

**Project Oceanology
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2023 4:00pm**

Attendance:

BOARD MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	OFFICERS	ATTENDANCE *
Joshua Fish	Bozrah		<i>Excused</i>
Jennifer Andrews	Columbia		Present
Eleanor Mariani	Community Mbr		Present
Kate Biddle	Community Mbr		Present
Robin Harris	Community Mbr		Present
Tom Gardiner	Community Mbr		<i>Absent</i>
Lisa Veudreuil	East Lyme		<i>Absent</i>
Jason England	Groton	Treasurer	Present
Bill Linski	ISAAC		<i>Absent</i>
David Bednarz	Ledyard		<i>Excused</i>
Kathy Howard	MSMHS	Chair	<i>Excused</i>
Jenn Hills-Papetti	New London		<i>Absent</i>
Monica Swyden	NFA		<i>Absent</i>
Lisa England	Preston		Present
Laura Runkle	Salem		<i>Absent</i>
Suzanne Scorza	Sprague	Secretary	Present
Nat Trumbull	UConn		Present
Mike O'Connor	Waterford		Present
J. Andrew Ely	Project O	Ex-officio	Present
PUBLIC			
Emily de Labry	Project O		Present
Callie Scheetz	Project O		Present
Janet Farquar	New London		Present

*12 attended: 9 board members, 1 ex-officio, 2 public

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Jason England, Acting Chair. A quorum was established.
2. Reviewed minutes of September 14, 2023 meeting. **Motion to accept minutes as presented at 4:03 p.m. by Lisa England, 2nd by Dave Bednarz. Eleanor Mariani abstained. Motion Passed.**
3. Public comments: Callie Scheetz met with UConn faculty about reviving the zooplankton DNA teacher professional development program last run in 2015.
4. Chair comments: Jason England commented that he was serving today for Kathy Howard, no additional comments.

5. Executive Directors Report: Andrew Ely presented an overview of the following:
 1. Budget: Highlighted changes to budget based on pending sale of EL3 and addition of leased vessel M/V Aubrey Joy including need to add Marine Employer Liability coverage to our insurance, pending removal of EL3 from insurance once sale was complete and removal of yard work for EL3. Salary costs for summer interns (\$20K) were added under salary since they had not been previously accounted for. See Enclosure 1 to the Executive Directors report for the revised budget. **A motion to accept the revised FY24 Budget as presented was made by Mike O'Connor, 2nd by Eleanor Mariani. Vote was unanimous.** Andrew also asked Emily de Labry to briefly discuss the need to move the Project Oceanology website from Wix to a more capable platform to support our business needs and integration with additional online platforms we use. Three bids for this project have been obtained and Andrew recommended that action on this initiative be delayed while we pursue vessel replacement costs/options.
 2. Grants: Work is ongoing to resume the annual Quahog Bowl with Uconn, NOSB will provide \$4,500 in funding and the University has made the academic building available for the event which is tentatively scheduled to be held on February 3, 2024. There will not be a national event this year, only regional events. More details should be forthcoming soon.
 3. School Year Programs: EL2 and Aubrey Joy are available for on the water programs this year. Aubrey Joy can only carry a maximum of 25 students. Dave Bednarz shared his experience on Aubrey Joy, a successful fishing program for his class. Dave noted that the Aubrey Joy Captain was very helpful, had excellent knowledge of where to go to catch fish, and that the equipment he provided for the students was top notch.
 5. Summer Camps: Summer Camp registration will begin in mid-December and a schedule will be forthcoming next month.
 6. Staff: The Grasso Tech interns are making a big difference in our seawater lab, the animals are receiving excellent care and our tank maintenance has improved dramatically. The Volunteer Program is now live on our website and being advertised. Ev Brown was instrumental in testing our volunteer registration process online and has officially returned to Project Oceanology in a volunteer capacity.
 7. Administration/Logistics: Something Fishy, Inc. is returning to Project O to repair seals between tank dividers in our new aquarium in early November. A commercial plumber has visited Project O to evaluate our seawater pump house and will be contracted to repair the piping and install new pumps and motors in the pump house. DEEP has renewed our permit to take seawater into our lab and discharge wastewater from the lab. The renewal process modified our permit to make it easier for us to monitor and report our discharge. The new permit is essentially 2 permits. One to divert seawater through the system and a second permit to

discharge water from our tanks. The monitoring and reporting now require that we measure water quality in one tank as a representation of all of our discharged wastewater in lieu of monitoring water at the outfall pipe outside of our building.

8. Outreach: A invasive sea slug was identified on one of the abandoned lobster traps we recovered, a press release is forthcoming from the Maritime Aquarium on this discovery.

6. Committee Reports: Committee membership was reviewed and volunteers were requested to fill vacancies. **A motion to accept the committee members was made at 4:38 p.m. by Lisa England, 2nd by Robin Harris.** The committee members appear below (Andrew Ely serves as Ex-officio and Recording Secretary for all committees):
 - a. Executive Committee: Kathy Howard (Chair), Jason England, Suzanne Scorza
 - b. Personnel Committee: Nat Trumbull (Chair), Eleanor Mariani, Lisa England
 - c. Programs Committee: Josh Fish (Chair), Kate Biddle, Suzanne Scorza
 - d. Budget Committee: Tom Gardiner (Chair), Robin Harris, Jason England
 - e. Vessel Search Committee: Ian Morrison (Chair), Mike O'Connor, Suzanne Scorza, Kathy Howard, Jason England.
 - i. The Vessel Search Committee met on October 25th, Ian Morisson provided a brief overview of the committees work.
 1. One potential vessel, the M/V Gulfstar in Tarpon Springs, FL has been identified as a potential vessel for Project Oceanology. A survey of this vessel has been scheduled.
 2. Vessels are being identified by Andrew, Ian, and our Broker – Captain Pete Fisher. Vessels be categorized as a T-Boat (65' or less in documented length that are capable of carrying ~60 passengers).
 3. Once a vessel has been identified the committee will discuss the potential merits of the vessel for our use. If a vessel has potential a survey will be conducted of the vessel by a certified surveyor. Once the results of the survey are received the committee will review the report.
 4. If a vessel meets our criteria and has a satisfactory survey we will engage the U.S. Coast Guard and JMS Naval Architects for opinions on the vessels ability to obtain a COI for our purposes.
 5. A visit to the vessel to examine the vessel in operation and out of the water will then be scheduled.
 6. If all tests are satisfactory and we have U.S. Coast Guard concurrence with our plan the committee will make a recommendation to the Board for a vessel purchase.
 - a. Note: The budget committee will work concurrently on funding options for purchase and refurbishment of the vessel.

7. The following schedule was established for upcoming board meetings (to be held at 4:00 p.m.):
 - a. November 16, 2023
 - b. February 8, 2024
 - c. March 7, 2024

8. **A motion to adjourn was made at 4:43 p.m. by Robin Harris, 2nd by Lisa England. Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Scorza, Secretary