

**Project Oceanology
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2024 - 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		<i>Absent</i>
Tom Gardiner	Community Mbr		Present
Lisa Vaudreuil	East Lyme		Present
Jason England	Groton	Treasurer	Present
Bill Linski	ISAAC		<i>Absent</i>
David Bednarz	Ledyard		<i>Absent</i>
Kathy Howard	MSMHS	Chair	Present
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			
Lesley de Labry	Project O		Present

*13 present including 12 board members

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:01p.m. by Kathy Howard, Chair. A quorum was established.
2. Reviewed minutes of April 18, 2024 meeting. **Motion to accept minutes as presented at 4:02 p.m. by Lisa Vaudreuil/2nd Mike O'Connor. Unanimous.**
3. Public comments: None.
4. Chairman's remarks to the Board – Chair, Kathy Howard, thanked everyone for being present and engaged during a busy time of the school year. An evaluation for the Executive Director and save the date for the June meeting including the board/staff annual dinner will be coming out shortly.
5. Executive Director's report – *Budget/Finance*: Reviewed investment account performance noting strength of investment account over the past year which has experienced market growth of \$67K.
Grant Activities: Reviewed grants that provide funds for camp tuition assistance.

With these grants we provide families on state or federal aid programs 80% tuition assistance and others with need 30%. If there is demonstrated need beyond these levels we increase the level of award. There are some exceptions, the ARPA grant from the Town of Groton pays 90% tuition assistance for Groton residents. We are providing over \$11K in funding through the APRAP grant this year, about \$1.9K remains to be handed out in that program this year. Finally, when we apply for tuition assistance funds we request to reserve unexpended funds from this years applications to provide funding to families for the next camp year who apply early; this helps mitigate the delay in award tuition assistance as many of these programs award funds in late April or May.

We have completed and successfully submitted our applications for \$750K in Congressionally Directed Spending through Senators Murphy and Blumenthal for new small boats and equipment and \$960K in Community Program Funding through Congressman Courtney's office to purchase a research vessel.

We are also working on a Community Impact Fund application through the state; \$250K planning grant to design the next generation Enviro-Lab and Small boats, completing an engineering study for replacement of the blue shed, and exam our business plan.

Summer Camp: Camp is filling up earlier each year based on a shift in how we market camp programs. This allows us to bring more youth to camp each year. Over three years we have increased from 300+ campers to almost 500 per summer.

Outreach: Earlier this month we met with the producer of a children's show, "Poppi's Plante" and will be filming an educational segment featuring Project O next month.

6. Committee Membership and Reports:

- a. Executive Committee n/a
- b. Personnel Committee - n/a
- c. Program Committee - n/a
- d. Budget Committee - n/a
- e. Vessel Search Committee - n/a

7. Nominations for Officers and Community Members: Nominations were made from the floor. After brief discussion the following were nominated:

Officers: Chair - Kathy Howard; Treasurer - Jason England; Secretary - Kate Biddle. Suzanne Scorza (current Secretary) will be taking a one year sabbatical and intends to return the following year.

Community Members: Kate Biddle, Tom Gardiner, and Eleanor Mariani all expressed interest in another term. Andrew will check with Robin Harris who was not present to see if she would like to stay for another year.

8. Executive Session for business matters: **Motion to enter Executive Session for business matters at 4:28 p.m. by Suzanne Scorza/2nd by Jason England. Unanimous. Motion to come out of Executive Session with no motions to be filed at 4:57 p.m by Lisa Vaudreuil/2nd by Mike O'Connor. Unanimous.**

9. The board confirmed the next meeting date, June 7, 2024 as the last meeting for the year and will discuss next year's first meeting dates at the June meeting.

**10. Motion to Adjourn was made at 5:00p.m. by Tom Gardiner/2nd Kate Biddle.
Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Scorza, Secretary