

Friends of Casco Bay Community Engagement Committee Minutes

Monday, February 3, 2020, 5-6:30 PM

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

In attendance

Board: Sandy Marsters (Committee Chair), Steve Bushey, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, Seb Milardo, Malcolm Poole, Joan Samuelson

Staff: Cathy Ramsdell, Mary Cerullo, Will Everitt, Sarah Lyman

Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund campaign update

Will and Cathy are continuing to meet with potential Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund campaign donors. Last week, we received a \$10,000 pledge from one of these meetings. They recently met Rodger Herrigel, who is a newer supporter who attended the Donor Appreciation Event. He plans to make a donation to the campaign. Cathy and Will hope to raise 80-90% before the 30th Anniversary event. Many folks are making generous gifts, 10 to 15 times what they give annually.

The public launch of this campaign will be the 30th Anniversary event and the mailing we will send out the day of the event. Cathy and Will considered many different ways the mailing could be done, including splitting up the mailing list different ways and sending different kinds of mailings/packages.

After running the numbers, they have decided that our most trusted mailhouse, Franklin Printing, will print, assemble, and mail the same package to 7,200-7,500 households. This will include the full Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund case statement, a letter with a note from Cathy that looks handwritten, and supplemental materials. We may have slightly different letters for folks who live in Portland, Yarmouth, and Harpswell, highlighting that a Continuous Monitoring Station will be off the coast of their community.

The mailing will increase our visibility. The case statement is getting great feedback, making the case for supporting the campaign and outlining our work in science and community engagement for the next decade. Cathy has been encouraging the streamlining the mailing process. The costs, which were factored into the planning and budget for the campaign, will be borne by the campaign. Our costs are very low thus far, and the majority of the campaign costs overall will be incurred in the beginning of FY21, for the 30th event and the big mailing.

Upcoming events

- Thank you to Sandy and Seb for covering the family-friendly **Eco-celebration, Jewish Community Alliance of So. Maine**, this Sunday, February 9, 3-5 PM in Portland.
- Please join us for the **Operating Plan and Budget Workshop** on **Monday, March 9**, 3:30-8:00 PM, at GMRI. Cathy hopes to see everyone at the Workshop. This is a great opportunity to review our work plan for the year and the supporting budget, and ask any questions. Staff have been meeting and working on their plans for FY21 throughout the last month. Malcolm elaborated on the process, stating that each staffer designs their section of the plan, Cathy consolidates and makes the whole document work. Staff and Cathy work out budget demands to support the plan. The job of the Board is to approve the plan first and then approve the budget to accomplish the plan. The budget will show a small surplus. Board needs to concur that the work can be done as presented. Malcolm shared that this process of the Staff writing their plans and Cathy weaving it together is the best of any organization he has been involved with.

- **Green Neighbor Family Fest**, Saturday, **April 25**, 8:30-12:30 AM, Deering High School (after Urban Runoff 5K) Thank you to Pat for volunteering for this event. A second Board Member would be helpful; if interested, please let Sarah Lyman know (slyman@cascobay.org)
- **Sustainability Fair at IDEXX**, Wednesday, **June 3**, noon to 3pm, IDEXX, Westbrook, ME Thank you to Pat for volunteering for this event. A second Board Member could be used for this event. If interested, please let Sarah Lyman know (slyman@cascobay.org)

Water Reporter gathering

We will hold a Water Reporter Training, likely June 22, 2020. This event is expected to be a quick overview of Water Reporter, with reminders of “how to” and covering why it is important to us and our work. Then we will dive more deeply into algal blooms and questions folks have around this specific effort, making the connection to climate change. We will be cautious about causality but share that observations are fundamental.

Bud suggested that perhaps a handful of the early adopters would be interested in helping train other folks to become Water Reporters in their region of the Bay. It would take a little work to get them trained and comfortable, but it could be beneficial to the enthusiastic volunteers while growing the effort. We will consider this in FY21 and consider planning and implementing in FY22.

Skimmers & Water Reporter recruitment

This idea, giving away the passive bilge skimmers that Malcolm donated to the organization, is coming off the generated ideas list on the monthly agendas and being incorporated into this year’s operating plan. We are expanding the idea, adding Water Reporter recruitment. The idea is that active Community Engagement Committee members who are also boaters would each take 4-6 bilge skimmer packages. The packages will contain the skimmer, an informational and instructional sheet about the skimmer, and Water Reporter information. Each interaction with a fellow boater is an opportunity to be an ambassador for Friends of Casco Bay while promoting good practices that are good for the Bay. This will require a conversation with that boater to explain how to use the skimmer and how to become a Water Reporter. We will plan to distribute the materials at a future CEC meeting and then we will follow up at subsequent meetings for updates. By sharing the name and contact information of the boater(s) you spoke to (as well as the story of how your interaction went), staff can follow up with them about Water Reporter and using the skimmers. For those who may take part, please think ahead on who might be the right people in your circles of influence.

Joanie suggested we consider selling fenders with our logo on them, because they are very visible to boaters. There are some that are made from recycled plastics. Another option may be covers for fenders, but those likely use unnecessary plastic.

30th Anniversary Event, Wednesday, April 29, 2020, 5-8 pm, Ocean Gateway

Location: Ocean Gateway, Portland

Date: April 29, 2020

Peggy Keyser & 207 Thanks to Joanie, Cathy will have a 5-minute spot on 207 in mid-April. Will and Cathy had a great conversation with Peggy to set this up.

Program update: Cathy has secured the Portland Fire Boat and a Coast Guard Vessel for the day of the event. Staff will continue to work through the order of the program for the event, making sure there is time for recognition of the last 30 years and, most importantly, the launch of the campaign. You may have noticed the language in the save-the-date email set the stage for the campaign.

Timeline of accomplishments: Mary created a comprehensive list of the organization's accomplishments. Cathy shared that it was amazing to read through. We are discussing the design and ways to present it both at the event and how it can be used for the website. Mary also sorted through boxes and boxes of old photographs, a few of which will be incorporated.

Pat suggested having a geographical display of the Casco Bay watershed. This would help to communicate that a drop of water in Bethel ends up in Casco Bay and answer the question a lot of people ask about the difference between the Gulf of Maine and Casco Bay.

Bud asked that Staff be careful about over-educating at the event. This is a celebration. The thought process that has gone into planning this event has been incredible. The result of meticulous planning is that we make these events look easy. When the final production is done, Bud hopes the Board and Staff will examine the effectiveness of all these ideas and identify what worked and what didn't. Whatever worked should be shared with other Waterkeepers. Will pointed out that we debrief after every event, and that we are always looking for Board Members' honest feedback so we can improve future events. Use your analytical eye during the event and please be honest about the event in the Community Engagement Committee meeting afterward.

Seb reminded everyone: The focus of this event is the kickoff of the campaign. Celebrate the past, but focus on where we need to go. We hope that the timeline and testimonials support this goal.

Testimonials—update & discussion

Steve, Sandy, Seb, Bud, and Malcolm all shared their experiences in reaching out to various supporters for testimonials about our organization and our work. Each appreciated the experience. They had great exchanges and learned about the organization. Joanie will be reaching out to Maddy Corson for her testimonial.

Some key phrases from Sandy's conversations: laser-focused, raise awareness, presence on the ground, valuable, hands on, nobody else doing what we do, guardians, voice of the Bay, advocacy data, science, activism, essential, resource, passionate, practical, connect, shift the needle, raises issues.

Seb shared that as someone who has done a lot of surveys, it was great to see that different people focused on different things, which is unlike most of his survey experience where he hears the same responses repeatedly. Bud shared about his great experience with Eddie Woodin. Malcolm shared that he had a delightful conversation with Joe Payne.

Thank you to all who took part. This third-party validation is going to be great.

Steve mentioned two items we should be aware of, and keep an eye on:

- LD2033 An Act To Ensure Proper Closure of Oil Terminal Facilities.
- Northeastern University's announcement of a graduate education and research campus in Portland, ME. They are taking students this summer and the plan is to have temporary facilities for 2 years and to have a permanent residence in 3 years.

<https://news.northeastern.edu/2020/01/27/northeastern-partners-with-entrepreneur-david-roux-to-launch-the-roux-institute-at-northeastern-in-portland-maine/>