

**Friends of Casco Bay**  
**Community Engagement Committee Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 7, 5:30-6:30 p.m.**  
**Meeting in person at GMRI Conference Room and**  
**via online Zoom**

Attendance, board: Kirsten Piacentini (chair), Pat Ianni, Sandy Marsters, Seb Milardo, Malcolm Poole (via Zoom)

Staff: Will Everitt, Sara Freshley, Sarah Lyman

Kirsten welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Event Debrief: Film Festival for Casco Bay**

We held a debrief to collect ideas to improve our events moving forward. Kirsten asked each attendee to share at least one example of what worked well and what we could do better or differently. The responses included:

- Best Film Fest yet! The event so much fun. The event felt flawless. Sandy bought tickets for friends and neighbors who also thought it was fantastic. It was a larger audience than last year/normal compared to pre-pandemic, which helped create that energy.
- Remove Membership and Bar form upstairs because the number of people up there is too low.
- Malcolm shared that Patti Poole helped with parking and most folks did not know how to complete the process.
- Shorten the event by one film. Get folks out by 6 p.m. Clarify the parking outcome.
- This was the best Film Fest we have had. Films were good but the atmosphere was what really worked. It was well organized. The oysters and kelp were great additions.
- Parking is an unneeded impedance.
- Hand out pencils with programs so folks can complete them throughout the films.
- This was our 14<sup>th</sup> Film Fest and there was concern about “fest exhaustion” as Maine Outdoor Film Fest hosted a number of events around the state before ours, but it was not an issue for sales.
- Our lineup is different from a traditional MOFF event.
- Parking is an issue.
- The event comes together well in set up. The volunteer orientation worked really well!
- The event felt 30 minutes too long, cut films.
- The buzz was great! People loved the seaweed and oysters.
- Move the trash barrels right at entrance of the auditorium.
- Have multiple water stations not at Bar.
- Maybe add something sweet?
- Will shared that part of going over time was because filmmaker Max Armstrong could attend the event, which was not originally part of the plan. Our goal this year was to make the event more festive and hosting Max was one way to do that.
- The event was a wonderful marketing advertisement of Friends of Casco Bay, because folks leave feeling good about *Friends*.
- Sarah shared some metrics of the event:
  - Sponsorship: \$15,600 (\$10,000 budgeted)
  - Event Tickets: \$10,865 (360 sold)
  - Raffle Tickets: \$3,705 (741 tickets)
  - Gross: \$29,715 (\$22,000 budgeted)
  - At least 335 in attendance, 413 tickets accounted for, at least 20 new to us people purchased tickets plus new guests.

### **3. Update on Water Reporter**

Will and Sara shared that we gave our new app wish list to The Commons, the creators of the original/current Water Reporter app. They can meet ~85% of the wish list for \$7,000. Program, Community, and Communications Staff met today to talk about the vision for the program moving forward and discuss the options presented by The Commons for a new app. Our next steps are meeting with partners with observation programs to better understand and evaluate what apps they use. We are also meeting with tech experts to vet The Commons's proposal and help us navigate the decision making process. The proposed \$7,000 would cover the buildout and allows us to trial it with volunteers before making final changes. If we do this, overall we will have more control of the app.

### **4. Reminder about Friends, Neighbors, and Colleagues Gift Membership Program**

Sarah asked who are some friends, neighbors, and/or colleagues you think *should* be *Friends* of the Bay? We will give them a gift membership! Board Members are asked to think of five to ten names of people who should be members. The requested deadline is November 30. Email them to Sarah Lyman, [slyman@cascobay.org](mailto:slyman@cascobay.org).

At this time, we just need names, but you can share addresses if you like. Staff will check if they are currently members. If they are not, we will send them a gift membership in December. There is no cost to Board Members. A year after a person receives their gift membership, we will follow up with them and invite them to continue to be a member with us by giving a membership donation.

There is are no criteria for the gift memberships — there are simply circles of people that you know that our organization does not but would like to.

Sandy will send a reminder this week to board members ahead of the board meeting challenging people to think of at least 10 people!

### **5. Donor Appreciation Event, Tuesday, December 5, 5-7:30 p.m. (12 minutes)**

Staff shared the invitation list for the Donor Appreciation Event at the meeting (and emailed to Zoom attendees). Sarah asked, who do you know and if you would you be willing to call, text, or email the donor to thank them for their support and encourage them to attend? We are really excited for this event and the Cumberland Club is excited to host us. The invitations were dropped in the mail today. This event is just to thank folks and give them an update about our work. There is no donation ask in the invitation. The invite list to people who have made major gifts in the last year. There will be a bar and hors d'oeuvres. We plan to have a limited bar. The plan is to have Will, Sandy, and Ivy speak at the event.

### **6. Reminder about Water Reporter Appreciation Event on Thursday, November 9**

Sara reminded those in attendance that the event is this Thursday at Maine Beer Company. We have a private room. The event is to celebrate our Water Reporters, how their work has impacted our work, and share the new directions the program is headed. To date, 56 people have RSVPed. Many folks that have RSVPed are not active Water Reporters, which bodes well for the future of the program.

Kirsten adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.