



## Meeting Notice & Agenda

To: The Maritime Aquarium Authority & Board of Trustees  
From: Robert Rohn, Chairman, The Maritime Aquarium Board of Trustees  
Donna King, Chairwoman, The Maritime Authority  
RE: **Sept. 17, 2014 Meeting Notice and Agenda**

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The regular meeting of The Maritime Aquarium Board of Trustees and The Maritime Authority will take place on **Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2014** at 5:30 p.m. in the **Hinnant Room on the third floor** at The Maritime Aquarium, 10 North Water St., Norwalk.

### AGENDA

- I. Approval of Minutes – Wednesday, June 18, 2014
- II. Audit Committee Report
- III. Building Committee Report
- IV. Finance Committee Report
- V. Development Report
- VI. Education Committee Report
  - The New Vessel Jennifer Herring, President and CEO
  - New Programs Aboard and on Land Tom Naiman, Director of Education
- VII. Exhibit Committee Report
- VIII. Government Affairs Report
- IX. Marketing Committee Report
- X. President's Report
- XI. Other Business
- XII. Adjournment



**MINUTES  
MARITIME AQUARIUM AUTHORITY  
& BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
JUNE 18, 2014**

**AUTHORITY:** Amy Bien, Vice-Chair; Shannon O-Toole Giandurco, Travis Simms, Andy Conroy, Jerry Petrini.

**TRUSTEES:** Rob Rohn, Chairman; Irene Dixon, Kathy Mitchell, Bob Bewkes, Earl Mix, Bill Burnham, Audrey Weil, Sanders Davies, Stanley Lee, Michael Sgoutas, Clay Fowler, Ashraf Rizvi, Richard Hokin, Jim Hurlock (6:00), (Judy Hyers, Jim Hurlock, Andrew Mais, Jane Drittel and Laurie Jones via phone).

**STAFF:** Jennifer Herring, President (via phone); Roy Dowdell, Sam Ross, Tom Naiman, Cara Kenefick, Donna Vinci.

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Mr. Rohn.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2014**

**TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. WIDLAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.
- \*\* MS. WEIL SECONDED.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**AUTHORITY MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. PETRINI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.
- \*\* MOTION PASSED WITH 3 VOTES IN FAVOR, 2 ABSTENTIONS (SIMMS, O'TOOLE GIANDURCO).

**COMMITTEE ON TRUSTEES REPORT**

Mr. Rohn spoke highly about the work done on this committee by Mr. Hinnant, and reviewed the resumes of the three people up for election to the Board of Trustees.

## **ELECTION OF KATHARINE ASHFORTH**

### **TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. WIDLAND MOVED TO ELECT KATHARINE ASHFORTH TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.**
- \*\* MR. BEWKES SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **ELECTION OF DAN MCLEOD**

### **TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. LEE MOVED TO ELECT DAN MCLEOD TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.**
- \*\* MR. SGOUTAS SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **ELECTION OF REBECCA BROWN**

Mr. Rohn reviewed the report as follows:

Rebecca Brown is a partner in the Stamford Office of Shipman & Goodwin. She has extensive experience in real estate financing and commercial and residential real estate transactions. Rebecca has done several years' worth of pro-bono work for the aquarium for its lease negotiations with the City of Norwalk.

### **TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. LEE MOVED TO ELECT REBECCA BROWN TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.**
- \*\* MS. WEIL SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The group officially welcomed Ms. Brown, and she joined the meeting.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Rohn said that the budget had been reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee.

Mr. Rizvi reviewed the financial report and Mr. Lee reviewed his report regarding investments.

Mr. Rohn noted that deferred compensation was included in this report.

Mr. Davies talked about the Audit Committee. He said that the Executive Committee feels that the Audit Committee should no longer be a sub-committee of the Finance Committee, but stand on its own as an independent committee.

**TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. DAVIES MOVED THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTTES APPROVE THE FORMATION OF AN AUDIT COMMITTEE, MEMBERSHIP TO BE APPOINTED THIS YEAR BY THE CHAIRMAN AND THAT THAT COMMITTEE DEVELOP A CHARTER TO DESCRIBE ITS TASK AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORT BACK TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING.**
- \*\* MR. LEE SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**APPROVAL OF FY 2015 BUDGET**

Mr. Rizvi gave a power-point presentation on The Maritime Aquarium's proposed FY 2015 budget, which included graphs illustrating projected revenues, projected expenses and revenue trends over the past three years.

Mr. Bewkes asked about head count, and Mr. Rizvi said it is stable.

Mr. Mix asked about changes in health care costs. Mr. Dowdell said they anticipate changes in 2017 because of the Affordable Health Care Act.

Mr. Widland spoke of the fact that they had received 25,000 volunteer hours, which is significant.

At 6 p.m., Mr. Hurlock arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Rizvi pointed out that there was not a Capital Budget presented today. Mr. Bewkes asked why. Mr. Rohn said that we are looking for sources of funding. The staff is putting together a short term Capital Budget, which will be presented at the next meeting.

Ms. Mitchell asked about the status of the river otters. Mr. Rohn said that there are no plans presently for a new exhibit. We did lose one and are in negotiations to obtain two more.

Mr. Conroy asked Mr. Dowdell how comfortable he was with the numbers presented today. Mr. Dowdell said he would prefer more contributed revenue, but he was fine with the numbers. Mr. Conroy said that the Board has gotten better with time, as had staff.

**TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. WIDLAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET FY 2015 AS PRESENTED.**
- \*\* MR. LEE SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Mr. Ross thanked Clay Fowler and Laurie Jones for their work in helping to create a very successful Red Apple Dinner, and said that this has been a great fund-raising year overall, especially since 90% of the development staff has been on the job less than one year. The golf outing raised \$98,500 and the Red Apple event raised \$763,000. TMA also received an endowment challenge of \$500,000, of which \$250,000 was paid up front. The challenge match was met in late April. We have also obtained a \$500,000 bequest intention for endowment. The golf outing will be held Monday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

### *Education Department accomplishments*

Mr. Rohn introduced Tom Naiman, who made a Power Point presentation on the department's accomplishments and future revenue opportunities. These include the R/V Spirit of the Sound; a Teacher Professional Development program and the creation of additional programs that can draw new audiences.

We are currently planning several general audience programs for fall of 2014 and discussions are underway with the Carver Center and South Norwalk Community Center to explore additional opportunities. We will increase our outreach through additional marketing, including social media; increase our penetration in local markets and create new "personal facilitated experiences" on the aquarium floor. We plan to continue reaching out to new teachers and schools and encourage board participation in helping us to connect with public and private donors and form additional partnerships.

At 6:15 p.m., Mr. Widland left the meeting.

At 6:30 p.m., Ms. Weil left the meeting.

Mr. Burnham said he had asked how many students the Aquarium impacts in the tri-county area, and Ms. Herring responded that the number is 130,000 annually, among the largest reach of any aquarium in the U.S. Mr. Burnham said this should be publicized.

Mr. Davies said it would be useful to have a written piece that incorporates all of the Aquarium's current offerings, and said it should be sent out with the minutes. Mr. Rohn recommended attending Education Committee meetings.

Mr. Rohn asked if TMA is anticipating the need for more FTEs to build up the department. Mr. Naiman said it is difficult to get highly qualified people if we can't offer them a full-time position. He is impressed by our part time staff members, who are very dedicated and talented, but there is a limit as to what they can do.

Mr. Rohn asked about funding sources. Mr. Naiman said there is a lot we can do regarding contributed support, including grants.

## **MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT**

### *Social Media*

Associate of Social Media Engagement Cara Kenefick delivered a presentation to update trustees on the success of our Jiggle a Jelly latte contest and other social media initiatives. We had 15 entries for the contest and our reach included coffee shops throughout CT and NY. The contest was very successful, and we received more than 1,150 votes. Our contest entry page received 1,000-plus hits.

The contest created an incentive to share our brand and vote. We also created a hashtag# campaign, resulting in cross-platform promotion.

Mr. Widland asked if there was a residual benefit. Ms. Kenefick said the content lives on on the internet and can be used in the future. Mr. Widland asked if we have the ability to contact these people, and Ms. Kenefick responded that we do, because all of these people had to “like” the Aquarium on Facebook.

Mr. Burnham said we are increasing awareness. Ms. Kenefick said people were going into the shops and requesting lattes to participate in the contest. There was a ripple effect.

Mr. Hurlock asked if this tool could be adapted to Spanish speakers and other subsets, and Ms. Kenefick responded affirmatively.

Ms. Mitchell asked when the next promotion would take place. Ms. Kenefick said TMA is now doing a boat contest. We are also doing a live feed for Jiggle a Jelly.

Ms. Dixon said TMA has done an amazing job, and Ms. Kenefick is doing a phenomenal job.

Mr. Conroy asked how TMA coordinates that type of activity back to its Google ad program. Ms. Kenefick said we are doing Google ads and promotions on Facebook that are targeted to specific groups.

Mr. Davies asked where we are on the spectrum of utilizing this technology. Ms. Kenefick responded that we are in a very good place.

Mr. Naiman said before he took this job, he followed the Aquarium and was very impressed.

## **EXHIBIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

The lorikeets exhibit has opened and we have made improvements based knowledge gained from last year. We are offering a Tweet the Keet experience on social media.

Our Jiggle a Jelly experience has been very successful and attracts a cross-section of people and age groups. A butterfly exhibit is planned for the spring of 2015.

## **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS REPORT**

Mr. Rohn reviewed the report:

We are hoping to establish regular meetings with Mayor Rilling. We also expect to be on the Common Council's August agenda regarding our lease agreement.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Herring reviewed her report. She noted that she was attending the meeting via phone because she had broken her kneecap on Thursday.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **TRUSTEE MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. BEWKES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MR. LEE SECONDED.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **AUTHORITY MOTION:**

- \*\* MR. CONROY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco Blois  
Telesco Secretarial Services