

NERACOOS Board of Directors: May 20, 2015 Minutes

Finalized on August 19, 2015

Board Participants: Anthony Kirincich, Matt Lyman, Nicole Bartlett, Joe Salisbury, Bruce Carlisle, Mel Cote, Jim O'Donnell, Steve Lohrenz, Steve Withrow, Steve Couture, Dave Hebert, Peter Smith, Bob Stankelis; **Other Participants:** Tom Shyka, Jackie Ball, Cassie Stymiest, Jeff Runge, Gabrielle Canonico, Josie Quintrell, Ru Morrison

IOOS Program Office

Gabrielle Canonico gave an IOOS Program Office update. There have been several staffing changes with the Office, and two more vacancies announced. The National Ocean Service has placed a priority on coastal resiliency. A new funding opportunity to support coastal areas and resiliency was released early this week for up to \$5M. The Program Office is also working to secure external reviewers for the IOOS five year proposal. Hopefully funding announcements can be made by the end of the calendar year. Three Marine Biodiversity Observing Network (MBON) projects were launched last year. There's interest within the Office to create a national network, there are no additional funds to support this activity. It has been requested that those who've received sensor innovation funds to interact with the MBON's.

IOOS Association

Josie Quintrell presented the IOOS Association update. The House appropriations committee is taking up the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) bill today. Currently it seems as though IOOS will have level funding, but not sure yet. Overall there have been many cuts within NOAA, except within the National Weather Service which saw a large increase. Josie stressed the importance of constituent and delegation engagement. Dear Colleague letters to co-sponsor the ICOOS Reauthorization Act, which is being led by Senator Wicker (Republican) of Mississippi, are going out soon.

Steve Lohrenz called the business meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Matt Lyman motioned to approve the February 24, 2015 board meeting minutes, seconded by Jim O'Donnell. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Conflict of Interest Forms

Forms are still needed from six individuals. Any forms outstanding should be returned to Jackie as soon as possible.

Finance Committee Report

Matt Lyman presented the finance committee report, referencing the financial report that was previously distributed to the board. On sub-award A002 there is a large outstanding balance that will need to be spent down. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funds are being slowly spent but the effort is currently ramping up. All other sub-awards are moving forward as

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expected. The audit results are clean for the second year in a row. NERACOOS remains high risk auditee, but it's expected that this will be lifted next year with another clean audit. The Financial policy was recently revised, but there were some outstanding questions about the indirect rate policy. Due to the new super circular NERACOOS cannot cap indirect on sub-awards moving forward. This will have big impacts on the budgets of the Principal Investigators (PI's). A call with the Vice Provost's may be necessary to make an informed decision. This issue will be discussed by the executive committee. NERACOOS is also in the process of hiring a part time finance director. Two of the four applicants were interviewed and Ru is in the process of following up on references.

Executive Committee Report

Steve Lohrenz presented the findings of the executive committee. The executive committee was asked to review membership of the Strategic Planning and Implementation (SPI) team. The committee has agreed that at this point, mid-proposal, there's no need to revise membership and has confidence that the current team will put together a fair and good proposal. After the proposal has been submitted the executive committee will revisit membership.

External review panel

Mel Coté presented the findings of the external review panel. This non-conflicted committee of the board was composed to ensure transparency and fairness of the NERACOOS pre-proposal process, and to review previous PI performance. Members of the committee include: Mel Coté, Steve Couture, Matt Lyman and Matt Nixon. All current sub-awardees were ranked satisfactory with the exception of the PI at the University of Rhode Island. The review panel also found the pre-proposal process to be open and transparent.

Ru then reviewed the proposal slate at three potential funding levels. It was also noted that there is flexibility within the proposal during de-scope. At the \$4m funding level there's expansion in nearshore investment, due to user feedback. There has also been an increase in funds allocated to data management. It was noted that there are other DMAC activities that occur within other line items and not just at the DMAC line. The office will look into this issue. There has also been an issue raised about the aging observing infrastructure. To build efficiency and longevity of the system these costs will need to be incorporated into the project. The next step for the SPI team and NERACOOS is to assemble a writing committee. Jim O'Donnell motioned to approve the proposal slate as presented, seconded by Anthony Kirincich, and the slate was unanimously approved.

NERACOOS Operations

Ru presented the operations update. The Northeast Coastal Acidification Network (NECAN) has been working on stakeholder engagement throughout the region and has successfully raised funds to support this work. Workshops in Maine and Southern Massachusetts have already

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occurred. Workshops are being planned for the following locations: Rhode Island, Northern Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Canada. The Marine Sensor Innovation project work has begun this spring, with the first sensor deployment in Great Bay last month. The first in a series of stakeholder workshops is to take place next week. The next deployment of sensors on buoys E and I will be in June. The Integrated Sentinel Monitoring Network (ISMN) project is in the final stages of completing a regional science and implementation. The plan will be released in June for public comment and review. Nicole noted the importance of communicating with upper level management about ISMN to garner regional support.

Tom presented the communications update. In addition to attending meetings throughout the region Tom has been working on a bi-national effort on marine safety, upon request from the First Coast Guard District. Also in development is a new NERACOOS homepage to better meet the needs of users. A beta-version of the website will be released shortly.

Cassie presented the education update. NERACOOS hosted a drifter building session at the Maine Fishermen's Forum for students of local fishermen. NERACOOS is also helping to support the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA) Summit at the end of June. Cassie will become acting chair of New England Ocean Science Education Collaborative (NEOSEC) in July. The next NEOSEC summit will be in Portland next year. A NERACOOS citizen science working group has been launched. Within the office we've secured an intern with Great Bay Community College through EPSCOR funding.

Steve Lohrenz motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Anthony, unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.