

DRAFT

First Meeting of the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board Washington, D.C. 2-3 December 2014

Ocean Exploration Advisory Board Members in Attendance

Vice Admiral Paul G. Gaffney II, U. S. Navy (Ret.), Monmouth University, Chair
Dr. James Austin, University of Texas
Dr. Amanda Demopoulos, U.S. Geological Survey
Dr. Jacqueline Dixon, University of South Florida
Dr. Chris German, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Ambassador Cameron Hume, Consultant
Mr. John Kreider, Oceaneering, Inc.
Mr. David Lang, OpenROV
Dr. Darlene Lim, NASA Ames Research Center
Ms. Nicolette Nye, National Ocean Industries Association
Dr. Richard Rikoski, Hadal, Inc.
Dr. Dominique Rissolo, Waitt Institute
Mr. Lance Towers, PE, Boeing, Inc.

NOAA Management and Staff in Attendance

Dr. Richard Spinrad, Chief Scientist
Dr. Alan Leonardi, Director, OER
John McDonough, Deputy Director, OER

OEAB Staff in Attendance

David McKinnie, Designated Federal Officer
Gene Smith, Alternate DFO
Yvette Jefferson, Coordinator

Meeting Summary

1. The Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB) Designated Federal Officer (DFO) opened the meeting. As this was the first OEAB meeting, there were no minutes to approve. The meeting, open to the public, was an organizational and informational meeting. The OEAB received information about the Federal Advisory Committee Act and its requirements, received the required annual training in ethics, and were administered the oath of office. The OEAB also received background, introductory information on the NOAA and national ocean exploration programs. All presentations and other materials NOAA provided the OEAB are posted to the OEAB website (www.oeab.noaa.gov) and available to the public.
2. The OEAB heard directly from the NOAA Chief Scientist, whom the NOAA Administrator has designated as her representative to the Board. His primary messages were that NOAA's investments in ocean exploration should support NOAA mission needs while allowing for discovery.

3. The OEAB discussed various possible definitions of “ocean exploration” for the NOAA program. As a preliminary working internal definition to guide planning for the next meeting, where further discussion of definitions will take place, the Board discussed a notional concept of “requirements-based exploration of high impact.”
4. After receiving briefings from NOAA staff, the Board agreed on the following general agenda for the next meeting:
 - A full explanation and discussion of NOAA priorities and plans for ocean exploration for the period FY 2015 - 2017, including a review of exploration activity since FY 2013. The Board asked that planned future activities be explained in terms of their value to and support for NOAA mission needs, and address:
 - All OER-funded “areas for survey and discovery:” including but not limited to operations by/of OKEANOS EXPLORER, Ocean Exploration Trust, Extended Continental Shelf project, “targeted exploration,” and any other at sea operations
 - Plans for use of linked technologies (such as fly-away systems)
 - Science community articulated interest in OER priorities
 - An introduction to the OER process for revising its strategic plan; including a list of NOAA requirements and definitions to be used in program strategic planning. The Board plans to specifically address the NOAA Ocean Exploration and Research (OER) program mission statement that will be used in the next strategic plan; John Kreider will lead the discussion of the mission statement. Dominique Rissolo will lead a discussion of the rationale for ocean exploration. In preparing materials for this discussion, OER should address any constraints and financial realities imposed on planning.
 - An overview of the competitive grants program process, in enough detail for the Board to offer judgment of its fairness and efficacy.
 - A briefing on the ocean exploration-like capabilities of UNOLS and NAVOCEANO ships and platforms
 - A discussion of the state of “citizen exploration.” David Lang will lead the discussion
 - A discussion of planning for the next Ocean Exploration National Forum scheduled for late 2015 at the National Aquarium in Baltimore. The OEAB will discuss:
 - recommendations from the first National Forum (Ocean Exploration 2020) of 2013 and the second, smaller National Forum held in Baltimore in September 2014
 - which stakeholders should be invited to the 2015 Forum
 - recommended topics for the next Forum
 - how National Forum results and OEAB activities relate

5. The OEAB discussed ideas for topics to discuss at future meetings, including:
- Briefings by other federal agencies and organizations involved in ocean exploration
 - Branding of the NOAA and national ocean exploration programs
 - Unique “moonshot” opportunities in process, techniques, technologies, engagement, and areas of ocean exploration
 - Public awareness of OER-funded discoveries
 - OER’s role as a test bed/*beta* development platform for emerging ocean exploration and telepresence technologies
 - Potential new ocean exploration partners for NOAA and the national program