

**Project Oceanology
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2025 - 4:00pm**

Attendance:

BOARD MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	OFFICERS	ATTENDANCE *
Joshua Fish	Bozrah		Present
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		<i>Absent</i>
Annaliese Spaziano	East Lyme		<i>Excused</i>
Jason England	Groton	Treasurer	Present
David Bednarz	Ledyard		Present
Kathy Howard	MSMHS	Chair	Present
Jenn Hills-Papetti	New London		<i>Excused</i>
Monica Swyden	NFA		Present
Lisa England	Preston		Present
Penny Phipps	Salem		Present
Cassidy Corey	Sprague		Present
Nat Trumbull	UConn		Present
Mike O'Connor	Waterford		Present
J. Andrew Ely	Project Oceanology	Ex-officio	Present
PUBLIC			
Chris Kincaid	URI		Present
Leslie De Labry	Project Oceanology		Present
Janet Farquhar	New London		Present

*17 present including 14 board members

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Kathy Howard, Chair. A quorum was established.
2. Reviewed minutes of March 13, 2025 board meeting. Robin Harris pointed out there was a typographical error in section 5c; the word 'be' was misspelled as 'by'. **Motion to accept the amended minutes at 4:05 p.m. by Eleanor Mariani/2ndJay England. Unanimous.**
3. Public comments - None.
4. Chairman's remarks to the Board – Kathy Howard, Chair, mentioned that Project Oceanology has gone from being a 10-month program to a 12-month program each year. She is excited about the energy of the staff, the participation of the board members, and for the continuing growth of Project Oceanology.

5. Guest Presentation - Chris Kincaid, Professor of Oceanography, URI is interested in the possibility of Project Oceanology programming at URI. He is working on a NOAA funded feasibility study to reestablish safe, efficient coastal ocean access through the URI Narragansett Bay campus. An executive steering committee has been formed to assist URI's leadership in this project. Once established, this facility would serve as a new base for the URI sailing team, research, community sailing, K-12 marine science education, and public access among other things. Chris highlighted the quality of Project Oceanology's programs as the 'gold standard' in marine science education and thanked Andrew Ely for his service on the executive steering committee for this project.
6. Executive Director's report – Andrew Ely started with a discussion of the next year's proposed budget. He reviewed Enclosure (1) to the Executive Director's report in detail which provided the current year's budget and next year's proposed budget. He is still working to make the budget more favorable but overall, he expects the budget to be tight again next year. **Motion to accept the budget proposal at 5:12 p.m. by Mike O'Connor/2nd Nat Trumbull. Unanimous.**

Andrew briefly highlighted the following information for the Board:

Grant activities: Project Oceanology signed a one-year contract with Richard J. Miller & Associates Grant Consulting and are starting to work on various grant applications. RJMA is looking for grants that focus on supporting operating costs in addition to grants for program delivery. Project Oceanology has several pending grant applications; new grants we have applied for include the Clif Family Foundation and 11th Hour Racing. Project Oceanology has received approval for several grants since our last board meeting.

School Year Programs: This month Project Oceanology provided a nautical science program for Fitch High School's Navy JROTC program and hosted the first annual spring break camp.

Public events: The Paint & Sip fundraiser event earlier this month was a success. There is a Prints & Pints fundraiser scheduled for May 1st at Project Oceanology.

Summer Camps: Summer camp registrations are ongoing, and some camps already have registrations at nearly full capacity.

Staff: Debbie Sayer and Haylie Schwarzenbach gave a presentation on the Connecticut River Connections (CRC) Program at the CT River Valley Summit. The poster Haylie created for this event was well received and shared data about the CRC program and its impact.

Administration/logistics: The seawater system is awaiting repairs to be completed by Tucker Mechanical. To do this correctly will require cutting out a section of the floor. Interviews are currently ongoing to hire a new custodian.

Outreach: Staff of Project Oceanology recently attended a PD Day at Mystic Aquarium. Thanks to donations from Franklin Templeton, Mystic Financial, and LPL Financial Project Oceanology will be able to take 2 high school students to Capitol Hill Ocean Week.

7. Committee Membership and Reports:
 - a. Executive Committee – n/a
 - b. Personnel Committee – n/a

- c. Program Committee – Josh Fish reported that the new website is easier to navigate, linked to standards, and aligned with Next Generation Science Standards. He thanked the educators for all their hard work putting this together. The committee also discussed ways to recruit new member schools. This committee is still seeking an additional Board Member.
 - d. Budget Committee – Jay England said that the committee met earlier in the week to discuss next year’s proposed budget which Andrew discussed in detail.
 - e. Vessel Search Committee – n/a
8. Request for Officer and community board member nominations:
- a. Officers-- Kathy Howard, Jay England, and Kate Biddle each nominated themselves to keep the Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary positions, respectively.
 - b. Community members in attendance, Robin Harris, Elenor Mariani, and Kate Biddle would like to remain on the board for another year term.
9. The board established the following meeting dates for the remainder of 2025:
- a. May 29, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. for elections of Officers and Community Members followed by a Project Oceanology Staff & Boards of Directors Dinner and “Celebrity” Bartenders Event at Mix Restaurant & Rooftop Bar from 7 to 9 p.m. in which 10% of the sales will benefit Project Oceanology.
- 10. Motion to Adjourn was made at 5:19 p.m. by Lisa England/2nd Monica Swyden. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Biddle, Board Secretary