

Apalachicola Bay System Initiative Community Advisory Board Outreach & Community Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes – 28 April 2023

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.

Subcommittee Members:

The ABSI Team (FSU): Sandra Brooke (Principal Investigator), Jared Fuqua and Maddie Mahood (Outreach & Education Coordinators), Betsy Mansfield (Brooke's postdoctoral student), 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), Devin Resko (FWC).

Subcommittee Charge:

- To work with ABSI leadership and Community Advisory Board to inform the public about the development of the draft management plan, the science being conducted in the bay, and the condition of the oyster reefs.
- To create outreach & community engagement strategies that answer the public's questions about the project, and attract stakeholders and the general public to actively inform the public about the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative's goals and actions.
- To measure the effectiveness of these strategies through direct participation in achieving actions, as well as web analytics and media stories)

Agenda Items:

- Overview of May ABSI Newsletter (Mahood)
- Review of Oyster Reef Restoration Experiments (Brooke and Mahood)
 - Goal – to create larger article on restoration experiments to include in newsletter and on website and then share article with news sites
 - The Apalachicola Times, Tallahassee Democrat, Oyster Radio, Wakulla Sun/Wakulla News...what else?
- Debrief of Oystermen's Workshop/Outreach Event on April 12 (Everyone)
- Recap of CAB Meeting Strategy Feedback from Dr. Opel and Kellie (Everyone)
 - Next Steps – what are we missing? What can we enact next?
- Create social media "damage control" strategy/checklist (Mahood)
- Additional News Items
- Adjourn

Overview of May ABSI Newsletter (Mahood)

- Mahood laid out the key components for newsletter – CAB update, hatchery update, and the bulk of the newsletter will be about the restoration experiments. All committee members agreed and *Mahood* will send out draft once restoration experiments are completed.

- Review of Oyster Reef Restoration Experiments (Brooke and Mahood)
 - Goal – to create larger article on restoration experiments to include in newsletter and on website and then share article with news sites
 - This is in the works! Hoping to have article completed and distributed the week of May 15th
 - The Apalachicola Times, Tallahassee Democrat, Oyster Radio, Wakulla Sun/Wakulla News...what else?
 - Committee members agree on this strategy

Debrief of Oystermen's Workshop/Outreach Event on April 12 (Everyone)

- All members agreed it went really well
 - Had more local turnout than previous meetings
 - Pros:
 - More informal, casual gathering to talk one-on-one
 - Not so presentation heavy
 - Citizens had the chance to really meet the ABSI team and ask questions about each project component
 - Good length of time
 - Cons:
 - The room could get a bit loud
 - A lot of repeat question/answers
 - For next time (August 9th):
 - Hybrid FWC and ABSI
 - 5-minute presentation from ABSI and FWC at 6:00 and 7:00 pm to give brief overview/updates and answer some FAQs ahead of time. Giving it again at 7:00 allows for the next wave of drop-ins to see it as well.
 - Maybe have little "update cards" for ABSI and FWC so people can look over the most recent data/projects and then approach with questions
- Next Steps CAB Meeting Strategy

Recap of CAB Meeting Strategy Feedback from Dr. Opel and Kellie Keys (Everyone)

- For now, we seem to have hit most of the key suggestions from Dr. Opel and Kellie Keys
 - Added earlier "public comment" opportunities to CAB meetings
 - Implemented "ABSI" branding on all social media posts, printed materials, and emails
 - More frequent (2-3 times a week) social media postings
 - Implemented boosted and targeted Facebook posts via zipcode
 - Monitoring all social media comments and shares (mostly on Facebook), as well as any controversial or inaccurate postings by other groups
 - One-on-one contact with citizens and key figures in the area. Sandra and Joel have quite a few phone calls with key figures one-on-one and events such as the Community Workshop allow ABSI staff and faculty to interact as well
- Strategies we could still implement:
 - Facebook polls – Q&As to the public as to what they want to know about ABSI
 - Facebook videos/oyster radio ads
- Strategies that are best left for the next phase/Successor Group:
 - More concise name/less acronyms

- Physical signs posted around Apalachicola and Eastpoint (think end of the bridge, in well-trafficked places)
- More video content

Create social media “damage-control” strategy/checklist (Mahood)

- Mahood will research and create a “damage-control” strategy for when ABSI or any future project is faced with controversy in print/paper media or social media
- Mahood will send this to committee

Additional News Items

- Resko noted that TNC’s back-up date for their next workshop is July 26th – the same as the CAB meeting and Community Workshop
 - To avoid any potential conflicts, the CAB planning committee has moved the date to August 9th for both the meeting and workshop
- Hanson inquired on status of CAB Key Messages document
 - Mahood will finalize and send back to committee for approval
- Mahood noted that new ABSI rack cards are forthcoming
 - Grove gave great suggestions to put ABSI name and contact at the TOP of the card, so that is visible when it is sitting in a rack
- Mahood noted that a future ABSI post will be on our three new CAB members – Otlice Amison, Grayson Shepard, and Brett Lolley
 - Waiting on a picture of Lolley and then will draft and post
- Ackerman noted that Cameron Baxley will be taking on her role as Riverkeeper and she will stay in the Executive Director role
 - Mahood will begin to send CAB materials to Baxley as well

Adjourn

Next Steps:

- *Mahood* – continue social media strategy, combine edits for Key Messages document, create ABSI newsletter, finalize Key Messages document, finalize new ABSI rack card, create social media “damage-control” sheet