

National Sea Grant Advisory Board Meeting
June 18, 2019
Draft Meeting Minutes

Silver Spring Civic Center
1 Veterans Place
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC 8:00am – 4:30pm EDT

8:00am – Call to Order, Welcome, Roll Call, etc. (Elizabeth Rohring – Designated Federal Officer (DFO), National Sea Grant Office (NSGO))

Ms. Rohring (DFO) read an official federal statement explaining her role to the group, and took the roll.

Roll Call

Members of the National Sea Grant Advisory Board (Board):

Dale Baker, Paulinus Chigbu, Carole Engle, Rosanne Fortner, Gordon Grau, Judith Gray, Brian Helmuth, Bill Hogarth (virtual), Amber Mace, Jim Murray, Kristine Norosz, Deb Stirling
Jonathan Pennock – (*ex officio*) Director of the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP),
Fredrika Moser – (*ex officio*), President, Sea Grant Association and Director, Maryland Sea Grant
Elizabeth Rohring –DFO, NSGO
Donna Brown – Executive Assistant – NSGO

Others in attendance: Nikola Garber – NSGCP, Rebecca Briggs – NSGO, Brooke Carney – NSGO, Susan Holmes – NSGO, Hollis Jones – NSGO, Audrey Maran – NSGO, Joel Widder – Federal Science Partners

8:15am – Approval of agenda, past meeting minutes (Dr. Amber Mace, Board Chair)

Dr. Mace reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve it.

Motion to approve the June 18, 2019 agenda: Judy Gray

2nd: Dr. Engle

Vote: All in favor

December 2018 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Mace asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2018 Board meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2018 Board meeting: Dr. Grau

2nd: Dr. Murray

Vote: All in favor.

8:30-8:45 – Board Chair’s Update (Mace, Board)

Dr. Mace welcomed the Board and introduced new Board members. She asked for introductions from everyone in the room. She thanked everyone for their efforts on the ongoing site review teams (SRTs) and acknowledged that there were 12 more to go, plus other heavy lifts many people on the Board, such as the Evaluation Committee and Biennial Report Committee. Dr. Mace welcomed Dr. Pennock for his update on the National Sea Grant College Program.

8:45-9:45 - NSGO Updates – (Dr. Jonathan Pennock, NSGCP Director)

Dr. Pennock said that he would review issues that have been impacting the program, the NSGO, and the Board.

Partial Government Shutdown

The partial shutdown impacted the NSGO and NSGCP deeply. There were nine SRTs scheduled during that time, all of which will need to be rescheduled. During that time, no one was allowed to work which pushed many deadlines back a couple of months, including several grant announcements and deadlines.

Staffing

Dr. Pennock discussed changes in NSGO staffing. Hollis Jones and Audrey Moran are our NSGO Knauss fellows. Hollis is looking into best practices for integrating research into extension; and Audrey is helping with communication with a specific focus on implementing the aquaculture communication vision plan. Rebecca Briggs has been on maternity leave since March and just returned. She is the research lead, National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance officer, and a program officer. Jon Eigen has been focused on working with our Workforce Management Office to hire an aquaculture specialist, who will join the NSGO in mid-June. There is another aquaculture hire in the works. The average time for a hire from start to finish has been over 360 days.

NSGO Activities

The NSGO has process 428 proposals in FY19, held 8 review panels and 343 grant actions. The shutdown impacted the deadlines for these grant activities, and has put a lot of stress on the staff. The NSGO will have one “late action” competition because it was not known until just

before the shutdown. Dr. Pennock shared some other NSGO activities – program officers are just starting to review their programs’ annual reports. Because of the many grant activities, NEPA has become a heavy lift for the NSGO. NEPA provides good safeguards for our environment, however it requires a level of details that is difficult for an office the size of the NSGO to handle.

Legislative Updates

NOAA is working with Congress on Sea Grant Reauthorization and language for Knauss Fellows to be “direct” hired. There have been some problems when it comes to differences in pay for Fellows, since each university handles how fellows are paid differently. All begin with the same amount, but some universities provide a stipend, others treat Fellows as staff, so there are differences in take-home pay. Again, NOAA and Congress are engaged in a conversation as to how to best deal with this issue.

Young Fisherman’s Development Act

There is a bill being dropped to support development for a new generation of fishers – 2 million dollars a year. Sea Grant has been active in supporting young fishers, and will continue to work with NOAA Fisheries and partner fishing communities in this realm.

Budget

Sea Grant was zeroed in the President’s Budget, however the House and Senate marks for Sea Grant put it back in. More on the budget once we hear officially.

American Lobster and Highly Migratory Species

The FY19 budget included Sea Grant line items for both American lobster research and extension for the northeast region and highly migratory species research. Dr. Hogarth said that he would be attending a meeting in the Gulf of Mexico “Ecosystem Impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Event: Assembling the Record of Species and Community Change” that would involve discussions about highly migratory species. Dr. Mace asked Dr. Hogarth to report back to the Board after the meeting.

9:45-10:15 - Sea Grant Association Update (Dr. Fredrika Moser, President, SGA)

Dr. Moser shared information on the Sea Grant Association and how the government shutdown negatively impacted the work that the programs were doing.

New directors and staffing

The SGA has some new Board Members and they will be holding another Boot Camp for them during the next SGA meeting. Mary Beth Burroughs is doing fiscal work and Katie Lea helping

with planning. Changes in Directors - Shauna Oh is the new California Sea Grant Director, and Rebecca Shuford is the new Director for New York Sea Grant. Jim Eckman former Director of California Sea Grant retired, and Karl Havens, Director of Florida Sea Grant's passing. Karl transformed Sea Grant Week and the workshops are now so much better because of his efforts. Sherry Larkin is the Interim Director for Florida Sea Grant. There is a large percentage of Directors who have now been in their position around 8 years. Diversity and Directors of color is almost non-existent the SGA needs to work on that as well.

Aquaculture

LaDon Swann, Sea Grant Aquaculture Liaison and Director of Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium is trying to understand the landscape of Sea Grant aquaculture work and provide the program with a sense of direction. Sea Grant needs to figure out how it wants to make a mark in aquaculture - are we looking for policy or behavior change? Dr. Hogarth said that many people are unclear on who funds aquaculture - is it NOAA? Sea Grant? Others? He suggested that Sea Grant focus on clarifying this so as to remove perceived confusion among people trying to work in the field.

SGA Business and Priorities

Dr. Moser and Mr. Widder said that the SGA is interested in ensuring that Sea Grant remains funded and find a balance. The SGA will have six Congressional briefings in the next 18 months to strengthen their relationship with Congress. This might help the reauthorization process. Increasing Sea Grant funding is a very big issue because some of the smaller programs are at risk. Dr. Helmuth asked how the SGA saw the value of working regionally. Dr. Moser said that some programs do that well and others don't. Dr. Pennock said that was one of the goals of the network visioning - to get the programs talking to each other and get to places where they can work with each other. Dr. Moser said that the SGA would like to work with the Board on a conversation about this topic and showing how Sea Grant really has a research to extension connection in the programs work.

SGA Leadership Changes

Shelby Walker (ORSG) is assisting Darren Lerner (HISG) on External Relations Committee (ERC). They are focused on funding. The Program Mission Committee (PMC) is working to try and move visioning forward – how to build these programs and get them to stand alone, etc.

10:30-11:30 - Committee Nominations – (Dr. Amber Mace, Chair, National Sea Grant Advisory Board)

Executive Committee

Dr. Mace is current Board Chair, Dr. Helmuth is Vice Chair. The Vice Chair is historically the Chair- Elect who will then step into the chair role after two years. Dr. Helmuth is willing to take on this role if nominated. The Board will also nominate two members at large. Dr. Murray has been serving as one member at last and Ms. Stirling is serving in the other. Ms. Stirling expressed interest in the Vice Chair position, and Ms. Gray said that she would be interested in serving our Dr. Murray's last year as member-at-large. Dr. Hogarth would be interested in serving as the other member at large. The Board will have official nominations and voting on these positions during the fall meeting.

Biennial Report

Dr. Fortner has been chair for this committee for the past three reports. The report accumulates what our accomplishments are and reports them to congress. Ms. Gray has volunteered to lead the committee for the 2020 report and is looking for three members of the Board to be on the committee as well as two SGA members. Topics discussed for the 2020 report, include Blue Economy and Economic Evaluation. Dr. Grau volunteered to write about the Resilient Communities and Economies work. Dr. Moser suggested that an overarching theme be "On the forefront of actionable science". The report is usually submitted in November, but due to the elections in 2020, the Board agreed to delay submission until January 2021.

Independent Review Panel (IRP) members

Dr. Murray said that a decision needs to be made about the IRP members and the committee chair. Several names were added to the list of recommended nominees and will be resubmitted to Dr. Pennock for his review and approval after vote.

Motion:

Approved the revised list of IRP nominees and forward to the Director of the National Sea Grant College Program for review and approval - Ms. Gray

2nd Dr. Murray.

Vote: All in favor

This session continued after the public comment period.

11:30 – 11:45 – Public Comment Period (Elizabeth Rohring)

There were no public comments

10:30-11:30 - Committee Nominations – Continued

Information Services and Publications Review Committee

Dr. Pennock sent a charge to the Board to stand up an Information Services and Publications Review Committee. The NSGO wants to look at what our information services needs are and

coordinate with NOAA and existing resources. Dr. Briggs will staff this committee and is looking for external participants with library science experience. Mr. Baker and Dr. Grau volunteered to serve on the committee. Dr. Grau offered to serve as chair, but further discussion was that they might want someone other than a Board member to chair this committee. It will be discussed further at the Fall 2019 meeting.

11:45 – 12:00 – National Sea Grant Law Center (Law Center) Coherent Area Program Status Report – (Deb Stirling, Chair, NSGLC Review Committee)

Ms. Stirling provided an overview of the Law Center status report. The status review committee found that the Law Center fit the criteria to be designated as a coherent area program (CAP) as described in the Sea Grant rules and regulations, which states that this status may be given to a program that has “Unique and Rare Capabilities in Marine Affairs”. The Law Center Review Committee recommends that the Board votes to recommend Law Center CAP status to the NSGO. The question of whether or not the Law Center should provide match was brought up during the review. The Law Center director asked if it could be waived. Dr. Moser was concerned that this could set a bad precedent, and that it might be better to look at other options. Mr. Eigen said that the NSGO is allowed to waive a certain amount of match annually (5% of the annual appropriation). Dr. Grau agreed that the Director should have the discretion to make these decisions.

Motion:

Endorse report that was provided and send to Director – Dr. Grau

2nd – Ms. Norosz

Discussion: Ms. Stirling added that a recommendation in the status review committee’s report was to provide guidance on what constitutes the “unique and rare capabilities in marine affairs”.

Vote: All Unanimous

1:00 – 1:30 - Partnership Update (Brooke Carney)

Framework

The NSGO has developed a partnership framework. The NSGO wants to leverage skills and expertise areas in partnerships but needs to better prioritize and coordinate to ensure best use of scarce budget and staff resources. The framework sets up a path for this with input from leadership to best determine high return partners. The framework includes a form with simple questions to help determine the value of each potential partnership (shared goals, long-term potential, staff time needed, etc.). Partnerships are put into one of three tiers from low-effort/return to high effort/return. The framework has been finalized and socialized it in the NSGO. The framework and process will be clarified and refined as it is used. Dr. Murray

asked if there is a pot of money for partnership. Ms. Carney said no, and Mr. Eigen said that many times these partnerships bring money to the programs. We currently have between \$3-4 million in partner pass-throughs.

1:30 – 2:00 - NOAA Research Update (Ko Barrett, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Programs and Administration)

Ms. Barret provided leadership updates. Dr. Neil Jacobs is now the Acting NOAA Administrator; Tim Gallaudet is the Deputy NOAA Administrator and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere. Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier is the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology.

NOAA Priorities

Two key priorities are to reduce the impact of extreme weather and water events, and improved hurricane forecasts and to increase the sustainable economic contributions of our fishery and ocean resources.

Brief Budget Update

FY19 budget are the highest levels of funding that NOAA/OAR has had. The FY20 house mark was just shy of \$20 million, including \$186.5M for climate research, which is a \$27.5M increase. The House is focused on climate, so the budget includes \$13 million for Research on Climate Engineering, Oceans and Coasts, and high performance computing.

Leadership Changes

John Cortinas has been confirmed as the new Director of the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Lab and Michele McClure is the Director of the Pacific Marine Environmental Lab.

Accomplishments

Last week the weather service updated the Global Forecast System and this update is kind of our strong foot forward to improve our weather forecasting.

Strategic Planning

OAR has been developing a strategic plan over the past year. OAR goals include exploring the marine environment, detecting changes in the ocean and atmosphere, making forecasts better, and driving innovative science.

Joint Meeting with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

OAR and NMFS conducted a joint meeting to talk about areas of support, including climate & fisheries, surveys and advanced technology, aquaculture research & development and

extension. Dr. Moser said it was good to see that Sea Grant goals and activities were represented in the strategic plans.

Discussion

Dr. Pennock asked if Ms. Barrett could describe OAR's portfolios. Ms. Barret said that OAR leadership realized that there needs to be better collaboration between OAR's labs and programs, so they created portfolios that combine the main topics in OAR – climate, water, and weather. Each has a portfolio steward to lead the efforts of these topics across labs and programs to better accomplish NOAA's mission.

Dr. Grau asked about developing more diverse human resources in OAR. Ms. Barrett said that this is a priority for NOAA and OAR and she is leading an effort to find early career scientists, and determine how to best engage them and keep them onboard.

2:00-2:30 - Aquaculture Update (Dr. Nikola Garber, Deputy Director, SG)

Dr. Garber spoke about Sea Grant aquaculture funding history and research activities. Sea Grant is funding a lot of initiatives to enhance aquaculture across the nation, however the office is increasing the amount of aquaculture social sciences research to better understand public perception, concern and acceptance of aquaculture.

2019 Competition Snapshot

Aquaculture is important to this administration so we are increasing our efforts. Sea Grant's aquaculture team meets monthly with the aquaculture programs in NMFS and the National Ocean Service (NOS) to coordinate grants and operations across NOAA. Sea Grant attended several aquaculture stakeholders meetings and that process helped in setting those general priorities for the 10-year vision aquaculture vision. In addition to the aquaculture competitions, the NSGO is offering programs a match of national funds for state program aquaculture proposals.

Dr. Engle said that Sea Grant should focus on getting priorities from the people that represent the major aspects of aquaculture. Dr. Hogarth said that the operations aspect of aquaculture within NOAA is confusing, and it would be useful for Sea Grant to sponsor an industry and stakeholder workshop to better understand impediments and address concerns. Dr. Murray said that the Advisory Board can help to seek input from the industry. Dr. Engle and Dr. Hogarth expressed interest in forming an aquaculture subcommittee on the Board for this purpose.

3:00 – 3:30 - Evaluation Committee Update (Dr. James Murray, Chair, Evaluation Committee, Advisory Board Member)

First task: Site Reviews

Sea Grant has completed 22 of the 34 site visits and had an Advisory Board Co-Chair on each of these visits. The evaluation committee will also complete a review of the site visits to ensure that standards were applied equitably across all programs. The committee will review all site visit reports and develop a summary analysis of those reports. It is not the goal of the evaluation committee to get into subjective judgements about the ratings – they will be looking to see if there was a misinterpretation of guidance. If the committee finds evidence that this could be the case, it will review the materials, and if needed, talk with the program officer (chair), Board member (co-chair) and other members of the team to understand the judgements made. Conducting this review of the site visits should be completed by November. The evaluation committee will receive materials from Susan Holmes and an analysis of the ratings to see the distribution of ratings, and identify outliers. The evaluation committee will have a final report to the Advisory Board in the March 2020 public meeting

Second Task: Independent Review Panel

The evaluation committee is also charged with standing up an independent review panel (IRP) to review the National Sea Grant College Program as a whole, including its management by the NSGO. This will be somewhat like a site review except on a more macro scale. The NSGO will prepare a briefing book; there will be a day to discuss management of the program as a whole, and a day of panels with a report out to the Director and OAR leadership. It is the hope of the evaluation team to get the IRP completed by June 2020 and have the Board vote on the report during the Fall 2020 public meeting.

3:30 – 4:15 - Outreach and Education Committee (Amber Mace)

Dr. Mace said that there had not been much activity on the Outreach and Education Committee, but she is meeting with the Director of Legislative Affairs, and the Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff following the meeting to understand how the Advisory Board can support Sea Grant in meeting NOAA's mission and goals. Ms. Rohring said that the committee can help by identifying what activities and connections they have among stakeholders. Dr. Murray said that the Board used to have more connections on the Hill and that it would be beneficial to renew these relationship. The Sea Grant Program Directors look to the Board for this type of leadership and that is where this committee can help.

4:15 – 4:30 – Wrap-Up/Adjourn (Amber Mace)

Dr. Mace summed up the decisions and information that was presented during the meeting. Dr. Helmuth wanted to understand NOAA and in particular Sea Grant's relationship with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and its new Coastlines and People (CoPe) project. He has

been involved in several of the stakeholder listening sessions held by NSF and it sounds like it has the same type of mission as Sea Grant. Dr. Pennock said that they Sea Grant was limited in its involvement, and by the time they were asked to participate the funding announcement had already been released, so there was no opportunity for input. Dr. Mace said that Sea Grant and the Board should focus on creating partnership opportunities to work with NSF on this. She finalized by saying that the Board is obligated to provide advice and look at the programs to see what they can do to spread the knowledge that it is an obligation they take on willingly.

4:30pm - Dr. Mace adjourned the meeting.