of the meeting on May 6, which focused on choosing a name for our new pumpout boat. After reviewing each of the 380 names submitted in the boat naming contest, the choices were narrowed to two. The winning name will be revealed at the Pumpout Boat Launch Party on Monday, June 10, 5-7 PM, at Portland Yacht Services. Donations of \$25 will be accepted but not required.

Other items:

Debrief on Annual Meeting event was positive, especially the break-out tables and the Board's receiving line to welcome members to the event and to thank volunteers and donors.

The Spring newsletter came in the mail.

Thank you to all who penned notes on Annual Fund letters.

Sarah Lyman discussed Water Reporter training events for existing and new Water Reporter volunteers.

On June 18, Board and staff will gather at Joe's Dockhouse at Port Harbor Marine in South Portland for a workshop on talking points for the case statement for the Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund. This is an opportunity for us all to learn how to introduce the campaign to others. Note: This is the last formal Board meeting until September 17.

Sandy reminded the group that the Community Engagement Committee will continue to meet monthly throughout the summer. It is a great venue to discuss emerging ideas and projects more thoroughly than we can at a Board meeting. The Committee meets at GMRI in the second-floor, small conference room on the first Monday of the month.

Staff Led Presentation and Discussion: Collaborative Relations: Opportunities and Challenges – *Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director, and Mary Cerullo, Associate Director*

Cathy highlighted some of the challenges of working with large and diverse groups, citing some specific partner groups we work with as examples. She noted how groups change as leadership and membership evolve.

Cathy cited a statewide coalition we are part of that is made up of 34 environmental and other organizations. Some members have at times taken unilateral actions that have put them at odds with the collaborative nature of the coalition. While members can certainly disagree respectfully, some have taken to publicly disparaging those who disagree with them, an action that is not aligned with our "work-with" approach.

Mary used her BayScaping experience to illustrate the complexity of working with many partners with diverse interests and conveyed that attempting to work with all sides can lead to being identified with one side or the other. She described the long-term relationship between Friends of Casco Bay and Maine Board of Pesticides Control in creating our program BayScaping, to minimize the use of lawn care products. The education outreach to homeowners and landscapers evolved into working with municipalities, as Cathy and Mary help communities to draft ordinances restricting pesticides, and now fertilizers.

Ivy described her involvement with the Interlocal Stormwater Working Group—14 local communities that work together to reduce stormwater pollution under the MS4 Clean Water Act permit. When Ivy saw that some members of the group, particularly municipalities, were actively working to weaken the MS4 permit requirements, she bowed out temporarily. Now that things have calmed down, Ivy will

reconnect with Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, which had coordinated the group in the past, and with permit writers at DEP. She plans to have the hard discussion about strengthening permit terms to protect water quality.

Baykeeper Update—*Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper*

Seb asked about a letter Friends of Casco Bay sent to DEP about Portland's lack of progress in meeting its court-ordered directive to remediate its sewer/stormwater system in the Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Plan. Ivy said our role was to be the catalyst to say there can be no more extensions to complete construction to meet the agreement. We need the City Manager to support the Integrated Planning (IP) process. Ivy wrote an email to Jon Jennings asking him or a designee to attend the next two (last) IP meetings to finalize the work plan and budget, so that the people of Portland know that the city is behind improving water quality.

Ivy will do an update on the governor's climate change bill at another time.

Executive Director Update—*Cathy*

Cathy reported that she and Ivy had a discussion about changes we recommended to the Governor's climate change bill. We may request that the Maine Ocean and Coastal Acidification (MOCA) partnership's bill to set up a marine climate change council be tabled until next session.

Cathy said we are essentially done with Augusta for this legislative session.

Our summer intern joined us today.

A new Board contact list is in the Board packet.

Cathy hopes to share metrics about our other volunteer efforts going on this summer, such as coastal cleanups and storm drain stenciling, at upcoming Community Engagement Committee meetings.

Planning for the June 10 Pumpout Launch party is well underway.

Up Close and Hands On: Meet our Continuous Monitoring Station — *Mike Doan, Research Associate*

Cathy noted that the Board packet includes a data matrix that lists the directed and derived measurements from the equipment in our Continuous Monitoring Station. Mike showed the Board the new components of the "cage of science" immersed off a pier in Yarmouth. The new datasonde has advanced features that make taking measurements and cleaning off marine hitchhikers much easier. Cathy noted that we have been using datasondes that are approaching 20 years old, and the manufacturer will no longer support replacement parts for the old models; remarkably, measurements taken with both the old and the new matched, testament to Mike's ability to keep the old equipment in top top, calibrated condition. Cathy explained that the heart of our Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund calls for two more Continuous Monitoring Stations to bracket the Bay, one near Portland and one near Harpswell, with redundant equipment so we will not experience any gaps in data collection.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

SAVE THESE DATES

Mon., June 6 Community Engagement Committee meeting, GMRI, 5 – 6:30 pm

Mon., June 10 Pumpout Boat Launch Party, Portland Yacht Services, 5 – 7 pm

Tues., June 18 Board/Staff Social and workshop on Campaign talking points, Joe's Dockhouse, Port Harbor Marine, Broadway, South Portland, 4 – 8 pm

Mon., July 1 Community Engagement Committee meeting, GMRI, 5 – 6:30 pm

Mon., Aug 5 Community Engagement Committee meeting, GMRI, 5 – 6:30 pm

Wed., Aug 7 House Party hosted by Brian and Carolyn Clement, Cumberland Foreside, 5:30 – 7:30 pm