

Friends of Casco Bay  
Minutes – Board Meeting  
Online via Zoom  
Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 4 pm

Board: Malcolm Poole, President, Steve Bushey, Mark Green, David Kaufman, Pat Ianni, Peter LeBourdais, Sandy Marsters, Althea Bennett McGirr, Seb Milardo, Tollef Olson, Derek Pelletier, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Ann Thayer, Lori Thayer, and Jack Thomas  
Staff: Sara Biron, Mike Doan, Ivy Frignoca, Sarah Lyman, Cathy Ramsdell

**Malcolm welcomed** everyone to the online meeting. He shared the news that Derek Pelletier will be resigning from the Board at the end of June 2020, and expressed appreciation for the Board's rapid approval for us to move forward with obtaining a Payroll Protection Plan loan via SBA, and funds are now in hand.

**Baykeeper Update – Ivy**

**Maine Climate Council** work continues, as the Governor does not want to delay the process, despite challenges of public outreach occurring through virtual meetings; all working groups are moving toward recommending 4-6 strategies. Ivy has made 2 presentations, one to the Environmental Funders Network and one to Casco Bay Regional Shellfish Collaborative.

These presentations are preparing us to deliver an online interactive presentation about the Climate Council's work, as a Casco Bay Matters online event, scheduled for 4/30 at 1 p.m. Attendance will be limited to 100, and Board members will have first dibs on registration, which will go out to them 24 hours ahead of everyone else. The presentation will last 15 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of Q&A using the chat feature.

**The East End Waste Water Treatment Facility** manager, Scott Firmin, has expressed concerns to Ivy about chemical supply line disruptions and shortages, in the face of the pandemic. He contacted her to report that, as a result of the inventory concerns as well as the need for staff to stay 6 feet apart, they will not be able to start the Nitrogen reduction process this spring as planned, since the process requires the use of more chemicals than when they are not de-nitrifying (cold weather season). Nitrogen reductions are part of the "fact sheet" in their discharge permit, not a formal part of the permit itself, and therefore not enforceable. All parties are dissatisfied about this, there is confidence that the process will be reactivated at the next opportunity.

**Executive Director Update – Cathy**

Cathy reiterated the appreciation for the speed with which the Board responded to the SBA PPP loan authorization request. Staff are working from home, dialing back the work load while using online meetings to stay in touch and keep things moving. Ivy is attending a lot of meetings via online platforms. Sarah reports that we have reached over 1,000 posts from our Water Reporters, a real milestone, and she is preparing online training. Fundraising continues with membership mailings and the preparation of the annual fund mailing, both being done differently in light of the need to minimize the number of hands that handle the mailing. We have recruited two summer interns, one undergraduate and the other an extern from the law school.

Earth Day's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is tomorrow; Cathy will be in a short video piece that will be posted by the City of Portland, and she will be presenting live online twice, as part of Woodard & Curran Inc. and Woodard & Curran Foundation's Earth Day broadcast to its staff (1,000+) coast to coast (the foundation made a \$100k gift to the Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund last year).

Royal River Conservation Trust notified us that they are presenting Cathy and Friends of Casco Bay their awards for Conservation Champion; they usually chose an individual and an organization, both are coming our way. We will send out announcements when we know more about the timing.

We are exploring various options/alternatives for our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, since we had to cancel our Ocean Gateway event planned for 4/29. We are uncoupling the 30<sup>th</sup> from the public launch of the campaign, and will likely do these on separate timelines, though we are still discussing alternatives. We have reached 85.5% of our goal for the campaign. We will be moving forward with the Annual Fund in early May. Seb expressed concern about losing momentum.

We are discussing the fate of the Film Festival, as well, with no final decision yet.

Lori shared her perspective that people adjusted very quickly to the pandemic; could bode well for supporting a slower, less consumer-oriented lifestyle going forward, segue way in longer positive changes later on. Cathy shared that Staff have been contemplating changes we might carry forward later after the office re-opens, such as continuing to work from home a couple of days a week to eliminate 2 days of 8 people commuting in. She also mentioned that Staff remain sensitive to tone and timing; while there have been significant reductions in emissions, it has been at the cost of health, lives, and freedom of movement, and talking about silver linings publicly feels inappropriate at the moment.

### **Minute for the Bay**

Tolleff said kelp harvesting is underway and way up, harvested 2 tons yesterday, and growing kelp has major benefits including removing nitrogen from Bay.

Joanie in an ad for Nike, talked about Bayscaping and Ocean Acidification. Then she saw a bald eagle—it wanted its old nest on the power line. She has also noticed high and angry tides leading to a scary amount of erosion.

### **Board Consent Package**

Jack and Malcolm reported that we ended the year better than expected, even with March being a bit weaker: \$4000 surplus, expenses in line, revenues positive. It will be interesting to see how the first quarter of this new fiscal year pans out. **Motion to accept reports: motion passed unanimously.**

### **Community Engagement Report**

Sandy encouraged everyone to attend the next committee meeting, online, May 4 at 5 pm. He commended the staff for their creative adaptation to the current circumstances. He extended Mary's appreciation for all the retirement gifts. He reiterated that the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event is in flux. We are working on new communications strategies, especially using online tools. Staff appreciates feedback from the Board on posts we send. Joanie: suggested we get getting more people engaged with Water Reporter; we are working on this, including an on-line training(s) in June.

### **Open Board Topics**

Derek resigning leaves a vacancy in slate of officers. Sandy will follow up with board members about that, as he prepares his cabinet for when he becomes President.

Format of Meetings: 4 pm start better, later zoom meetings are harder. Zoom going pretty well, though it stifles contributions a bit as opposed to meeting in person; that might change as we get more used to the format. Jack was experiencing problems due to high winds. Cathy acknowledged that online platforms can be frustrating but we are grateful for having the technology.

In response to inquiries, Cathy said that new lease negotiations have been put on hold, as has hiring a new employee.

Sandy shared that both boats have been launched. Tollef suggested we put a video together. Staff are exploring various topics for short (2-5 minutes) videos to share online with the public. We are all itching to get out on the water.

### **Board Debrief**

*Althea*: zoom use seems to be getting better, but prevents you from speaking thoughts when you have them. Tides have been crazy. *Sandy*: personally doing well under the circumstances; great to see everyone, misses seeing people in person; staff and Cathy doing terrific work. *Ann*: Like zoom meeting, makes easier to get to community engagement meeting. Had to leave that meeting because tree came down and hit the porch! As we re-enter office, we should rethink requirements as we rethink how much time we will spend in the office. A lot of people look for osprey returning, might be good for Water Reporter. *Dave*: fine with zoom, thinks it works. Lobstermen not going out because only fetching \$5, not \$10. What does that do to fishery? *Derek*: fan of zoom, think it works and likes that he can see everyone, and appreciates the opportunity to think of topics other than virus. *Jack*: looking forward to getting together, and will improve tech skills. Never seen so many periwinkles. Boat going in first week in May. *Joanie*: like zoom, good way to get together for time being. Need to start running with phone because of all the sights she is seeing. In favor of postponing 30<sup>th</sup> until can do in-person event. *Lori*: zoom better than google. Thanks to staff for working hard. Kite surfers on Sunday-beautiful site. *Mark*: zoom working well but doing meetings in person works better for him. *Pat*: zoom working well; will share ideas for more virtual meetings with members. *Peter*: erosion and high water; just permitted by state to do living shoreline. Starting in two weeks and will monitor. *Seb*: hates zoom, misses interpreting faces and emotions. Doesn't want to loose momentum on Climate Change Fund. *Steve*: these changes do warrant reconsidering space considerations and perhaps coworking space moving forward. Still has stenciling kit; he can keep it and keep on stenciling. *Tollef*: Stay in good health everyone. Happy to help Peter with living shoreline proposal.

Coffee meetings—still need to think of who to invite? Follow up with Malcolm.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30.