

**AOOS Virtual Board Meeting
Meeting Summary
May 13, 2021**

UPDATES AND PRESENTATIONS ON AOOS ACTIVITIES

Programmatic presentations and updates were given during an informal morning session.

Update on IOOS Program Office Activities by Oriana Villar

Oriana Villar updated the AOOS Board and staff on the relevant Executive Orders, the IOOS drivers and priorities, and the President's budget. She also informed the Board of the IOOS activities associated with the UN Decade of the Ocean, the 2021-2025 Cooperative Agreements, the new administration and new legislation, and how these will advance IOOS and the Regional Associations.

Update on IOOS Association activities by IOOS Association Director Josie Quintrell

Josie Quintrell presented to the Board the IOOS Association's 5-year Strategic Plan, with the top priorities being to increase IOOS funding, increase IOOS visibility and importance, and diversity and inclusion. She updated the board on the current IOOS appropriations request; HAB funding and activities; the infrastructure request ("Build Back Blue") including gliders, radars, moorings, HABON; Congressional activities including the Coordinated Research and Monitoring Act of 2020; the initiative towards detecting the Coastal Climate Signal; activities towards diversity, equity and inclusion including matching funds from the IOOS Office for funds provided by the Regional Associations.

The AOOS Board discussed how these activities are related to the Blue Economy, which in Alaska is primarily tourism, fishing, oil and gas, and shipping. Monitoring and managing these activities are part of the Blue Economy in Alaska.

AOOS Staff Presentations

Ocean Acidification Network

Darcy Dugan updated the Board on the activities of the OA Network, including growing participation, recent presentations, community sampling, the "Tipping Points" salmon project, engagement and outreach including a planned workshop, podcast, informational posters and reports and a portable kiosk. Darcy also informed the Board of planned local government engagement such as the Alaska Seafood Climate Round Table.

The Board discussed the Gulf of Alaska vulnerability assessment by OA Network Executive Committee member Tom Hurst (NMFS) and how that relates to the work of the OA Network. The Board welcomed the podcast work, and the idea of engagement with an Alaska Seafood Climate Roundtable, and discussed how it related to the previous Blue Ribbon Panel. The Board also discussed possible ideas for mitigation measures for OA such as alternative fuels, carbon dioxide removal through technological advancements, and/or kelp farming.

Bering Region Ocean Data Sharing Initiative (BODSI)

Jill Prewitt presented the activities under this project, including the Bering Region Data Integration Portal, Bering Science outreach publications, Bering Strait Transboundary Incident

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Response Tool, outreach activities and other data projects and products under development. Jill also presented ideas for broadening this project to include statewide activities such as a statewide data capability assessment workshop, mariner's app/dashboard, permitting portal, etc. These items were discussed in more detail under the budget item on the agenda.

Marine Operations and Coastal Hazards

Carol Janzen updated the Board on activities under the Marine Operations and Coastal Hazard themes including build-out plans and updates to Alaska Water Level Watch. Marine Operations activities include HFR installations, new MXAK AIS co-located weather stations, wave buoy operations and maintenance and installation of a new wave buoy. Coastal Hazards activities include new installations of 2 water level stations, hydroball bathymetric surveys, and a new webcam installation at Shaktoolik. Carol highlighted the opportunities for community involvement, especially with the hydroball surveys since they can be towed by small vessels in the nearshore areas. The Board welcomed this activity and suggested engagement with the AOKH project with the community of Little Diomed in addition to the communities already planned for hydroball surveys.

Follow up: Margaret and Carol will follow up on Little Diomed.

Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network

Thomas Farrugia presented a background on the AHAB Network, membership, defining the role of AHAB, AOOS and the Coordinator, and the AHAB Action Plan. Thomas also presented on the activities of the network, including sampling efforts, enhancing testing and lab facilities, exploring new technology, developing a data portal, providing a communication hub during HAB events, and securing funding for short-term projects and long-term network coordination.

The Board discussed what kinds of data will be included in the portal, and how different types of data will need to be presented in various ways. There was also a question of how much HAB testing was completed in Alaska versus outside of the state. The state used to have more testing capacity in-state.

Outreach Materials

Holly Kent updated the Board on the current AOOS outreach activities, outside of the directed outreach being done within programs such as the OA and HAB networks and the BODSI project. These include the mailchimp and other email contact lists, regular publications such as the quarterly newsletters, eNews, monthly update, annual AOOS Impact Report. Holly informed the Board of plans to discuss the format of the newsletters going more toward electronic only and a new more consistent format with highlights of projects, partners, new products and tools, regions, etc. Board feedback, ideas, and input on these outreach materials is welcomed.

Follow up: Holly will reach out to the Board with ideas for outreach.

National and International Engagement

Molly McCammon updated the Board on the National and international engagement activities that she has been involved in on behalf of AOOS, including IOOS, IARPC, NOAA Science Advisory Board Ecosystem Science & Management Working Group, national conferences, UN

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Decade of the Ocean, Arctic Observing Summit 2022, Polar Data Forum, and Ocean Obs 19 followup.

AOOS BOARD BUSINESS MEETING

Attendees

Board Members Present: Ed Page (MXAK), Lynn Palensky (NPRB), Kenny Down (NPFMC), Cheryl Rosa (USARC), Ginny Eckert (AK Sea Grant), Katrina Hoffman (PWSSC & OSRI), Katie Howard (ADF&G), Robert Foy (NOAA/AFSC), Margaret Williams (WWF), Dee Williams (USGS), Mike Miller (IPCoMM), Bradley Moran (UAF/CFOS), Sara Longan (ADNR), Paul Webb (USCG), Phil Thorne (USCG), Tara Riemer (ASLC), Jim Kendall (BOEM), Christina Bonsell (BOEM), Amy Pelozza (Hilcorp)

Not Present: Jason Brune (ADEC), Amy Holman (NOAA)

AOOS Staff Present: Sheyna Wisdom, Molly McCammon, Carol Janzen, Darcy Dugan, Holly Kent, Thomas Farrugia, Jill Prewitt

Guests: Josie Quintrell (IOOS Association), Oriana Villar (IOOS Program Office), Christina Bonsell (BOEM), Paul Webb (USCG)

Meeting called to order by Board Chair Katrina Hoffman at 1 pm via Zoom. Roll call was completed and new Board members were welcomed.

Adoption of Agenda, Board Meeting Summary, and ExCom Meeting Summary

Action Item: The meeting agenda, December 2020 Board meeting summary, and April 2021 ExCom meeting summary were approved unanimously. (*Motion by Riemer; Second by Palensky*)

Update on AOOS Activities by AOOS Executive Director Sheyna Wisdom

Sheyna Wisdom provided an overview of recent and upcoming AOOS activities and participation in state, national, and international level initiatives.

Administrative:

- Onboarding of new Executive Director
- Staff retreats
- PI meeting on Feb 21
- No Cost Extension for Y5 through May 31, 2022
- IOOS FY21-26 proposal submitted
- Working through descope for Y1

Alaska Activities:

- Alaska Marine Science Symposium

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- Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission
- Kachemak Bay Science Conference
- ADAC C-ICE
- One Health, One Future Conference
- US Russia Science Corner
- Kodiak Area Marine Science Symposium
- ADAC Alaska and Arctic Maritime Communications & Connectivity Analysis
- ADAC Arctic Maritime Horizons

Goals for new Executive Director

- Improve project management
- Team building
- Data portal improvements
- Board engagement

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

Darcy Dugan gave an update on the AOOS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Working Group which met three times this winter and produced a set of recommendations that was circulated to the Board. Two of the recommendations required Board action and three provided guidance for conducting AOOS activities. They are summarized below:

- 1) Expand Board representation from one tribal member to include four Indigenous organizations on the Board, each representing a coastal eco-region (Beaufort/Chukchi, Bering, western Gulf, eastern Gulf)
- 2) Amend AOOS Governance Documents (specific edits documented)
- 3) Expand engagement with Alaska Indigenous Communities (specific recommendations included)
- 4) Support workforce development by working with existing internship programs
- 5) Suggestions for land and water acknowledgments

Molly suggested the Board might want to consider additional board restructuring along with recommendation #1. After some discussion, multiple Board members spoke to the importance of responding to the Working Group's recommendation as the most immediate priority, and deferred to a future time further discussion of additional Board restructuring.

Action item: "Expand Board representation to include four Indigenous organizations on the Board, each representing a coastal eco-region, and ask the Diversity and Inclusion working group to define the regions and how to approach potential groups for membership (*Motion by Eckert; second by Moran; approved unanimously*)

Action item: Accept the following changes to the Standard Operating Procedures recommended by the working group:

1. On page 2 Section II G, add wording to read "The Board will normally meet in Anchorage, Alaska, but may choose to meet in other communities in Alaska or by teleconference or other virtual formats in order to broaden participation."

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2. On page 2 Section II G: add bullet allowing AOOS to provide honorariums to Board members who may represent organizations that don't provide salary for AOOS board activities. *Before this bullet is added, AOOS should develop a written policy with parameters for dollar amounts and bring it to the board for approval.*
3. On page 5 section VII, first bullet, add wording to read “Communication pathways and forums of partner organizations and programs using the most relevant channels of communication.”
4. On page 5 section VII, reword first sentence to incorporate 2-way engagement. “AOOS will rely on a variety of avenues to solicit recommendations and input and engage in 2-way information sharing to inform AOOS operations and decision-making.”

(Motion by Riemer; Second by Foy; approved unanimously)

Action item: Accept suggested recommended by the working group to the AOOS Memorandum of Agreement”:

1. On page 2 under Objectives, second bullet, add wording to read “Coordinate State, Federal, Alaska Native, local and private interests at a regional level to meet the priority needs of user groups in the Alaska region;”
2. On page 2 under Objectives, second bullet, add wording to read “Enhance the usefulness of ocean observations for a wider variety of users, including users with different internet bandwidth capabilities;”

(Motion by Riemer, Second by Foy; approved unanimously)

Action item: Accept the suggested bullet to be added to the AOOS 5-Year Strategic Direction: Page 1 under “AOOS does:”, add bullet “Support monitoring and operational and applied research to meet the needs of stakeholders”.

(Motion by Reimer; Second by Kendall; approved unanimously)

Acceptance of New Proposals

Sheyna Wisdom presented a list of proposals submitted, pending, rejected, approved, or in process.

Action item: Accept funding for Bering Strait Response Tool project funded by WWF. *(Motion by Riemer; Second by Page; approved unanimously)*

Axiom Contract Extension

In August 2020 the Executive Committee extended the Axiom contract until August 2021, pending further review. The Board unanimously supported extending the contract again since AOOS is pleased with Axiom’s work and can continue to build on the current investment. Tara Riemer confirmed that no competitive process is required for an extension.

Action item: Extend contract with Axiom until June 2026 with midterm review in 2023. *(Motion by Page; Second by Kendall; approved unanimously)*

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Budget Items

FY21-25 Y1 Budget: Core Funding

Sheyna Wisdom presented a proposed conceptual budget for the FY21 Core Program funds based on the IOOS funding letter and detailed in the Year 1 draft descope. The budget memo described the conceptual breakdown, with a final descope proposal to be presented to the Executive Committee later in the summer. This funding level represents a mostly flat ongoing budget, very similar to what was awarded last year.

The Board discussed fees for office space rental, funding amount on the travel line, and the AOOS conflict of interest policy for Board members and the AOOS budget discussions.

Action Item: Approve conceptual budget for FY21 core program. (*Motion by Kendall; second by Foy; unanimously approved*)

Follow up: Present FY21 Y1 final funding spend plan for ExCom approval.

FY21-25 Y1 Budget: Non-Core Funding

Sheyna Wisdom presented the Annotated Letter received from IOOS that included the non-core funding.

Action Item: Approve acceptance of funding for FY21 Y1 non-core funding. (*Motion by Kendall; second by Palensky; unanimously approved*), with final spend plans for the Harmful Algal Bloom Observing Network (HABON) and Regional Ocean Data Sharing Initiative funds to be presented to the ExCom.

FY21 Y5 Carryover Funding

Sheyna Wisdom presented staff recommendations for spending down the Year 5 carryover funds from the IOOS FY16-20. Wisdom explained that AOOS staff was looking for feedback from the Board now, and the final plan will be voted on by the ExCom.

The Board discussed the necessity of these carryover funds being spent by May 2022 and the associated challenges (equipment purchase and contracts must be complete). The Board also discussed how many of these projects could be funded through the Regional Data Sharing Initiative which does not have the same time restrictions.

The Board discussed additional ways for considering spending the Y5 carryover funds, such as focusing on diversity including ideas from the URGE seminars, ANSEP placements, additional cultural sensitivity training, etc.

The Board discussed that ocean energy needs should be considered by AOOS in the future. Kendall informed AOOS that work towards ocean energy renewables in Alaska may start happening sooner than originally thought, and that AOOS should consider what could be done towards those efforts. These will likely include mostly hydrokinetics and currents, but likely not waves because of the presence of sea ice.

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The Board discussed the importance of improving awareness of ocean observations to society. The mariner's app, for example, is applicable for users right now. It has the potential to save lives, increase efficiency, and support the Blue Economy. Lots of information, how do we make it more available, accessible. Get the observations out to people.

- Katrina - weather info accessed by commercial fishing fleet, app would have user adoption. Suggestion to make sure it distinguishes itself from other apps such as windy (forecasting).
- Sheyna - feel free to reach out as the Board digests this more, before we bring to ExCom.

Follow up: Present FY21 Y5 carryover funding spend plan for ExCom approval.

Roundtable

- Margaret Williams (WWF): Little Diomedede partnership. Russian pollock fishery - did not take place, WWF RU monitoring situation, auctions coming up for potential quotas, unclear of what will happen. Global Arctic program, ArcNet - mapping, database of over 800 layers of biodiversity, Arctic Council call for info for marine protected areas. Used and adapted by any party. Expanding own program - looking for marine biologist, community partnerships, replacement for Margaret's position (Exec Director)
- Lynn Palensky (NPRB): NPRB recent Board meeting. Funded another 7 core projects, grad student, outreach. Approve staff to move forward with RFP Arctic Synthesis report, assessment of Bering Sea for next IERP 2022-2025 program. Early tell to research community, general structure and amount for fall RFP. Timeline will be short. Outreach for Arctic IERP - videos, engagement, museum exhibit at Anchorage Museum, Museum of the North. Board approved money to support co-production, response to Kawerak letter, working with Bering group on project to fund ISN (\$150,000) - contract soon to get work underway. Big changeover to Board, will look very different - face of NPRB will be very different.
- Kenny Down (NPFMC): OA/seafood climate roundtable, support this effort. NPFMC, call for nominations for community engagement committee, adding up to 2 members to that committee. Council SSC met in June, setting research priorities, finalize at June meeting, look at those. Council took up 5-year review of EFH, completed in 2022, will go through SSC. Nominations for HAPC - process has not been opened up in last 7 years - nexus? Possible modifications to fishery management plans.
- Bob Foy (NOAA/AFSC): large cetacean survey in GOA. UXS, OMAO developing center to broaden the use. Climate fisheries work - need to identify observing data, monitoring information, opportunities to identify gaps, national effort.
- Dee Williams (USGS): national coastal shoreline change analysis, started in Canadian Beaufort, working around, phase 3 Wales to Bethel, expanded to AK Peninsula. Barry Arm landslide - funding to expand hazards program to landslides - working with SOA and NOAA - AVO installed infrasound array in Whittier, aid in future real-time warning center, water level sensor - DGGS multiple aerial surveys. USGS has expanded surge/wave/tide hydrodynamic network - deploy mobile storm tide sensor, Emmonak will get sensor.

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Emerging collaboration - AK TRibal Resilience Learning Network, support system for Indigenous communities as they develop their resilience plans.

- Katrina Hoffman (PWSSC/OSRI): Barry Arm landslide, presentation on that and climate modeling, oil spill response in PWS on May 24, [PWS Nat History Symposium](#) virtually, not coordinating but staff speaking on it. Hig and Tsunami warning center. Unmanned systems, oil spill recovery institute developing unmanned system for oil spill response.
- Ed Page (MXAK): ocean observing but also disseminating - weather stations with AIS. Geofencing alerts, could fit very well with AOOS. E.g., geofence alerts if vessel gets within X miles of walrus haul out area to that vessel through the AIS. E-navigation, getting info to mariners. Could be dynamic marine protected areas, AKGeofence.org

No executive session.

Meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm.