

# Friends of Casco Bay Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 17, 2019  
Gulf of Maine Research Institute  
Commercial Street, Portland

Present: Malcom Poole, President, Steve Bushey, Dave Kaufman, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, Seb Milardo, Tollef Olsen, Derek Pelletier, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Ann Thayer, Jack Thomas

Absent: AJ Curran, Peter LeBourdais, Sandy Marsters, Althea Bennett McGirr, Lori Thayer

Staff: Mary Cerullo, Will Everitt, Ivy Frignoca, Cathy Ramsdell

## **Welcome** – *Malcolm Poole, President*

Malcolm welcomed everyone back after their summer break.

## **A Minute for the Bay**

Malcolm requested that Board members discuss items about climate change.

Tollef took some UNE students to a site on the Bay that 20 years ago was almost exclusively covered by sugar kelp; today they saw several different species, evidence that seaweed populations are changing.

David was speaking with a fisherman who said it was “the worst fishing in 50 years.” His reason—pollution.

Derek’s extended family gathers annually at Small Point in early August. This year, they were troubled by the extensive growth of algae. They noted that the water was burgundy, apparently colored by the *Karenia* bloom.

Bud saw a whale family breaching just offshore of Peaks Island. There have been several sightings this summer of a minke whale around Casco Bay and even close to shore.

As Joanie was harvesting eelgrass for her garden, she talked with a clammer who told her that clamming was as good as it’s ever been. “There is no climate change. It’s cyclical.”

## **Board Consent Package** (minutes and financials) – *Malcolm*

*Action Item:* Minutes of June 18, 2019, meeting – Approved

*Action Item:* Malcolm asked Board members to hand in their signed conflict of interest forms.

Jack said income was on track with the budget.

## **Election of officers**

**Slate of officers** September 2019 to August 2020

President: Malcom Poole

Vice President and President Elect: Sandy Marsters

Treasurer: Jack Thomas

Clerk: Pat Ianni

**Directors at Large:**

Seb Milardo

Derek Pelletier

Bud Higgins

*Action Item:* The slate was approved as presented.

## **Baykeeper Update**—*Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper*

Ivy said that Friends of Casco Bay has made an amazing amount of progress this summer on climate change and ocean acidification advocacy.

Friends of Casco Bay secured a grant from the Broad Reach Fund at Maine Community Foundation, to hold three work sessions to draft an action plan for the Maine Ocean and Coastal Acidification (MOCA) partnership and to hire a facilitator, C. Jeffrey Wahlstrom with Starboard Consulting. To prepare for those meetings, FOCB staff members met together to review what we have done in science, advocacy, and community engagement in order to address the question, “How has each MOCA partner addressed the recommendations of the original Ocean Acidification Study Commission report from 2015?”

The three workshops were held in Augusta, each with 20-25 invited participants, covering Research & Monitoring, Policy and Law, and Remediation and Adaptation, both for fisheries and for those who work/live in coastal communities. At each meeting, participants brainstormed many options and then voted on the highest priorities for action.

From there, Ivy, the facilitator, and the MOCA steering committee crafted a document with seven recommendations to help inform the Maine Climate Council's Coastal and Marine Working Group as it drafts its own work plan for the next four years. Ivy will deliver the report to the Governor's Climate Council, which meets on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Ivy does not expect to be named to the Climate Council, but the Coastal and Marine Working Group would be a good place for us to have an impact.

**Update:** Ivy received an invitation to serve on the Maine Coastal and Marine Working Group shortly after the Board meeting and attended the first meeting of the Maine Climate Council on Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>.

Members of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future have expressed their appreciation for all the work that MOCA has done. Ivy also reported that the State is considering using Mike's design for our Continuous Monitoring Station as a model to apply to rest of the state.

As Ivy was reviewing the comments of the meetings' participants, it became clear that Casco Bay is ground zero, where we find the most research, the most remediation projects, as well as the most challenges. DEP's Don Witherill remarked, "If something is going to happen, it's going to happen in Casco Bay." Ivy noted that 19 coves in Casco Bay have been afflicted with slimy green algae this summer. BUT there has been no algal bloom in Portland's East End beach area since the East End Treatment Facility has significantly reduced nitrogen levels in its effluent waters during the warm season.

### **Staff-led Presentation and Discussion: Development Trends—Outlook for the Future—Will Everitt, Development and Communications Director**

Will discussed our development metrics—what the numbers tell us, how the Board contributes to our fundraising work, and what we can do moving forward.

He explained that that the funding sources of contributed income primarily are, in order of percentage of our income last year, individual giving, foundation grants, government grants and contracts, and corporate giving. Individual renewals for FY19 were 1,221 households. Though this number represents a slight decrease from FY18 in the number of households, we raised more funds than in past years and the gifts per household were larger.

Will noted that there is a lot of capacity for giving out there. Even as we are raising \$800,000-900,000 a year to meet our operating expenses, people reliably donate to our campaigns. Giving opportunities include: Annual Fund appeal; Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund; Baykeeper Fund, Advocacy Fund, Boats Fund; Anchor Society (our planned giving society); Calendar Island Circle, monthly giving society; donor advised funds; foundation giving. We try to match a donor's interests to our needs, such as a donor's recent gift to our pumpout boat campaign.

What is this the ultimate purpose of our fundraising? Building community around the shared value of protecting the health of Casco Bay.

### **Board Round Table Discussion: Board check-in and comments on summer thoughts; your efforts to build our friend and board candidates list, thought on Friend raising — Malcolm**

Malcolm asked the Board to suggest colleagues or friends they can invite for coffee with Cathy and Malcolm to discuss membership or other support.

Tollef went to a surf shop and met someone related to Eimskip. He hopes to follow up.

Derek's new boss just bought a waterfront home in Harpswell. It could be a potential house party site in a few years.

Bud has new summer-only neighbors. He hopes to introduce them to Friends.

Pat is seeking a corporate donor contact at Seevee Mahar.

## **Community Engagement Committee Report and Discussion**—*Seb Milardo*

Seb reviewed highlights of the September 9 meeting and noted the robust turnout—10 Board members.

**Debrief on the Cumberland House party**—the consensus was that it was a big success with terrific hosts and an enthusiastic crowd of about 100 people. They discussed ideas for house party venues for next summer. There is an offer to do one in Cape Elizabeth, so another location in the Harpswell, Brunswick region would be great.

**Surfboard raffle** raised \$ 5,100 in ticket sales.

### **Film Festival November 2, 2019**

Seb distributed posters and postcards and a volunteer signup for the event.

We still need raffle items and sponsors. Will noted that sponsorships will cover our expenses, so all ticket sales will go to support Friends of Casco Bay.

**Passive skimmer swag**—Malcolm donated about 30 passive skimmers, devices that can remain in a boat's bilge for years absorbing oil and other chemicals. Next spring, we will share them with our boating Board members, along with a card with information about Friends, including our long and square decals. Their challenge: How will you use them to promote the organization and then bring your story back to our staff? Malcolm suggested calling the effort "A Minute for the Bilge."

Mary provided an update on **BayScaping workshops**, which Friends of Casco Bay has been doing since 2000. She noted that Pat Ianni has done many of those presentations. This year, requests came from varied audiences: city councils, civic organizations, a yacht club, Wolfe Neck Agricultural Center, Portland Trails' annual meeting, and the Portland Flower Show.

## **Executive Director Update**—*Cathy Ramsdell, Executive Director*

Cathy discussed

**Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund**—our campaign to raise \$1.5 million in 36 months.

Cathy said she and Will would be meeting individually with each of the Board members, as it is important to be able to tell potential donors that we have 100% participation by the Board.

So far, 13 donors have pledged or donated \$869,000, getting us 60% toward our goal. Three gifts are in the \$250,000 range, one of which is a planned gift.

We have had such a positive response from the Case Statement that we are considering reprinting and sending to potential donors when we launch the public phase of our campaign. We will ask for suggestions for potential donors who may not yet been in our lists.

### **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Film**

A four-minute film is in production by Knack Factory to premiere at our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on April 29, 2020. Four people are being interviewed: Joanie, Tony Jessen, Cathy, and Ivy. The film will include videography from our boat and from a plane provided by LightHawk.

### **Dredging**

Ivy had to leave the Board meeting early in order to attend a South Portland City Council workshop on a proposed dredging project. Discussion at the meeting will focus on digging a Confined Aquatic Disposal Cell (CAD Cell) just off the Coast Guard Station in South Portland, to sequester contaminated sediments dredged from around piers and wharves on both sides of Portland Harbor. Nothing has happened for decades to address the buildup of these sediments that are silting in our working waterfront. Friends of Casco Bay has been involved for many years in discussions on dredging the private wharves over concerns that these toxic sediments can be re-dispersed into the water column by prop wash and storms. We call a CAD Cell "the least worst option."

### **South Portland Fertilizer Ordinance Working Group**

Cathy was appointed by the South Portland City Council earlier this year to serve on this group. Their work to craft an ordinance to recommend to the City Council will continue for several more meetings.

### **Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC)**

An upcoming EPC meeting will discuss bills and issues that are on the horizon for the next legislative session. Last year, our Climate Change Advisory Council bill was an EPC Priority Bill, which the entire EPC membership lobbied for passage. We do not plan to introduce another priority bill.

### **Filtering requests for engagement**

We are often asked to weigh in on issues, and we filter the requests through the context of their relevance to Casco Bay. As our visibility increases, we get more and more of these requests. For example, the International Fund for Animal Welfare recently asked us to get involved in efforts to save the North Atlantic right whale. We declined, saying that though we are deeply grateful for their work, we do not have capacity to join those efforts, which extend beyond the borders of Casco Bay.

### **Interns**

We have had and currently have great interns. UMaine School of Law extern Alex Mihalov is doing legal research for Ivy, and Corey Ackerson from UNE is primarily assisting Mike Doan with data and Sarah Lyman with community outreach. From May through August, Alexis Burns from Boston College helped Mike with data collection and documentation and conducted many of our 22 coastal cleanups. Our legal extern from last semester, Josh Biermann, will be working on a project for Ivy as an independent study.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.