

**Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council**  
**October 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes**  
New England Aquarium, Boston, Massachusetts

Participants<sup>1</sup>

- Ms. Elizabeth L. Cheney, Energy Seat
- Ms. April Crow, Other Business Seat #1
- Ms. Sophia Mendelsohn, Other Business Seat #3
- Ms. Andrea Pinabell, Travel and Tourism Seat #3
- Ms. Lisa M. Swanson, Transportation Seat
- Ms. Melissa Trotto, Other Business Seat #4<sup>2</sup>
- Ms. Maura Welch, Travel and Tourism Seat #2
- Mr. John Armor, NOAA
- Mr. Matthew Brookhart, NOAA
- Dr. Rebecca R. Holyoke, NOAA
- Dr. Craig MacDonald, NOAA
- Ms. Rosemarie McKeeby, NOAA
- Ms. Elizabeth Moore, NOAA
- Mr. Matthew Stout, NOAA
- Ms. Kate Thompson, NOAA
- Dr. Nigella Hillgarth, New England Aquarium
- Mr. Jason Patlis, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Members of the Public

- Mr. James M. Haussener, California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference
- Ms. Carliane D. Johnson, SeaJay Environmental<sup>3</sup>

**Opening and Introductions**

Dr. Rebecca Holyoke, National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) convened the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' Business Advisory Council meeting at the New England Aquarium's Harborside Learning Lab in Boston, Massachusetts. This meeting marked the sixth meeting of the council overall, and the fourth in-person meeting. Following introductions, Dr. Holyoke provided an overview of the meeting that specifically emphasized intended outcomes. Lastly, Dr. Holyoke concluded her introduction with a public service announcement about Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary starring Adam Gardner, from the popular alternative rock or indie band, Guster. Filmed at the New England Aquarium, the video was a result of a partnership between the ONMS and REVERB, the environmental non-profit founded by Gardner and his wife, which encourages musicians and their fans to take action toward promoting a more sustainable future.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Terry Garcia (Communications and Marketing Seat), Dr. Mark Penning (Other Business Seat #2), Mr. Rich Pruitt (Travel and Tourism Seat #2), Mr. Joseph Stella (Recreation Seat #1) and Mr. Steven E. Stock (Foundation Seat #2) were unable to attend.

<sup>2</sup> Ms. Trotto attended portions of the meeting via conference call.

<sup>3</sup> Ms. Johnson attended portions of the meeting via conference call.

### **Introducing the New England Aquarium President and CEO**

John Armor, Acting Director, ONMS, introduced Dr. Nigella Hillgarth, President and CEO of the New England Aquarium. Dr. Hillgarth has been with the New England Aquarium for about one and a half years. Previously, Dr. Hillgarth renovated exhibits and expanded community outreach at the San Diego Birch Aquarium. John noted that her emphasis on outreach and education similarly underscores the ONMS and council's focus on communities. Moreover, Dr. Hillgarth's work extends beyond the aforementioned aquariums to major field experiences all over the world.

### **Welcome Address**

In her welcome address, Dr. Nigella Hillgarth, President and Chief Executive Officer, New England Aquarium, discussed the aquarium's wonderful partnership with Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. Dr. Hillgarth went on to describe a recent trip to National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa, where she went snorkeling and saw the largest coral reef in the world in Ta'u, and visited Rose Atoll too. Dr. Hillgarth noted that she is a "bird person by profession,"; therefore, the experience was extraordinary.

Moreover, the New England Aquarium conducted a research expedition to American Samoa, on Phoenix Island, in particular. The purpose of the expedition was to look at the coral reefs around American Samoa, specifically regarding coral bleaching. Scientists determined that, while there are some indications of bleaching, said indications are relatively minor. Additionally, the aquarium even counted 300,000 seabirds on an island a person can walk around in only twenty minutes!

Dr. Hillgarth additionally mentioned previous visits to Monterey Bay and Olympic Coast national marine sanctuaries, but that she has most frequently been to Stellwagen Bank, and values the aquarium's partnership with Stellwagen enormously. She encourages people to experience an extraordinary marine protected area that is coincidentally very easy to visit. Under her leadership, and personal passion for education, the aquarium works to communicate the importance of oceans to the public. To that end, since its construction in 1979, the New England Aquarium has carried out a lot of research and conservation projects, including local work with North Atlantic right whales.

Dr. Hillgarth concluded with her gratitude for the council's attention.

### **Understanding Our Direction**

John Armor, Acting Director, ONMS initially addressed his new title as Acting Director. [The previous director, Daniel J. Basta, retired from the office after more than 36 years of service to the federal government.] John indicated that, as the Deputy Director, NOAA leadership asked him to serve as the current Acting Director. In spite of this transition in leadership, John proudly stated that ONMS did not "miss a single beat" and will continue to proceed ahead.

Next, John briefly summarized the ONMS and National Marine Sanctuary System (NMSS) for novice audience members. The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 170,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American

Samoa. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments. Specifically, Craig MacDonald, Superintendent, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary manages the sanctuary in closest proximity to this BAC meeting in Boston.

The ONMS also oversees the Maine Protected Areas Center, a joint venture between the Departments of Commerce and Interior.

Next, John segued into a special announcement from President Barack Obama. In October, at the Our Oceans Conference in Chile, the president revealed that NOAA will start the process to designate two new national marine sanctuaries: Lake Michigan—Wisconsin and Mallows Bay—Potomac River. For approximately fifteen years, no national marine sanctuaries were designated; therefore, President Obama’s announcement marks an important hallmark for the ONMS and NMSS. Furthermore, John elaborated that the designation process is a sign that both the ONMS’s mission and how it engages with the public matter. John remarked that now is an exciting time to be with the office, and he looks forward to the future.

Following news about two potential new sanctuary designations, John recounted his focus over that past five months. Specifically, he discussed his efforts to talk with ONMS leadership and staff regarding how to make and keep the program relevant. In order to increase awareness about and ensure the long-term success of national marine sanctuaries, we need to establish and maintain meaningful connections with the public “that count.”

For example, John referenced Dr. Hillgarth’s visit to National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa (NMSAS). NMSAS is one sanctuary where the ONMS has really attempted to “make it count” because most people in American Samoa do not know, or care about, Rose Atoll; therefore, it is the role of the ONMS to “bring the place to the people.” John complimented Gene Brighthouse, Superintendent, NMSAS for an amazing job working with children, the community college, and adults to achieve this goal.

Conversely, the ONMS faces a bigger challenge here in Boston, albeit contrasted with more available opportunities. John highlighted the BAC’s role in creating said opportunities, whether the council realized it or not.

Concurrently, he elaborated that the ONMS has two key objectives for the BAC. First, the ONMS will listen to the council’s advice, and then report back with updates. For example, following the council’s suggestion, the ONMS shorted its social media messages from 30 minutes to 30 seconds to a few minutes in length—Earth is Blue.

In regards to the Centers of Excellence, one of which Craig manages near Boston, the ONMS leadership team discussed what the centers are trying to accomplish overall. Specifically, is the name for the centers misleading? How can the ONMS revamp the concept and establish a place of collaboration with expertise from the ocean community?

Second, John asked the BAC for its help to plot a course forward. He introduced the rest of the day’s agenda, that speaks to this question, with sessions from: (1.) Elizabeth Moore, regarding

the National Marine Sanctuary Act's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; (2.) Matt Brookhart about the ONMS's strategic plan; (3.) Kate Thompson on the *Earth is Blue* Internet and social media campaign; and (4.) Jason Patlis and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's role in a new strategic vision.

John concluded with his opinion that the present marks a pivotal moment for the council. Generally, he stated that this is the meeting in which the ONMS will start to better integrate the Business Advisory Council into its everyday work in an attempt to fully realize its goals and objectives.

### **Defining a Path Forward**

Matt Brookhart, Acting Deputy Director, ONMS facilitated a session on the ONMS's goal to write and adopt a new strategic plan. Matt underscored his gratitude for any advice or suggestions from the council on the outdated plan during this pivotal time in the program. With two potential new sites on the horizon, Matt elaborated that the new strategic plan must effectively utilize communications to simultaneously account for the entire system of semi-autonomous units and grow with the program. In response to the old and new versions of the strategic plan below, the following summarizes questions and comments from council members and invited guests received during the session: . . .”

#### ***Strategic Plan (2005-2015)***

##### *Previous Mission*

Identify, protect, conserve, and enhance the natural and cultural resources, values, and qualities of the National Marine Sanctuary System for this and future generations throughout the nation.

##### *Previous Vision*

The National Marine Sanctuary Program is a world-class system of sanctuaries that protect the nation's natural and cultural marine resources for this and future generations and provides both national and international leadership for marine conservation.

#### ***2015 Leadership Team Meeting***

##### *Draft Mission*

Protect special marine places to promote a healthy ocean [and inspire ocean conservation].

##### *Draft Vision*

National marine sanctuaries create a healthier ocean and vibrant, engaged communities.

#### ***Highlights from Discussion***

- The word “protect” jumps out in the draft mission.
- It sets a particular connotation for what national marine sanctuaries do. To so many, it means law enforcement and rules.
- It is similar to the the word “sanctuary” which often leads to people thinking it's a place you can't go.
- The new, shorter versions are better – closer to where they should be.
- The word “ocean” is also confusing, especially since the two potential new sanctuaries are not in the ocean.

- People who aren't affiliated may not associate with national marine sanctuaries because these areas aren't in the ocean.
- ONMS has often used marine and Great Lakes (but we're adding more words back in).
- Consider "environment" since it incorporates community vitality, marine and land. It could read something like: **Protect special marine places to promote a healthy environment.**
- The mission includes double/redundant words (i.e., marine and ocean) and two verbs (i.e., protect and inspire).
- Considering swapping the order of your mission statement so it's more like: **Conserve and enhance special places by inspiring people to protect them on their own.**
- Conserve allows for protection and includes communities' interest as well. Pulls it together into one.
- General agreement that getting buy-in is good but that we need to go in with a sales pitch.
- Be clear so everyone can rattle it off.
- Use simple, concise, active words that are clear to a seven-year old.
- Concerned about what the word "vibrant" means. "Engaged" seems clearer.
- If you want "vibrant" to relate to economics, then you would say **profitable or thriving.**
- ONMS has been concerned about overselling our economic value to communities. Council challenged that since this is supposed to be about a vision – something you are aspiring to – so it's okay to have communities along the path (i.e., some further along than others).
- Do sanctuaries "create" these things or "empower"? Suggest starting with "**National marine sanctuaries empower . . .**"
- You can add more to your vision. If, for example, the number one thing you are looking at is public-private partnerships, you should include it in your vision.
- Once your mission and vision are at 80% then it's time to turn to the goals.
- Get to where you are comfortable that you have addressed community needs and then go from there.
- Make sure you capture your Director's vision of "**relevance**". It needs to be in one of these two statements.
- Why do you always use "ocean" instead of waterways or environment?
- Oceans are such an enormous amount of the planet and all freshwater is connected.
- **National marine sanctuaries empower a healthy ocean relevant to communities.**
- Consider how to incorporate engaged communities (not just aware).
- Until everyone in the organization sees their role in the plan, mission, and vision, it's just a document. If they actually see what they are contributing, it will start to drive things.
- You need an internal and external campaign once you have this mission, vision, plan.
- Revisited "protect" versus "conserve" and led to: **Conserve to promote the protection of . . .or . . . Conserve and protect for the future.** Trying to incorporate the idea of a higher standard of conservation within a sanctuary.

*Potential Mission (assuming the above comments)*

Conserve and promote the protection of special marine and Great Lake places for future generations.

*Potential Vision (assuming the above comments)*

National marine sanctuaries empower a healthy ocean relevant to communities.

**Aligning with Our Foundation**

Jason Patlis, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) held a session that summarized the foundation's accomplishments and partnership with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. With a new strategic direction, Jason discussed accompanying new logos.

Jason elaborated that the foundation, nearly doubling in revenue, is different from an advocacy group and other foundations and prioritizes grants for research and conservation, in addition to funding expeditions. For instance, the foundation acquired a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) for High Definition (HD) imagery and sampling, and funded arctic research, mooring buoy deployments, and marine mammal acoustic research and disentanglement programs. The foundation also contributed to exhibits, signs, and visitors centers.

Jason continued with the foundation's commitment to advocacy since 2010. He highlighted the foundation's involvement in NOAA's new sanctuary site regulations and an increase in congressional engagement over the last six years.

Jason then talked about the Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund grants that support projects that honor former U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings's commitment to increase the American public's understanding of the ocean and promote opportunities for all Americans to take action for ocean stewardship. He looks forward to opportunities that might leverage corporate funds to further enhance this program.

Jason concluded his remarks with Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW), emphasizing its political and public outreach, and showed a video from President and Mrs. George W. Bush who received the 2015 Leadership Award at CHOW. Lastly, Jason ran a video from OCEANSLIVE!, live broadcasts from the ONMS Outreach and Education team during breaks at CHOW.

Council members and invited guests had the following questions and comments during this session:

- People liked the logo change.
- *After the ONMS finalizes its new strategic plan, will the foundation look to complement it with its own vision and mission statements?*
  - *Response:* Currently, the NMSF is considering an answer to that question. One answer might be that the ONMS and the foundation do not have to “sing the same notes” as long as they “sing in harmony.”
- *Does the foundation have a Business Advisory Council or equivalent?*
  - *Response:* The NMSF has a board. The board has gone through a few iterations, and now sits more corporate executives than ever before, therefore contributing to a more robust board overall.
- *How does the foundation do financially on CHOW?*

- *Response:* This is a discussion currently before the NMSF's trustees. Fundraising events need to be reported differently for tax purposes. Here, ticket sales fund symposia that anyone can attend free of charge. In past, the foundation was in "the red" when it added staff time; now, it is in "the black" with a small profit margin, but again, CHOW is not a fundraiser.
- *The gala tickets are expensive; however, the individual sessions are free?*
  - *Response:* Yes, the individual sessions are free. The foundation's budget for CHOW increased from \$250,000 to \$380,000 because costs have concurrently increased. The NMSF does not want to make CHOW a fundraiser for fear of losing support from other ocean-based organizations.
- *Is the NMSF interested in marketing at CHOW?*
  - *Response:* Yes, the foundation is interested in increased marketing at CHOW, the foundation's biggest platform to partner with the corporate community.

### **Leveraging Our 50th Anniversary**

Elizabeth (Liz) Moore, Chief of Staff for Strategic Partnerships, ONMS led a session on the ONMS's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022. Liz stressed the benefits of the ONMS's partnership with the U.S. National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior, which will celebrate its own 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016.

Liz continued with a list of previously received, helpful suggestions from the BAC. For instance, individual council members talked with Liz about 50 gifts for the ocean or a 50 piece puzzle that forms a new picture and message, and how the keystone of the campaign should focus on public engagement.

Furthermore, Liz elaborated that the ONMS fully acknowledges that the anniversary cannot just look back at the past 50 years of the program, but that it should simultaneously look ahead to the next 50 years and beyond. There have been discussions about creating "a call to action," taking ONMS mascot, Sanctuary Sam, to the "next level," or even developing a business plan, which the ONMS has never had before.

Liz concluded that she hopes this session can provide additional ideas for the impending anniversary in only seven years! Specifically, she asked the BAC: "How can the ONMS position itself for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and maintain its future growth?"

Council members and invited guests had the following questions and comments during this session:

- *Response:* It is interesting to think about what you want when you turn 100. In our world, seven years is a long time. I think action oriented components of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be very important to get the ONMS to where it wants to go when it turns 100.
- *Response:* At our last meeting, we talked about hands-on ideas from *Shark Tanks*, and specific ideas on a call regarding marketing. 2022 is a long way away, but the ONMS should approach public-private partnerships now.
- *Is it the ONMS's intention to use the 50 year mark to build towards the 100 year mark, or will the 100 year plan already be in place to push at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary?*

- *Response:* A bit of both. What are some of the other things we can do in the next seven years and beyond to carry it forward.
- *Response:* Go to the people that will carry it through in 2072. How far can kids go? Let us see what the kids say.
- *Response:* That video that showed the woman that said she's connected to the ocean; love that. How are you connected to the ocean? A social media push, maybe.
- *Fifty gifts or projects, are those new or re-purposed?*
  - *Response:* A combination of both.
  - *Response:* Finding, organizing, launching, completing, and evaluating 50 projects in seven years is daunting.
  - *Response:* Connections to ethnic minorities—this is a big thing. Google is best in class. It is not 50 gifts for the ocean, it is 50 gifts for different communities.
- *What does the ocean mean to us and our children? In 50 years, where we are now may be underwater.*
  - *Response:* Resiliency is a big deal to the National Ocean Service (NOS) right now; therefore, it is an important aspect of what we need to communicate.
  - *Response:* There was a conversation about creating a time capsule; however, where would we keep it with sea level change?
  - *Response:* I love the idea that the ONMS will be a “thought leader.”
  - *Response:* Conservation International changed its image very deliberately a few years ago: “People need nature to thrive; nature does not need people.” We need people to engage with sanctuaries because then they will protect them. Change from a gift for the ocean to a gift for sanctuaries or communities
  - *Response:* Maybe there is the 100: What does Sally's kid want for the future?
- *At what stage should the ONMS bring the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary plans back to the Business Advisory Council?*
  - *Response:* At every meeting we should continue to talk about it.
  - *Response:* I would like to see a list of things you all love.
- *Does the ONMS have good social media?*
  - *Response:* Yes! The ONMS is so well equipped!
- *What has the NPS done to be successful?*
  - *Response:* We have close connections and we are talking to the NPS. What can we do now so that sanctuaries are as well-known as national parks?
  - *Response:* What came out of Mission 66 is not all about lines on a map. The NPS expanded to national seashores and national historic landmarks and developed other tools to become more relevant and reach more people beyond national parks. Sanctuaries are great, but we need to take a page out of the NPS playbook and be recognized and influential in marine conservation beyond these lines on a map.
  - *Response:* There is almost a kind of confidence that came from the park system as it emerged in American society regarding where the NPS fits in and how it communicates about itself; the NPS occupies a place in American history.
- *I wonder if we are too focused on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and should instead concentrate on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary? Get every kid in a sanctuary?*
  - *Response:* Not a lot of accessibility.



- *Response:* Education coordinators are already challenged regarding how to increase awareness and interconnectedness.
- *Response:* It does not impact the ocean; it impacts the vibrant engaged communities.
- *Response:* Do people in Iowa really feel passionate about what comes from California?
- *Response:* Go at it with a really national lens.
- *Response:* How do we tell the story?

### **Experiencing the New England Aquarium**

Participants were provided a behind-the-scenes look into what goes into caring for and increasing public awareness of the living marine resources at the New England Aquarium.

### **Revisiting *Earth is Blue***

Kate Thompson, Chief, Education and Outreach Division, ONMS began with a statement that her division has already utilized BAC feedback from the last meeting. She then went on to discuss *Earth is Blue* and its launch almost one year earlier. Specifically, social media can be a bit intimidating in the federal government because there are a lot of rules that need to be followed; however, the ONMS noticed that the U.S. National Park Service shared one photo every day, and the ONMS wanted to start a similar awareness campaign with one photo every day and one video each week. Today, *Earth is Blue* is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Then, Kate showed and elaborated on the initial *Earth is Blue* video that framed the entire campaign, in that it should tell the story of the National Marine Sanctuary System (NMSS) itself and how the system impacts the ocean. Kate drew a distinction between the program's choice to pursue public engagement, and not simply awareness, and the challenges faced, especially on social media where "you only have a second to tell a story."

Next, Kate provided an overview of *Earth is Blue* statistics for each of the aforementioned social media platforms that highlighted increases over its first year. Every photo is available on the *Earth is Blue* webpage. This year, the most popular video posted was about the expansion of Cordell Bank and Greater Farallones national marine sanctuaries; the White House even shared the video!

After a series of short video clips, Kate continued with examples of the campaign's adaptability. For instance, *Earth is Blue* videos no longer have lengthy introductions that lost viewers' attention. Additionally, Kate asked what additional platforms could maximize public engagement.

Recently, the *Earth is Blue* campaign decided to pursue Tumblr; it launches next week. Here, the ONMS can interact with a new community of users to discuss what the ONMS does and why it is important.

Kate concluded with the *Earth is Blue* one year anniversary video, which featured Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, and charged the BAC

to provide any additional comments or questions, especially regarding Earth is Blue's primary goals to increase awareness with #EarthisBlue and its presence on new platforms. In other words, "Where can the Earth is Blue campaign go from here? How can the ONMS increase engagement?"

Council members and invited guests had the following questions and comments during this session:

- *Last year, we did a waste campaign on Instagram with a photo contest. Hotels took pictures with hashtag in order to engage hotels; a contest is a good way to go.*
  - *Response:* The ONMS held a photo contest that received 30-40 entries.
- *Does the campaign have a membership of any kind?*
  - *Response:* A constituent list; however, what partners can make the Earth is Blue campaign "big"?
  - *Response:* Congratulations! Compared to our last meeting, this is amazing!
  - *Response:* Love the pin.
- *How can the Earth is Blue partner with Jet Blue, TripAdvisor, etc.?*
  - *Response:* We [TripAdvisor] could probably do a lot. Earth is Blue is high quality and well-branded; therefore, we would be happy to work with you. Social media offers an easy medium to do things. We are also about to do a content hub.
- *What is the most popular? What content do you like the most? We want to share research too, not just charismatic megafauna. What is most popular for you?*
  - *Response:* We have two million Twitter followers. Two posts that do well on Facebook include posts with people and those with puppies. Shots of people are great.
  - *Response:* People want to share, "Look, I am here!"
  - *Response:* Most likes and shares originate from our sustainability department. Examples include turtles, associates interacting with nature, and animals and people.
- *Is that the end goal? Likes and thumbs up? Are you trying to take that to some other place with types of tools and information?*
  - *Response:* Engagement with public opens up a bigger story and can engage a brand that provides the general public with what is important to us. How do we tell a story that is engaging to the public?
  - *Response:* That is so key, how to take the next step. A healthy environment ties to a healthy economy. How can we take that next step and make that correlation?
  - *Response:* In bits and pieces. That turtle was in Indonesia, so it helps tell the story of a hotel in Indonesia. Similarly, find bits and pieces around the world to tell a comprehensive story. What is giving business the best bang for their buck? The link to that property's page. People are going to this location because they have seen we are doing "x,y, and z"; however, it is difficult.
  - *Response:* It is hard. Engaged members are more valuable than non-engaged members. You are after the right thing—engagement is where the payoff is; however, it is not easy to tie back to you or directly measure it.
- *Have you used Tumblr?*

- *Response:* Yes; however, we have not really seen re-blogging through Tumblr. Instead, Instagram is more useful for us. LinkedIn is also really useful.
- *Response:* I would not worry about a platform as much as a timeframes for different platforms.
- *Response:* That is the good thing about Tumblr, it has a community.

### **A Glimpse into Corporate America: Learning from TripAdvisor**

Ms. Maura Welch, TripAdvisor's Director of Brand Marketing, provided participants with an opportunity to learn more about the purpose, direction, and approach of TripAdvisor. She highlighted how they see themselves as "being in the happiness business" and the emotions travelers move through preparing for, participating in, and reflecting on their travels. She explained why people travel, and the value of people connecting – across countries and languages – to share their unique experiences and recommendations. She provided a few statistics on the reach of TripAdvisor (e.g., 375M unique users per month and 84M email-able members) and how they strive to reach consumers through every phase of their journey. Ms. Welch discussed how reviewers are the heart and soul of the community and why it's important to (and they do) develop ways of thanking or recognizing their efforts (e.g., 11,000 awards per year). She discussed the volume of images related to water, how more water often equates to higher click rates, and how many of us dream of beaches and the ocean.

Council members and participants had the following questions and comments during this session:

- *Are the rankings, ratings, evaluations, etc. very subjective?*
  - *Response:* It's an algorithm.
- *How do you account for someone loves it but someone else hates it?*
  - *Response:* People often throw out the best and worst reviews and look in the middle. Typically, people review between six and 12 reviews.
- *What's amazing is that there are so many people who acknowledge that they couldn't be in business without TripAdvisor bringing them business.*
- *NOAA and national marine sanctuaries need to invite more people into the conversation so you can have more people engaged.*
- *You should do a mini mission and vision exercise for your social media efforts. Once you have identified your mission and vision, then you can propose it to companies – for example, like JetBlue, and develop something even better together.*
- *Your video quality is very strong. You might want to consider reviewing our "Why we travel" campaign. Individuals submit their favorite photo and tell TripAdvisor why it's their favorite. Sanctuaries should ask for reviews on TripAdvisor (e.g., from whale watch companies).*
- *How could we combine Earth is Blue, JetBlue, TripAdvisor, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, etc. to common purpose around something like World Ocean Day?*
- *On your redesigned webpage, why doesn't the photo go all the way down or across the page?*
- *National Park Service and Sanctuaries should consider linking together with a standard header.*

### **Potential Administrative Actions**

Advisory council representatives were asked to consider adopting the meeting summary for the April 22-23, 2015, Sanctuary System Business Advisory Council meeting. No revisions or objections were noted. As such, the draft meeting summary will be updated to reflect that it is a final meeting summary.

### **Public Comment**

One comment was received during the opportunity for public comment. Mr. James M. Haussener, Executive Director of the California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference (CMANC), presented participants with printed copies of the positions of CMANC on the re-authorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and Our Protected Coast Coalition on the *Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary* nomination (attached). He spoke to CMANC's position that there should be no new or expanded sites within the National Marine Sanctuary System. Additionally, he commented on the conversations he and others have had with National Ocean Service (NOS) and NOAA leadership, as well as to his feeling that the program is rushing to protect large areas of the ocean without partaking in marine spatial planning. Mr. Haussener encouraged council members to work with the NOAA Administrator to appropriately address the concerns of harbors, ports, and coastal communities relative to national marine sanctuaries.

### **Looking Ahead**

John Armor, Acting Director, ONMS showed the previously cited video of President Obama's announcement from the Our Ocean Conference in Chile and once again, underscored the significance of the new site designation process. Before adjourning, John asked the council to reflect on the meeting overall and the Business Advisory Council's future partnership with the ONMS. Specifically, he charged members to consider, "How can the ONMS maximize the BAC's efficiency? What should the BAC try to achieve and how can it get there?"

John concluded the day in Boston with praise for the meeting's productivity and constructive presentations and discussion, and inquired about the BAC's thoughts regarding the format.

Council members and invited guests had the following questions and comments during this session:

- *Was the structure of today's meeting positive or beneficial?*
  - *Response:* Today felt more like a working session; I appreciate that. Good insight provided.
  - *Response:* Today gave me pause. Some meetings I felt like we were giving business advice. Conversely, today, we got into mission and vision. We have never had a dissenting view here—the public comment gave me pause. I think it is important for us to understand the range of viewpoints.
  - *Response:* I agree. I appreciated being able to provide business insights and how those can help the ONMS reach its goals. You can get more out of this group by giving us more of a "behind the curtain" look like we got today. This group is more helpful to you in terms of strategy and how to navigate through a complex organization.

- *I think you can better deliver this advice and recommendations; it is not all roses and sunshine. For the first several meetings, maybe it has been our pitch to you—the refined message; however, I agree, that in order for you to be more effective, you need to understand the ONMS and its challenges.*

*One point to think about is our next meeting and whether to have it at a sanctuary site, like, for example, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). FKNMS is going through an extensive management plan review. The ability to see and interact with ONMS staff, the sanctuary advisory council, and diverse constituent groups could prove highly beneficial. Often, it is about the process, and not just the outcome; therefore, we are trying to include as many people as possible along our journey, inviting the BAC to observe and participate.*

- *We talked so much about community engagement; therefore, where can we see that in action?*
  - *Response:* Maybe we should hold a BAC meeting in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (TBNMS) in order to learn from TBNMS, and then go to a contrasting location with less or poor public engagement.
  - *Response:* I would argue that FKNMS is a window into everything we deal with in sanctuaries. Issues, partnerships, etc.—also a lot of different sectors display a wide range of perspective from love to hate. One of the tools or mediums that overcame negativity in Alpena was the development of relationships; we do not manage these places from D.C. or regional offices. Now is a great time for such a visit.
  - *Response:* It would be good for a representative from this council to go to the Sanctuary Advisory Council Summit. Dr. Holyoke will send information about the meeting held the week of January 10, 2016 in Annapolis, MD.
  - *Response:* We will look at the calendar and propose potential options and times, evaluate the pros and cons of each site, and make a decision henceforth.
  - *Response:* Excellent meeting; impressive and very productive.

John stated that everything talked about will be iterative, and thanked the Business Advisory Council members and guests for their time.

To finish the day, Dr. Rebecca Holyoke, National Advisory Council Coordinator, ONMS announced that a new representative, Elissa Loughman with Patagonia, will join the Business Advisory Council.