

Friends of Casco Bay
Community Engagement Committee – Minutes
Hybrid Meeting: In-person at New L.L. Bean Headquarters and Online via Teams
Monday, August 7, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

In attendance

Board: Kirsten Piacentini (Committee Chair), David Kauffman, Pat Ianni, Seb Milardo, Sandy Marsters

Staff: Sara Freshley, Sarah Lyman

Welcome – *Kirsten Piacentini, Committee Chair*

Kirsten asked the group the check-in question: Share a highlight from last week's members meeting.

Committee brainstorm: Freeport Oyster Bar is hosting an event for us on Saturday, August 26. How can people leave the event feeling connected to our work/Casco Bay?

Background Information:

Freeport Oyster Bar is hosting for Casco Bay Day, they are doing much of the set up and organization of the event. There will be oysters, appetizers, silent auction, and live music. Tickets are \$75 and one drink comes with ticket. All proceeds come to *Friends* after costs are covered, which are expected to be \$35/ticket. The owners Ken Sparta and Thomas Henning are reached out to us wanting to do this. We will promote and sell the tickets through our website. They will promote it as well. Will was clear that we are not automatically pro aquaculture, but that we are supportive of what is good for the Bay.

There was discussion of the motivation for people to go. Food, music, supporting the Bay. Is there more motivation for the Oyster Bar than for us? For us this is a fundraiser and a friend raiser.

The discussion moved to ticket price and whether we can charge a deal for a couple or a cheaper price, or a cheaper price overall. Ideas ranged from \$35 a ticket to \$125 for a couple? The discussion centered on whether the price point was too high. Most people agreed it was.

How can people leave the event feeling connected to our work/Casco Bay?

- Map displays
- Pat suggested Will speak or Thomas speak about 1/3 of the way in
- Screen for a slideshow?

Do we want to pursue this over all? And if so, should we change the date? As well as a price point? It was also agreed that August Saturdays are hard and a lower price point may encourage more people to attend.

Debrief of our summer events and help us shape future events

We Are Water: Friends of Casco Bay Members Annual Meeting

The discussion started off with how engaged and passionate volunteers were. Then it moved to the Program itself. Folks thought that there was too much mingle time before the actual program. The program was great, we should get outside speakers every year and use this as a way to engage more folks with our work and Annual Meeting. Board members also requested some greeter line suggestions for going up to members and starting a conversation. The Committee thought that the photo contest went great. Some feedback was that it would be nice to see the photo matched with the winner up front.

House Party in Cumberland Foreside hosted by Jack and Susan Thomas

Sarah started with some numbers. 85 guests attended, including board and staff. 350 households were invited, 100 RSVP'd yes. We acquired at least 8 new donors and received 35 gifts, totalling \$7,365. Sarah explained that this number will grow as people who could not come continue to donate. This number does include board members and hosts if those gifts were given in relation to this event. Sarah confirmed that this number is in line with our expectations. This event grew our list in Cumberland Foreside a very significant amount.

Water Reporter and Community Engagement Events, including:

Water Reporter Kick Off Event, Water Reporter Salt Marsh Restoration event, Water Reporter Invasive Species event, Presumpscot Moratorium Celebration, Easy Honey Coastal Cleanup

- Kick off event had most folks
- We will evaluate turn out compared to the times the events were offered
- Pat went to 3 of 5 and said they were fabulous
- Lots of new and returning folks
- Folks want more opportunities to volunteer
- Ones with speakers are a draw
- Trying to offer at different locations as well

Film Fest Raffle Items

Sarah will send an updated email about the raffle inviting folks to share what they have gotten.

David asked Sarah about Bayscaping one pagers, Sarah will ensure David has them.

Kirsten adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.