

Friends of Casco Bay
Board Meeting – Minutes
Online via Zoom
Tuesday, September 21, 2021, 5:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Board: Sandy Marsters (President), Steve Bushey, Deb Debiegun, Mark Green, Bud Higgins, Pat Ianni, David Kaufman, Seb Milardo, Malcolm Poole, Joan Samuelson, Lori Thayer, Jack Thomas
Staff: Sara Biron, Will Everitt, Ivy Frignoca, Robby Lewis-Nash, Sarah Lyman

Welcome – President Sandy Marsters

Sandy began the meeting at 5:32 p.m. with a Minute for the Bay. Seb shared that the Bay has been spectacular amid the late summer, early fall weather. David noted he has seen a lot of sturgeon recently.

Board President Update – President Sandy Marsters

Sandy announced that he, Pat, Seb, Sarah, Will, and Robby are reinitiating the process to schedule and plan an equity workshop for the board. This planning process was intended to take place over the summer and was pushed back due to the Executive Director transition process.

Sandy shared that he and Seb will meet with staff tomorrow to discuss the character of the next Executive Director. At the next board meeting, the staff and board will discuss and integrate their desired characteristics for our next Executive Director. In early October, we will have a first draft of the job description, with plans to advertise the position nationally. Sandy was clear that we are not rushing this process, but that we are trying to get the window open for as many strong candidates to apply as possible. A search committee meeting will be scheduled in mid-October. From there on out, the search committee will meet every two to three weeks depending on the workload. January 2 will be the deadline for resumes. Sandy hopes to begin interviewing candidates in January.

Action Item: Board Consent Package (minutes and financials)

Malcolm moved and David seconded, to accept the consent agenda as presented. *PASSED*

Community Engagement Committee – Committee Chair Seb Milardo

Seb shared that the Community Engagement Committee's previous meeting focused on our climate change communications and how they could be improved. Attendees split into small groups for discussion and then came back together to share ideas. Seb said this format was very successful, and then shared a few ideas from each group.

- We should take our time to evaluate our ideas and opinions, and be ready to act quickly when necessary; we aspire to be a nimble snail.
- A news page on our website could serve as a trusted source of information for the community. The title, Message in a Bottle, was suggested for the page.
- Videos, field trips, and other means of communication could help us expand our reach beyond our current membership.

- Data from our Continuous Monitoring Stations should be shared more frequently. We could ask outside experts such as fishermen or marine resources staff to speak about our data.
- We should work on engaging our major donors, especially in-person.
- A monthly column in a local newspaper could help increase our public visibility and the reach of our communications.

Seb shared that the Community Engagement Committee also debriefed past events. The group reached a consensus that tabling at the boat show was not worthwhile because it required a lot of planning and was poorly attended. Cathy's party was widely agreed to be a huge success. Sarah and Ivy hosted a great meetup for Water Reporters in early September, where volunteers got to know each other and learn more about the Bay from staff; more meetups for Water Reporters will be organized in the future.

Interim Director Update – *Interim Director Will Everitt*

Will shared that he is honored to serve as our Interim Director and that our work is moving forward smoothly. Our financials are in order, and Will will continue to review reconciliations of our bank accounts every month and prepare monthly financials with Jeff. Will said that Cathy submitted our Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness paperwork to KeyBank, and that we will soon be able to recognize our second \$118k loan as a grant. Year-end giving is approaching and staff are working on our annual fund mailing, fall newsletter, and annual report. Will said staff hopes to deliver annual fund letters to board members for notes in early October. Board members will soon receive a new board contact sheet with Deb's information and annual conflict of interest forms to fill out. Staff will be reviewing progress on our operating plan, and Will will report back to the board with any course corrections. Will emphasized that the board-staff relationship is more important than ever amidst the transition, and that he and Sandy have been working to ensure the board is more engaged in our work. Mike and Ivy will be inviting board members to join them for seasonal sampling, especially next year as field season is winding down. Staff will also be preparing talking points about our advocacy positions for board members to help increase clarity about public comments, testimony, and other advocacy work. Will ended his update by thanking staff and board members for shouldering additional work during the transition.

Sandy expressed his gratitude for Will's update, adding that the talking points are appreciated. Pat agreed that the talking points or "cheat sheets" are excellent.

Strategic Plan Check-In – *Board as group, introduced by Interim Director Will Everitt*

Sandy announced that the board will review the strategic plan with staff to help them consider how they will implement our strategic goals in the next operating plan. Will explained that unlike our operating plan, which is an extensive document, the strategic plan is somewhat the opposite because it is concise and elegant. Will summarized the goals of the strategic plan as improving our communication with the community, increasing our program capacity and science work, and strengthening our organization.

Malcolm asked Will to clarify what he wants out of this conversation. Will responded that he wants to hear from the board how we are doing on meeting the goals of the strategic plan, and specifically

where the staff may need to do more work to meet those goals. Will added that he and Sandy wanted to discuss the strategic plan because these topics will inform the Executive Director hiring process – it is an opportunity to take a big picture view of our work. Malcolm responded that we should raise more money, have more *Friends*, and turn the needle up in Augusta. Malcolm observed that the board could not get climate change on the strategic plan ten years ago and that climate change will likely be all over our next strategic plan. David commented that Robby's addition to staff has improved our communications. David suggested that we could do a better job of growing our membership, noting that we become more influential in places like Augusta when we have a much larger membership. Seb said that the communications and science goals have been met, and that we could do a better job of strengthening the organization and building collaborative relationships. Pat said she likes this process of reviewing the strategic plan, noting it is easier to grapple with than our long operating plans. She noted that reviewing the strategic plan is also useful as we are hiring a new Executive Director and deciding who we want to be as an organization moving forward. Pat thought we have stayed the course on most of these goals, and agreed with David that we should grow our membership, but that she does not see that goal outlined in the strategic plan; that goal should be added to our next strategic plan. Pat said she has always wanted to represent the whole watershed, not only the coast. Will commented that growing our membership is also important for our future financial stability. Will shared that a major part of the strategic plan was to raise awareness about how the Bay is changing, and that we began hosting Casco Bay Matters events and improved our communications. Sandy expressed that he is unclear on the boundaries of our region: are we looking to engage the whole watershed? Pat replied that because there are no other Waterkeepers in Maine we can feel less constrained to the boundaries of our watershed; we also know that water and air currents travel in and out of the watershed and the Bay. Will said we have historically focused on the towns surrounding the Bay, and that our advocacy is leading us up the watershed as we begin to focus on issues like stormwater. Will noted that we have not yet focused on cultivating more inland donors. Ivy said there are two other organizations that are thinking about starting Waterkeeper organizations in Maine. Ivy added that we have also expanded our reach by offering our expertise to other water quality organizations, like Friends of the Presumpscot River which is trying to upgrade the river's water quality designation from class C to class B. Deb shared that now seems like the perfect time to move our work upstream, noting that freshwater and saltwater are inextricably connected. David expressed his support for moving our work and membership up the watershed. Will added that our membership has grown in the past five years, just not as an order of magnitude bigger. Pat noted that we lost opportunities when COVID struck and we cancelled many of our 30th anniversary celebrations. Seb agreed that growing membership is important, and that he thinks we should not underestimate the value of cultivating relationships with other people and organizations, like Mike and Ivy are doing with Friends of the Presumpscot River. Others look to us because they respect us, and these relationships offer sources of power and influence. Malcolm said he still does not know what Will and Ivy are looking for in this conversation.

Baykeeping Update – Casco Baykeeper Ivy Frignoca

Ivy shared that it has been a busy summer and that she will limit her update to three topics. Ivy gave an update of our successful appeal of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit to the Board of Environmental Protection (BEP), as reported at the summer meeting. The BEP ordered the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to include a requirement in the permit that

municipalities develop and adopt an ordinance that requires the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques for new development and redevelopment, and a requirement to adopt three best management practices to begin restoring water quality to impaired waters to which the MS4 discharges.

The municipalities were most concerned about the LID ordinance. In recognition of their concerns, we agreed to a two-year window of time for municipalities to adopt the LID ordinance. We also agreed to include an appendix that sets forth the minimum elements to be included in the ordinance as potential LID. Neither of these concessions are required by the BEP order.

This is a very important incremental victory to reduce stormwater pollution. It greatly reduces stormwater pollution within MS4 boundaries but not outside of them. As an example, Ivy shared a map of the areas of Cumberland and Yarmouth that are covered by the MS4 permit, adding that only urbanized areas with over 50,000 people are affected (the Greater Portland region, for example, but not Brunswick).

The next step is to get the state to revise their Chapter 500, State of Maine Stormwater Management Rules. We started this process by helping to draft and pass a legislative resolve that directs DEP to revise Chapter 500 and other land use regulations. We are waiting for DEP to publish the time table for that work and will advocate for the process to build upon and parallel the municipal efforts.

Sandy asked Ivy to clarify the 50,000 population threshold requirement. Ivy responded that when an urbanized area has over 50,000 people according to the US Census it is covered under the MS4 permit. An urbanized area can cross town lines and municipal boundaries. In Maine, these urbanized areas include greater Portland, greater Lewiston-Auburn, greater Bangor-Brewer and municipalities in southern Maine. Seb asked Ivy to clarify how this win affects the Bay. Ivy said that the goal of using LID is to mimic the hydrology of any site prior to development. This can help to correct past harm (during redevelopment) and future harm (from development) to the watershed. Seb asked to clarify how else the permit helps make stormwater cleaner. Ivy said that another aspect of the MS4 permit requires stormwater to be regularly tested for contaminants (mainly bacteria), and if there is a contamination issue it must be investigated and removed. Pat asked Ivy if LID is codified in Maine law. Ivy said the MS4 permit includes a definition of LID, but that on appeal it was agreed to add the state guidance of LID from a stormwater manual as an appendix to the permit. Jack commented that this is great news, and that Robby and Ivy should be working together to communicate this to the public; that way we can help create buy-in from the community for this process, especially among developers. That work is underway.

Ivy's second update focused on offshore wind. The state will soon submit an application to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to develop a research array to study the effects of offshore wind. In a concurrent process, the State has set up an Offshore Wind Advisory Council to develop a roadmap for commercial offshore wind development. Ivy is serving on the Environment and Wildlife Working Group of the Advisory Council. Ivy shared a map of the area where the state hopes to locate the research array, which was based on feedback from fishermen, scientists, and others. At present, the

only connection sites for the research array are at the decommissioned Maine Yankee site in Wiscasset or Wyman Station in Casco Bay. As to commercial offshore wind development, Ivy said that because of concerns raised by lobstermen, the governor proposed and the legislature passed a ban on all offshore wind development in state waters. All offshore wind development will be in federal waters, which may limit our influence over development.

Malcolm asked why we would not be preparing for a connection at Wyman Station. Ivy agreed and has been asking about that during working group meetings. Pat asked how development in federal waters will impact our influence over cable routes. Ivy responded that all cables passing through state waters will require state review and that she is researching this issue. Lori asked how wind power compares to solar in terms of energy production. Steve responded that a single turbine produces the power generated by approximately 20 acres of solar panels. Steve added that if the power comes to shore at Wyman station, there will be all sorts of changes coming to Casco Bay with respect to business and development.

Ivy shared a brief update on the Willard Beach oil spill: that she visited the site during the cleanup and was very impressed with the quality of the cleanup.

Sandy thanked Ivy for her update and congratulated her on the MS4 win. Sandy adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.