



OARS 35th Annual Meeting Minutes of June 28, 2021 Meeting

Attendees: Board: Allan Fierce, Paul Fitzgerald, Lisa Vernegaard, Ingeborg Hegemann, Jeff Collins, Pam Rockwell, Kirk Doggett, Susan McArthur

Staff: Alison Field-Juma, Bill Froberg, Julia Khorana, Ben Wetherill

Members: Approx. 49 Members attended remotely

Welcome: Allan Fierce, President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and reviewed the procedures since the meeting was held using Zoom and would be recorded.

Approval of Minutes: Draft Annual Meeting Minutes of Nov. 16, 2020, were approved by a unanimous vote of members present.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Fitzgerald, Treasurer, reported that FY 2020 had been an unusual year with the following key events: In March and April, everything shut down and donations to OARS stopped. OARS applied for and received a federal Payroll Protection loan which was forgiven. Despite a slight decrease in member and corporate giving overall, OARS ended 2020 in a good position. We are very pleased that we maintained our membership levels during this difficult time. Our expenses decreased slightly because we did not have in-person events. OARS also moved to a new space in the same building which is slightly cheaper, saving some money. In summary, total revenue was \$248,320 and total expenses were \$249,161. He noted that OARS depends on members to support our work and thanked everyone for stepping up during the difficult year.

Board of Directors Election: Ingeborg Hegemann, Vice President, introduced the slate of board members up for re-election for three-year terms:

- Allan Fierce, Stow
- Paul Goldman, Marlborough
- Richard Lawrence, Hudson

She asked if there were any other nomination from members; there were none. The slate was approved by a unanimous vote of members present.

2021: Eyes on the Future Alison Field-Juma, OARS Executive Director, noted that it had been ten years since the organization changed from OAR to OARS to cover the whole Sudbury-Assabet-Concord watershed! The Board really stepped up during the pandemic and helped figure out all the adjustments that had to be made. They also devoted a significant portion of each board meeting to discussing diversity, equity and inclusion. OARS continued to gain strong support from donors, our cities and towns, and businesses large and small. She thanked the staff for their work to keep the data collection uninterrupted despite social distancing. This was the second year of collaboration with the National Park Service collecting dragonfly larvae to measure mercury contamination. It was the third year of bacteria monitoring and the second of a project to track down the sources of high bacteria contamination in Lowell. New work has included building a coalition of cities and towns working together on reducing cross-boundary climate impacts and building community resilience. OARS continues to advocate at all levels of government for adequate funding for science, water permits that reflect the realities of climate change, and reducing pollutants in our rivers that can affect both human health and aquatic health, like PFAS. The annual River Cleanup became a successful Team-up Clean-up. She emphasized that OARS' members are the most important partners, providing half of all funding enabling new work on mercury in wildlife, developing virtual education programming, and helping people enjoy the rivers during the pandemic.

Kathy Sferra, Stow Conservation Director, presented: **Local Wildlife Seen Through the Lens of a Trail Camera!**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.