



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

Communications Committee Meeting
Friday, April 1, 2022
9:00 a.m. – 10:40 a.m. Alaska Time
Virtual meeting held via Zoom

Minutes Approved September 8, 2022

I. Call to Order

ASMI Communications Chair Pat Shanahan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

II. Roll Call

Chair Shanahan asked ASMI Communications & Marketing Specialist Kimberly Valverde to do Roll Call.

Present virtually: Chair Pat Shanahan, Vice Chair Cassandra Squibb, Julianne Curry, Jessica Hathaway, Hannah Heimbuch, Peggy Parker, and Nicole Kimball. A quorum was established. (Board Member Liaison Tomi Marsh joined after roll call.)

Absent: Matt Carle

Also present virtually:

ASMI Program Directors & staff: Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow, Ashley Heimbigner, Megan Rider, Hannah Lindhoff, Tanna Peters, Kimberly Valverde, Leah Kraft, Amy Dukes, Susana Osorio Cardona, John Burrows

Program contractors: Christine Fanning, Tessa Ward, Kate Consenstein, Tricia Sanguinetti, Sam Freidman

Members of industry: Nicholas Dowie

III. Reading of Anti-Trust Statement

Chair Shanahan read the Anti-Trust Statement for the record.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Chair Shanahan confirmed everyone received the meeting agenda. Vice Chair Squibb made a motion to adjust the agenda to move item eight (Budget Discussion) before item seven (Committee Roundtable Discussion). The motion and adjusted agenda were approved unanimously.

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Shanahan requested a motion to approve minutes from the Communications Committee Meeting at All Hands on August 20, 2021.

Parker moved to approve the minutes from August 20, 2021. Squibb seconded the motion and complimented staff for the thoroughness of the meeting minutes. With no objections, the meeting minutes were approved.

VI. Public Comment

Chair Shanahan asked if any public participants had questions or comments. Hearing none, Chair Shanahan moved to the next meeting item.

VII. Communications Director Report & Budget Discussion

Chair Shanahan invited Communications Director Ashley Heimbigner to provide the Communications Report and FY23 Budget Proposal. Heimbigner began by thanking the Committee, followed by providing an organization chart and introducing ASMI's new staff member, Kimberly Valverde as the Marketing & Communications Specialist. She also introduced the Communications and Consumer PR contractors, and thanked ASMI's Domestic, International, Technical, and Admin Teams for their continued support.

Heimbigner gave an overview of FY22 Communications Budget Status followed by the FY23 Budget Proposal. She also announced the launch of the Alaska Seafood Online Marketplace, a new site designed to replace the former Suppliers Directory, with valuable features for buyers, suppliers, and consumers of Alaska seafood.

Committee Discussion

Chair Shanahan opened the floor for discussion on the proposed FY23 budget. Kimball asked if there was still opportunity for ASMI to receive additional ARPA funding. Heimbigner said there was potential and if received, it would change the proposed FY23 budget. Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow added that ASMI is not counting on the additional ARPA funding. Curry followed by asking Heimbigner where she would allocate an additional \$100k in funding and why. Heimbigner mentioned she would distribute additional funding between Advertising and Promotions, Contract Labor Support, Printing and Materials, in addition to Stock Photo and Video to support in-state messaging efforts.

Vice Chair Squibb asked Heimbigner if there were plans for partnerships outside of the Alaska seafood industry. Heimbigner responded there were plans to collaborate with and support events hosted by Alaska Travel Industry Association, Alaska Food Policy Council, as well as plans to work with the cruise industry and culinary experts.

Curry thanked the team for making a more cost effective strategy for the New York City event, and supported the strategy of sending Alaska seafood to media and social media influencers. Curry questioned the value to Twitter stating she doesn't see much engagement. She also stated she supports the use of Pinterest and asked if there were plans to use TikTok. Heimbigner referred to Tessa Ward of Edelman for additional input on the topic, but noted that although ASMI does have a limited owned branded presence on TikTok, and instead utilizes through influencer partnerships that resulted in very high engagement results from the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks campaign.

Parker added her support of the budget increases and efforts targeting Alaskans.

Consumer PR Budget Status

Heimbigner provided the budget status for the FY22 Consumer PR contract, which included an increase of \$400k from ARPA funds that was specifically directed to the consumer and trade campaigns supporting #AlaskaSeafoodHacks.

Heimbigner noted that the FY23 line item budget was not available because ASMI was in the RFP process for the Consumer PR contract, however, the budget range was between 900k and 1,350,000, which would be dependent on the accepted proposal and finalized contract.

Chair Shanahan opened the floor for discussion regarding the Consumer PR budget. Hearing no comments or questions, Chair Shanahan asked for a motion to approve the proposed consumer PR and communications budgets. Curry moved to approve the motion. Parker seconded the motion. The vote to approve the budgets was approved unanimously.

VII. Committee Roundtable Discussion

Chair Shanahan opened the floor to allow for committee member updates. Parker shared questions she received from industry members seeking information on how to donate Alaska seafood to Ukraine. International Director Hannah Lindoff said her team was working with the Foreign Agricultural Service to find ways to donate Alaska seafood and would share information. Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow mentioned discussions with Alaska's delegation regarding a coordinated seafood donation through USDA programs. Kimball discussed logistical challenges regarding donation efforts.

Vice Chair Squibb brought up the issue of rising costs and inflation and the importance of communicating the depth and variety of Alaska seafood options across all channels.

Kimball brought up the issue of ongoing misinformation shared on traditional media outlets and social media platforms about salmon hatcheries and suggested ongoing commitment to share accurate information on Alaska's hatchery program.

Chair Shanahan welcomed Board Member Liaison Tomi Marsh. Marsh commented on RFM and the importance of calling out Alaska seafood by name. She made mention of new partnerships with Princess Cruise Lines and recommended the continued effort of reaching out to women of all ages about the health benefits of consuming Alaska seafood.

Vice Chair Squibb mentioned concern about negative media coverage in Alaska about Alaska seafood. Chair Shanahan voiced similar concerns about misinformation.

IX. International Program Update

International Director Hannah Lindoff provided an International Program Update with focus on the effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Changes noted included the UK's newly imposed tariff of 35% on Russian whitefish and the US ban on Russian seafood imports.

X. Consumer PR Campaign Updates

Tessa Ward of Edelman provided a Consumer PR and Digital Program Update that included the goals and results from the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks campaign.

Kate Consenstein of Rising Tide followed by sharing an update and results of the work Rising Tide did for the in-state component of the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks campaign.

ASMI Digital Marketing Manager Tanna Peters provided an update on the tools created and used to enhance the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks campaign. Tanna stated the development of the new website and Alaska Seafood Brand Guide in the past year allowed for quick and efficient production of a campaign landing page, assets and toolkit.

Chair Shanahan complemented the success of the campaign and asked committee members if they had comments or questions. Hathaway asked if there were plans to repeat the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks. Ward said there has been some discussion but no determination on repeating the campaign. Hathaway followed by stating she noticed the high engagement and excitement behind the campaign and suggested encouraging Alaska commercial fishermen to share their favorite hacks next harvest season.

Vice Chair Squibb shared that she was impressed by the collaboration between the domestic and in-state team and the execution of the campaign across programs. She stated that the Alaska influencers have large national following and strong reach and believed their partnership added value to the campaign. She pointed out the #AlaskaSeafoodHacks campaign designated significantly more money toward influencer partnerships than previous campaigns and asked if this was expected for future campaigns. Ward answered that the influencer landscape is getting more competitive and expensive but the engagement with influencer partnerships has changed. She noted that in the past, influencers with lower following were hired to create a lot of content to build up ASMI's portfolio of images and recipes. This has evolved into collaborating with personalities and voices who can spread awareness of Alaska seafood at a broader level. Ward said there is a lot of options determined by the budget and the strategy, but to achieve a greater reach would require investment.

Ward provided an update on upcoming and always-on programs including a new sustainability campaign.

XI. Old Business and Good of the Order

Chair Shanahan asked the committee if they had anything to share. Hathaway shared that she will be moving on from National Fishermen after 16 years and will be joining Ocean Strategies.

Heimbigner thanked committee members for their continued support and said she would contact them after finalizing the Consumer PR contracting budget and would appreciate their review and input along with discussion about future in-state campaign efforts at the next committee meeting.

XII. Adjourn

Chair Shanahan requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Parker made a motion to adjourn, Vice Chair Squibb made a second motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:40am.

