Spring 2017 NEERS Meeting at UConn’s Avery Point, March 16-18

**Business Meeting Minutes**

* Call to order
* Reading of the minutes of the last meeting
  + This was waived
* Officer Reports
  + President (Sara Grady)
    - Sara gave an update from the NEERS Board. This included a mention that there might be a NEERS/NERRS combined meeting in the Spring of 2018.
    - She also introduced the concept of a mentoring program for the students.
    - We will need a new student representative on the Executive Committee in the near future.
    - CERF Update (on behalf of Hilary Neckles)
  + Treasurer Report (Courtney Schmidt)
    - As of March 15, 2017, the NEERS checking account contains $11,930 and the CD has $20,169. The Student Endowment CD has $32,270 and the savings account has 418,851.
    - NEERS has received substantial donations to the Marshall Pregnall Award. This award hasn’t been created yet, but will most likely be an undergraduate travel award. Perhaps on the order of $100. One important stipulation of this award is that the student will not have to present to receive it.
    - A big thank you to our Fall 2016 Meeting Sponsors: URI’s Graduate School of Oceanography, CERF, URI’s College of Environmental & Life Sciences, Xylem/YSI, WHOI Sea Grant, RPS ASA, Stantec, ESS Group, URI’s Coastal Institute, RI Sea Grant, and MIT Sea Grant.
    - Fall 2016 Meeting Finances:
      * Meeting income: Registration = $17,416 and Donations = $4,367.25
      * Meeting expenses: Meeting = $21,266.79 and Awards = $833
      * Total: $316.54 overall meeting loss (1.43% of the total cost)
      * Other:
        + Dues collected at the meeting: $985
        + Student endowment (donations, dues): $3,470
        + Expenses: computer & accessories, web hosting, CERF Travel award, CERF Governing Board = $1,768.39
    - Fall 2016 Meeting Stats:
      * 140 registrants, 63% pre-registered
        + 72% members, 54% students, and 57% non-members pre-registered
  + Secretary Report (Autumn Oczkowski)
    - Feedback on the Fall 2016 NEERS meeting on Block Island:
      * 94% of people rated the meeting as excellent or above average.
      * People still love the location and felt that the meeting was well organized, but felt that we may have outgrown the Spring House.
      * The Screen too small issue: we will BYOS (bring you own screen) in the future.
      * Good content, diverse presentations
      * The symposium was a big hit.
      * So was Walter’s Family Feud game
      * #1 reason people come to NEERS Meetings: Networking
      * Overall: Yes to Block Island, more mixed on Spring House Hotel
    - Feedback from the students:
      * What students want:
        + Want to hear more about the ‘day in the life’ of people outside of academia
        + Advice on writing & publishing papers
      * There is interest in participating in a mentoring program at future NEERS meetings
        + Non-academic career
        + General advice for navigating a scientific career
        + Better understanding of pathways
      * Workshops that students would appreciate:
        + Presentation skills
        + how to set up collaborations
        + technical training
        + interview skills (a few students mentioned this)
        + CV editing
        + how to reach out to potential advisors
  + Committee Reports
    - Webmaster (Brett Branco)
      * Brett asked that we come to him with any registration issues or challenges
      * He reminds us that registration and membership are done separately. Renew your membership first and then register for the meeting.
        + Attendees admitted to confusion about this separation and Sandy MacFarlane suggested an email blast.
    - Newsletter (Sara Grady)
      * This most recent newsletter was longer and had more content
      * In the future, Sara will work to integrate some of the mentorship ideas into the newsletter. This will likely take the form of a member spotlight and might look like ‘A day in the life’ style profile, or responses to five questions.
  + New Business
    - For CERF 2017, there will be a NEERS table in the poster hall. Typically, we have a poster behind it. For this coming meeting, we would like to have some swag to hand out as well as for purchase. We might have a drawing for a free membership or free meeting registration.
    - CERFtones needs a drummer. If you can drum, you can be in the band. Let Sara Grady know.
    - Given the current climate for sciences, the Executive Committee is discussing putting together a statement letter.
      * Also, the local NERR’s have reached out to us and are asking for a letter of support. This will be a second type of letter that we (as the NEERS community) might draft.
      * Sue Adamowicz expressed some concern about how her role as a federal employee may prevent the drafting of a statement letter that fully reflects what the NEERS community wants to say.
      * Sandy MacFarlane asked if we were going to be writing a letter to everyone who wants one?
      * CERF is also contributing a letter to support the NERRS non-profits
      * CERF is also part of a larger marine consortium that is also going to contribute a letter.
      * Cathy Wigand expressed concern that we not remain silent on these issues.
      * Robert Buchsbaum also reminded us that CERF has lobbied in the past
      * Brett Branco described how the Estuary Congressional Caucus could appreciate a statement letter and that we will need to let our local caucus representatives know where we stand on these issues.
      * Who will help with the construction of the position statement? Please let Sara Grady know.
      * From the floor, Walter Berry called Steve Schmidt on his cell phone to let him know that he won the Long Island Sound Book (as part of a fundraiser for NEERS)
        + Thank you to Jim Latimer for the donation.

*Meeting Adjourned.*