

**Friends of Casco Bay**  
**Environmental Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**  
**Minutes, September 11, 2023 4-5 p.m. (Meeting held via Zoom)**

**In attendance:** Board: Pat Ianni, Chair, Deb Debiegun, Sandy Marsters Staff: Will Everitt, Sara Freshley

**1. Updates from staff and board committee members**

Will updated committee members that staff will be inviting our supporters to share their [pronouns](#) if they wish for our events, name tags, etc. Our goal is to make people feel welcome and comfortable, with no assumptions. Pat asked if this new time (4 p.m. instead of 3 p.m.) worked for everyone? Everyone said they were good with the new time and Pat said she will check in with Ivy when she returns to be sure she can make this new time.

**2. Revised EJDEI statement and process**

Will and Pat revised the statement based on specific comments we received from board and staff since July 24. Deb shared that she liked the succinctness, the connections between environmental justice and our work, and the actions. Deb shared that they liked, too, that we share our definitions of EJDEI. The references to the Operating Plan and the Strategic plan will not be shared. We fixed a few grammatical errors. There was a discussion about removing our analysis of the linking of environmental injustices and inequities to uneven power structures and systemic racism. The Committee, as a whole, felt it important to have this analysis be part of the statement. Committee members shared that this statement is part of a process and learning journey and that we can come back, update it, and evaluate where we are.

The Committee unanimously approved the new statement (version 9) and will strongly encourage its acceptance by the board at our September 19 Board meeting. We will share the statement via our website, replacing the now-outdated statement from 2021. We are open to other ideas for use/presentation of this statement going forward.

**3. Discussion about our prioritized work**

At the last meeting the committee prioritized our work. The committee began a conversation about what areas we (the committee) want to focus on next.

- Building relationships with new partners/new communities

Will shared information about a recent meeting with [Cross Cultural Community Services](#) (attended by Will, Sara F, and Pat) and next steps there. We are moving forward with an MOU on working with Cross Cultural Community Services-to provide more DEI training (perhaps next Spring) to Friends of Casco Bay, Board and Staff, advising us on our DEI work, and connecting us to diverse leaders and organizations led by people of color within our community.

- Diversifying our board

How do we want to begin the process of diversifying our board? What recommendations should we make to the board? There was a discussion about this process relative to the board recruitment process that we are discussing at the September board meeting. The committee discussed that we keep two seats “open” for recruiting diverse members, acknowledging that in order to be more diverse, we cannot simply add more white board members to get to our “ideal size” of 18 board members. Pat shared that she is not worried about being “too large,” that if we were 20 members instead of 18, that is not a hindrance to our work.

- Training and learning

What should new board members know about our EJDEI work? How should we train them? Ongoing training for all of us? Deb shared that providing new board members the history of the formation of this committee and the background of our most recent statement might be enough and then they will learn more as they go forward. Will shared that perhaps we should include the [Press Herald on the history of Malaga Island](#) here in Casco Bay. The committee thought this was a good idea. Pat suggested we may also want to include our comments in support of tribal sovereignty.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 pm.