

**Project Oceanology
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 29, 2025 - 4:30pm**

Attendance:

BOARD MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	OFFICERS	ATTENDANCE *
Joshua Fish	Bozrah		<i>Excused</i>
Jennifer Andrews	Columbia		<i>Absent</i>
Eleanor Mariani	Community Mbr		Present
Kate Biddle	Community Mbr	Secretary	Present
Robin Harris	Community Mbr		Present
Tom Gardiner	Community Mbr		Present
Annaliese Spaziano	East Lyme		Present
Jason England	Groton	Treasurer	Present
David Bednarz	Ledyard		Present
Kathy Howard	MSMHS	Chair	Present
Jenn Hills-Papetti	New London		<i>Absent</i>
Monica Swyden	NFA		Present
Lisa England	Preston		Present
Penny Phipps	Salem		<i>Excused</i>
Cassidy Corey	Sprague		Present
Nat Trumbull	UConn		Present
Mike O'Connor	Waterford		Present
J. Andrew Ely	Project O	Ex-officio	Present
PUBLIC			
Ian Morrison	Project O		Present
Cathy Fontaine	Sprague		Present

*16 present, including 14 board members

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. by Kathy Howard, Chair. A quorum was established.
2. Reviewed minutes of April 24, 2025 meeting. **Motion to accept the minutes at 4:35 p.m. by Jay England/2nd Lisa England.** Tom Gardiner and Annaliese Spaziano abstained.
3. Public comments- None.
4. Chairman's remarks to the Board – Kathy Howard, Chair, said she appreciated the high level of attendance at the hybrid board meetings and all the work of the staff during this busy year. With changes in the scientific and funding landscape she noted that Andrew is working particularly hard. Lastly, she said she is excited for Project Oceanology's strong start for another busy summer.
5. Executive Director's report –Andrew briefly highlighted the following information from his Executive Director's Report for the Board:

Budget/Finance: Project Oceanology is in a challenging financial situation but wants to keep working on obtaining additional grant support and finding more financial donors rather than raising prices.

Grant activities: Since our last board meeting, Project Oceanology has received approval for several grants totaling over \$200k to deliver programs.

School Year Programs: Amanda Fall and Andrew Ely will attend Capitol Hill Ocean Week with 2 local high school students. Special thanks to the sponsors for funding this trip, including Franklin Templeton and Mystic Financial Group.

Public events: The Prints & Pints fundraiser was a success. Andrew attended and commented that fish printing was more difficult than he realized.

Summer Camps: Historically, Project Oceanology has had approximately 300 kids attend summer camp, and for this year, over 450 kids are registered. It is also exciting to have grant funding to make camp available for more kids; tuition assistance is still available for this summer.

Administration/logistics: The seawater system is still awaiting repairs to be completed by Tucker Mechanical. Andrew and Lesley are working to replace Project Oceanology's existing medical insurance for employees this year. A new part-time custodian has been identified.

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. Election of Community Board Members and Officers for 2025-2026:

- a. Community member- Kate Biddle
- b. Community member- Tom Gardiner
- c. Community member- Robin Harris
- d. Community member- Eleanor Mariani

Motion to Accept the Community Members for 2025-2026 was made at 4:51 p.m. by Mike O'Connor/2nd Jay England. Unanimous.

- e. Chair- Kathy Howard
- f. Treasurer- Jay England
- g. Secretary-Kate Biddle

Motion to Accept the Officers was made at 4:52 p.m. by Monica Swyden/2nd Lisa England. Unanimous.

8. The board established the following meeting dates for next year:

- a. September 11, 2025
- b. October 9, 2025

- c. November 13, 2025
- d. January 29, 2026
- e. February 19, 2026
- f. March 26, 2026
- g. April 30, 2026
- h. May 28, 2026

9. Motion to Adjourn was made at 4:56 p.m. by Mike O'Connor/2nd Monica Swyden. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Biddle, Board Secretary