

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

Monday, July 1, 2019, 5-6:30 PM

Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Second floor conference room, Portland, ME

In attendance

Board: Sandy Marsters, Malcolm Poole, David Kaufman, Seb Milardo, Jack Thomas, Pat Ianni

Staff: Cathy Ramsdell, Mary Cerullo, Sarah Lyman, Intern Alexis Burns

Sandy: Great turnout for this meeting. Thank you all!

### **Update on Program Activities**

Summer is going swimmingly, and we have a lot of good news to share:

- The environmental priority legislative bill on climate change action at the state level, which incorporated the bill language we worked on for a climate council focusing on marine resources, passed with strong bi-partisan support. Ivy attended the bill signing last week.
- Our sampling season is underway as we maintain the Continuous Monitoring Station and continue to collect data for the long-term data set from our 21 shoreside and deepwater sites, by land and by sea. We are using two new, upgraded data sondes, our first purchase through our Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund.
- Our Water Reporter observing network is expanding as we hoped and planned. We had 37 enthusiastic volunteers at the Water Reporter training. Volunteers are signing up to keep watch for algal blooms in specific areas of the Bay's shorelines. We have received great press on this issue. Sarah has upgraded the Water Reporter website to make it easier for volunteers to use.
- Our new pumpout boat, Headmaster, is launched and is our highly visible ambassador on the Bay, helping Jim to more efficiently keep sewage out of the Bay. We had ten media hits on the launch party and after!
- We are almost a third of the way to our goal for the Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund and have started setting up meetings with our next set of priority donors: key major donors and then you, our Board Members.
- Cathy, Will, and Sarah have reviewed more than 72 films for Wild & Scenic Film Festival; another few hours and they will have completed viewing of this year's festival offerings to make their selections.
- A high volume of requests for coastal cleanups and storm drain stenciling from community groups are keeping Sarah and intern Alexis busy several times a week.
- Mary has received several requests for BayScaping talks; she is scheduling in August and beyond.
- Cathy is serving on the South Portland Fertilizer Working Group, with meetings every 3-4 weeks, to assist the City in drafting a Fertilizer ordinance. So far the work has been constructive.

### **Debrief: Pumpout Boat Launch , June 10**

Staff members were delighted with the event. Board members shared that it went off really well, that it was excellent, great crowd, great food, great mix of people from all different places, perfect weather as well.

Captain Jim Splude completes his rounds of pumpout visits in a general pattern, but he is not in any one location on predictable days. He tries to be efficient by grouping boats based on requests from the same area or marina. Seb shared that a visit to Four Points Marina got him thinking about how few boaters know about the service. This had him considering whether we should have signage at the marinas about the pumpout service. Cathy said she and Jeff would follow up with Pam Parker about updated signage about pumpouts at

each marina. We are hoping to empty our pumpout boat hold at the Four Points Marina when its pumpout facility is completed. We will consider our own general signage about Friends of Casco Bay at the marinas. Board members shared that their sense is that generally boaters aren't aware of Friends of Casco Bay. Board Members agreed that Boating Clubs and Marinas would be happy to have our poster on their bulletin board. We can keep the message positive, as boaters tend to be on the Bay to enjoy and relax. David shared the idea that we could give out oil absorbent pads to mariners to get some visibility. Malcolm offered to donate bilge skimmers on which we could add our message, logo, and such. Because Board members are affiliated with different marinas, they can be a great resource in spreading our message, too.

### **Debrief: Campaign workshop, June 18**

Everyone thought this was a great gathering, well balanced between business, workshop, and social time. We had a good turnout. Pat shared that the more Board Members hear about the campaign, the better, because Cathy and Will are living the work of the campaign everyday, but Board Members are not. Cathy and Will were pleased how engaged everyone was. It was clear everyone really had done their homework. Cathy asked Board Members to keep sharing the names of potential donors to the campaign, as they come to mind.

### **Debrief: Water Reporter training event, June 24**

37 Water Reporters attended. There were people with a variety of experience with Water Reporter. We had “seasoned” Water Reporters as well as folks who knew very little about the effort and signed up that day. We were excited about the age range in the room. Folks learned about the app, got their questions answered, and completed a practice post. The reception of the crowd was great and Intern Alexis Burns and Volunteer Rick Frantz did a wonderful job covering parts of the training with Sarah.

**Water Reporter Metrics:** 64 posts this fiscal year, which started April 1. This combined with last year's posts bring us to a total of 300 posts to our group. We have 161 members with 53 sign ups this fiscal year; 20 of those have been in the last 15 days.

### **Additional volunteer activities: Cleanups and Stenciling**

So far in FY20, which runs April 2019-March 2020, we have had 148 active volunteers complete 291.5 hours of service. Folks of many different ages have been involved. Below are metrics for some of our some specific volunteer efforts.

We've been very busy with volunteer activities this season! We never had a chance to send out our call for groups before we started getting requests. Corporate community service days are the way most of our cleanup requests are generated. It is a win-win. We make it easy for the community service day organizers by working with them to find the right day and time, identifying the location, and bringing all the supplies needed, to fulfill a 3-4 hour commitment. They organize a group of engaged volunteers for the specific opportunity, and we get to meet new folks/potential members. We have had so many requests that we have already filled all our available cleanup dates.

Intern Alexis has been an important part of this process. She has been running Coastal Cleanups and Stenciling events on her own. This frees up Sarah to do other work and coordinate with other groups. Alexis has been an active participant in Water Reporter and has been helping monitor and respond to posts as well.

Alexis shared the following metrics for Cleanups and Stenciling so far this season:

**Coastal Cleanups:** 6 cleanups, 69 participants, 238 lbs of trash collected (based on estimates by the CleanSwell app)

**Storm Drain Stenciling:** 2 stenciling events, 37 participants, 238 storm drains stenciled

**Cumberland house party--Wed., August 7, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Brian and Carolyn Clement, Cumberland Foreside**

**Whom do you want us to invite? Give us names and addresses of guests.**

We are looking forward to this event; logistics, such as renting a tent (tricky this time of year), are falling into place. Please email Will at [willeveritt@cascobay.org](mailto:willeveritt@cascobay.org), by the 10th the names of those you want to be sure are on the invitation list. If you have their mailing address, please include it. If you would like to introduce anyone to the organization, this house party works well because attendance is not limited (hence the tent!). Invitations will be mailed with RSVP return cards. Invitees will be able to donate to us even if they cannot attend.

High tide will be 5:17 PM. There are 3 or 4 extra moorings and a dock, so folks can come by boat. Jack has offered to pick up folks coming by boat and bring them ashore.