

**Project Oceanology
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 7, 2024 - 4:00pm**

Attendance:

BOARD MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	OFFICERS	ATTENDANCE *
Joshua Fish	Bozrah		Present
Jennifer Andrews	Columbia		<i>Excused</i>
Eleanor Mariani	Community Mbr		Present
Kate Biddle	Community Mbr		Present
Robin Harris	Community Mbr		Present
Tom Gardiner	Community Mbr		<i>Excused</i>
Lisa Vaudreuil	East Lyme		Present
Jason England	Groton	Treasurer	Present
Bill Linski	ISAAC		<i>Absent</i>
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
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			
None			

*14 present including 14 board members

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:03p.m. by Kathy Howard, Chair. A quorum was established.
2. Reviewed minutes of May 09, 2024 meeting. **Motion to accept minutes as presented at 4:05 p.m. by Mike O'Connor/2nd Eleanor Mariani. Motion Passed. Kate Biddle, Monica Swyden, and Robin Harris abstained.**
3. Public comments: None.
4. Chairman's remarks to the Board – Chair, Kathy Howard, thanked all who have been hard at work behind the scenes to 'keep the boat afloat'. She noted excellent committee work this year on a variety of challenging issues.
5. Executive Director's report – Andrew asked if there were any questions about his written report. There was one question about our involvement in the Blue Economy Coalition (under the Outreach section of the report) and what it is. Andrew discussed the coalitions' purpose to focus on industry, jobs, training, and education

to support the Blue Economy in CT. The members of the coalition intend to hold an event in July to formalize the MOU and to publicly announce our work. The coalition will meet at least quarterly to discuss progress.

Andrew also gave a report on Capitol Hill Ocean Week – a successful trip for member school students who participated. The week included youth comms and advocacy training, a meeting with Congressman Courtney and his staff, a meeting with Senator Murphy’s staff, a tour of the Capitol Building, a tour of the National Mall, a youth social, and the 2-day Capitol Hill Ocean Week conference. Students met other youth from around the country and overseas and many leaders in science and policy including Jean Flemma and Jane Lubchenco. The board would like to see planning for this trip earlier next year and consideration of having a board member attend the trip.

The board also briefly discussed summer camp. It was suggested that Project Oceanology consider accepting tuition assistance applications before camp registration. Many member teachers noted that families who have limited funds are hesitant to commit to registration until they know how much tuition assistance they will be provided.

6. Committee Membership and Reports:

- a. Executive Committee – Kathy Howard reported on the last meeting held on May 21st for the purpose of reviewing a proposed change to the budget. As directed by the BOD at the May 9 meeting Andrew developed three scenarios for the budget considering the impact on full-time educators being switched from exempt to non-exempt status effective July 1, 2025. Andrew presented the scenarios to the committee and recommended adoption of the scenario that provided merit raises plus an additional 1.5% for impacted employees. The committee agreed to adopt the proposed budget with this scenario and present the action to the board at the next meeting. Andrew asked if the board had any questions about the budget revision, there were none.
- b. Personnel Committee – n/a
- c. Program Committee – Josh Fish reported that the committee had on May 16th to discuss content for the new website for new members. The committee had agreed that the target of this website was teachers at potential member schools and that the page should include program offerings, alignment with Next Generation Science Standards, and testimonials from member school teachers, administrators, and students. Josh reminded members that he had requested that they provide some of these testimonials to him in reply to his request.
- d. Budget Committee – n/a
- e. Vessel Search Committee – n/a

7. Elections for Officers and Community Members:

After brief discussion and review of the proposed slate **a motion was made at 4:34p.m. to elect Community Members Kate Biddle, Tom Gardiner, Robin Harris, and Eleanor Mariani to a one-year term effective July 1, 2024 by Mike O’Connor/2nd Jason England. Unanimous.** Immediately following **a motion was made at 4:35p.m. to elect Officers: Chair – Kathy Howard; Treasurer – Jason England; Secretary – Kate Biddle by Josh Fish/2nd Mike O’Connor. Unanimous.**

Congratulations to our continuing community members and our returning and new officers. Thank you to Suzanne Scorza for her service as Secretary over the past two years.

8. After the elections, Andrew took a moment to acknowledge and thank Lisa Vaudreuil for her work on the board. Lisa will be stepping down from her role on the board and East Lyme Public Schools will be appointing a new member to serve next year. Lisa thanked the board members for the past few years and noted that she had learned a lot about the work that is required to support Project Oceanology's operations.
9. The board confirmed the next meeting date, September 12, 2024, and agreed that at the next meeting the board would be ready to set dates from October and November meetings. Proposed dates for those meetings are October 10th and November 14th, 2024.

10. Motion to Adjourn was made at 4:40p.m. by Mike O'Connor/2nd Lisa England. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Ely, Ex-officio Board Member, Executive Director