

## **Apalachicola Bay System Initiative Community Advisory Board Outreach & Community Engagement Subcommittee Meeting – 8 April 2021**

Part of the charge for all Members of the Community Advisory Board is to determine what each of them can do to inform people within their sphere of influence about ABSI and help tie ABSI tightly and positively to the community. Members are ambassadors for ABSI to bridge the gap between ABSI (academia) and the Franklin County community, some of whom within the power base are upset about the FWC approved Bay closure. While there will always be criticism and conspiracy theories, the members should be primed to run interference on behalf of ABSI, answering people's questions, and encouraging them to sign up for the newsletter.

### **Subcommittee members:**

Subcommittee members include members of the ABSI Team (FSU): Sandra Brooke\* (Principal Investigator) and Maddie Mahood (Outreach Assistant) and members of the ABSI Community Advisory Board: Georgia Ackerman (Apalachicola Riverkeeper), Chad Hanson (The Pew Charitable Trusts, Chair of Subcommittee), Anita Grove (Apalachicola City Commissioner), and Michael O'Connell (St. George Island Civic Club, 2025 Vision).

*\*Absent from this meeting*

### **Subcommittee Charge:**

- To work with ABSI leadership to inform the public of who we are and what we are doing.
- To create outreach & community engagement strategies that attract stakeholders and the general public to actively inform the public about the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative's goals and actions.
- To measure effectiveness of these strategies through direct participation in achieving actions, as well as web analytics and media stories)

### **Agenda Items:**

- Report from Franklin County Commission Meeting (Brooke, O'Connell)
- Overview of Updated ABSI Website/Homepage (Mahood)
  - Feedback from Committee Members
- Review of Media Distribution Plan (Mahood, Grove)
- Public Workshops – BRAINSTORM
  - Solidify starting group and time/date –SGI Civic Club meeting
  - Identify two more target groups
- Review of upcoming April Oystermen's Workshop (Mahood, Brooke)
- Additional Items/News
- Adjourn

### **Report from Franklin County Commission Meeting**

- O'Connell, Grove, and other members agreed that Brooke did a great job of presenting

and that the presentation was received well by the Commissioners

- All members agree that doing an “update” presentation every couple of months is a good idea – aiming for the next one to be in mid/end of summer
- Hanson suggested that all the Franklin County and Apalachicola City Commissioners be provided the ABSI website and email
  - *Mahood* – charged with creating contacts with the Commissioners and adding all the Commissioners (city and county) to the ABSI Newsletter email list

### Overview of Updated ABSI Homepage

- Mahood presented the members with a look at the new ABSI Homepage and CAB document organization
  - All members agreed upon the changes made; Mahood will keep members abreast of any additional changes made in the future
  - Hanson suggested renaming the “Strategies Worksheet” to a more descriptive term such as “Draft Strategy Plan.” Mahood will make this adjustment.

### Review of Media Distribution Plan

- Mahood asked for feedback on how to better reach local citizens of the ABS
  - Hanson, Grove, O’Connell suggested reaching out to the local newspapers
  - Hanson offered up the idea of writing “Op-Ed” articles for the local newspapers (*The Star, The Apalachicola Times, The Wakulla News, etc.*)
    - Committee agreed that this was a great idea – aiming to have first submission around mid-May
    - *Mahood* – charged with drafting first “Op-Ed” section, will have members review
    - *Hanson* – charged with bringing up this idea to the rest of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) at the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The goal is to have CAB members become guest writers for these submissions.

### In-Person Public Workshops Brainstorming\*

*\*These workshops will only occur if/when each organization allows for public involvement and attendance and COVID-19 safety precautions and guidelines can be properly executed & followed*

- O’Connell reported that the St. George Island Civic Club would be holding a “test” in-person meeting in mid-April using social distancing, masks, and BYOB food/drink. If this test meeting goes well, ABSI will be asked to present at the May meeting
  - *O’Connell* – charged with report back on test meeting
  - *Mahood* – charged with setting date/presentation with Brooke and/or Dr. Joel Trexler (Co-Principal Investigator, ABSI and the FSUCML Director)
    - Committee members would like to start asking Brooke and Trexler to do a few “tag-team” presentations over the next couple of months to one) introduce the community to Trexler and two) to work towards splitting the presentation duties between Trexler and Brooke
    - Committee members also suggested creating a baseline ABSI presentation that all committee members would feel comfortable presenting

- *Mahood* – charged with writing a blurb on ABSI for the SGI Plantation newsletter and SGI Civic Club newsletter
- O’Connell and Grove also suggested a meeting/presentation with the Eastpoint Civic Club
  - *O’Connell* – charged with contacting Ricky Jones and Lynn Martina
- Hanson suggested the Franklin County Commissioners host a workshop on ABSI for their constituents. This meeting would hopefully be slated for an evening presentation to allow for more people to attend.
  - *Grove and/or O’Connell* – charged with contacting Ricky Jones and Michael Moron
- ANERR and FSUCML are both in the works of re-opening to the public. When this occurs, ANERR would make for a great location for workshops as it is centrally located to citizens of Eastpoint, Carrabelle, and Apalachicola. FSUCML could also host a workshop and bring in citizens of Alligator Harbor, Panacea, Wakulla, and Tallahassee
- Grove suggested hosting a meeting at Alligator Harbor, possibly at the Taxpayer’s Association
  - *O’Connell* – charged with contacting Bert Bolt
- Hanson suggested creating a more casual/laid-back event for the ABSI team and locals to meet and talk.
  - A happy hour event such as “Oysters and Brews” or something to that effect where ABSI and citizens could meet at local bars and restaurants and engage with the project
    - Possible locations: Oyster City Brewing, Eastpoint Brewery, Paddy’s Raw Bar (SGI), Half Shell
- Hanson suggested reaching out to tourists to engage them with the project as well
  - Members agreed that creating an ABSI rack card would be beneficial. This could be placed in beach rental packets, on realty websites, and in tourist/visitor center offices around the region
    - *Mahood* – charged with ABSI rack card creation

### **Review of Oystermen’s Workshop for April 15, 2021**

- Mahood has been in touch with the oystermen and created a more reliable audio system set up with Kennedy Hanson at ANERR
- Mahood has emailed the rest of the CAB members and local legislators the Zoom link and incorporated the Zoom information into the ABSI newsletter and website

### **Additional Items/News**

- None

### **Next Steps**

- *Mahood* – charged with setting next Outreach meeting date, creating an ABSI rack card, writing a blurb for the SGI Plantation Newsletter and Civic Club Newsletter, setting a date/time with O’Connell for an SGI Civic Club presentation, drafting the first “Op-Ed” article, adding city and county Commissioners to ABSI newsletter list, and making adjustments to ABSI website

- *O'Connell* – charged with contacting Mahood about SGI Civic Club meeting, contacting Ricky Jones and Lynn Martina about Eastpoint Civic Club meeting, contacting Bert Bolt about Alligator Harbor meeting possibilities, and contacting Ricky Jones/Michael Moron on County Commission hosting an ABSI workshop
- *Hanson* – charged with presenting summary of Outreach Committee work at the April 21<sup>st</sup> CAB meeting