

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
Communications Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 8, 2022
12:30-3:12 PM Alaska Time
Cowork by RSD (with remote option via Zoom)
911 W 8th Ave. Anchorage, AK

Call to Order

ASMI Communications Chair Pat Shanahan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 12:30.

I. Roll Call

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

Present: Chair Pat Shanahan, Vice Chair Cassandra Squibb, Hannah Heimbuch, Peggy Parker, Jessica Hathaway, Nicole Kimball, Julianne Curry, Board Liaison Tomi Marsh. A quorum was established.

Absent: Matt Carle

Also present:

ASMI Program Directors & staff: Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow, Ashley Heimbigner, Megan Rider, Tanna Peters, Kimberly Valverde, Heather Johnson-Smith

Program contractors: Christine Fanning, Kate Consenstein, Alina Fairbanks, Tessa Ward, Katie Goldberg, Susan Marks

II. Reading of Anti-Trust Statement

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

III. Approval of Agenda

Chair Shanahan asked if anyone had proposed changes to the meeting agenda. With no adjustments recommended, Curry made a motion to approve the agenda. Parker seconded the motion and with no objections, the agenda was approved.

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Shanahan asked if anyone had proposed changes to make to the meeting minutes from the Communications Committee Meeting held on April 1, 2022. Parker pointed out a repeated word in the second to last paragraph in Old Business and Good of the Order. Hearing no additional changes, Chair Shanahan requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes with the edit noted. Heimbuch

moved to approve the meeting minutes, Parker seconded the motion and the meeting minutes were approved.

V. In-State Communications (Ashley)

Chair Shanahan invited ASMI Communications Director Ashley Heimbigner to provide the Communications program update. Heimbigner began by referencing the revised FY23 Communications and Domestic Consumer Public Relations Program Budget document provided in the meeting packet. Heimbigner noted the proposed FY23 Consumer PR budget provided at the previous Communications Committee Meeting was an estimate given that an RFP process was underway. The formal FY23 Consumer PR budget was \$1.35 million. In addition, Heimbigner informed the committee that the Board of Directors moved to increase the Communications Program budget by \$300,000 at a meeting ASMI held on May 12 to focus on increased in-state communications efforts to positively support Alaska's commercial fisheries.

Following the FY23 proposed budget overview, Heimbigner presented the plan for the in-state Communications campaign, "Seafood Sustains Alaska", created to address the Board's request which will include a consumer facing awareness campaign and editorial campaign. The goal of the campaign is to maintain and promote positive perceptions of, goodwill toward and a sense of inclusion and pride in the Alaska seafood industry in state; and address misinformation that harms this perception.

Heimbigner thanked the Committee members for their feedback in the survey sent to industry members to gather insight and direction for the in-state campaign. The survey results yielded the shared desired outcome of helping Alaskans better value and understand their relationship to the Alaska seafood industry, helped formulate campaign messaging and identify the primary target audience as residents of Southcentral and interior Alaska (including Anchorage).

Parker asked for an elaboration on how the campaign will measure success among consumers and state government. Heimbigner stated several survey participants identified specific campaign goals included a larger budget for ASMI, which could be used as a measure of success among the state legislature. In regards to consumers, Heimbigner shared plans to conduct polling of Alaska residents at the onset and outset of the campaign. Kate Consenstein of Rising Tide Communications added that polling would help gather a preliminary baseline measurement of sentiment and guide campaign messaging. Chair Shanahan stressed the importance of creating a sense of pride among Alaskans about the Alaska seafood resource. Parker shared her support of the polling strategy.

VI. FY23 Consumer PR Plan

Tessa Ward provided a Consumer and Trade PR update on behalf of Edelman, which included a recap of the FY22 Q4 Sustainability Campaign and plans for the FY23 campaign, *Make the Wild Choice*. Ward shared the *Make the Wild Choice* campaign objective is to differentiate Alaska seafood from other seafood and elevate it into a league of its own to create demand with messaging that reinforces Alaska seafood as wild, healthy, delicious and sustainable. The campaign will include an

Alaska Seafood Ambassador Program with a celebrity chef partner and Alaska fishermen, media experiences in New York, familiarization trips to Alaska for media and influencers, and custom Alaska seafood mailers for media, influencers, registered dietitians and sweepstakes winners. The launch date for the campaign aligns with Alaska Day and National Seafood Month.

VII. Alaska Seafood Marketplace and Seafood U Update

Chair Shanahan invited ASMI Digital Marketing Manager Tanna Peters to provide an update on the latest industry resources created by ASMI. Peters began by sharing a project update on the newly launched Alaska Seafood Online Marketplace (formally called Suppliers Directory). New features allow users to manage their own accounts and listings, access trade leads and direct message between buyers and suppliers. The outreach status is in the initial phase of recruiting suppliers. Peters shared that she has been attending ASMI committee meetings to inform members how to join the Marketplace. The second phase of onboarding Alaska seafood buyers will launch in the fall followed by the third phase of sharing with consumers, Heimbigner added.

Peters followed by updating the committee on the revised Alaska Seafood U, online training platform that is set to launch in the coming weeks. The industry tool allows users to take different modules with new videos that provide education on topics that include an overview of Alaska seafood and ASMI, seafood species, health benefits, sustainability, and Responsible Fisheries Management Certification. Committee members noted that Alaska Seafood U in will be valuable in the retail and foodservice sector as well as media.

VIII. Committee Roundtable

Following a short break, Chair Shanahan invited committee members to an open dialogue on topics relevant to ASMI and the Communications Program. Kimball began by suggesting a conversation on sustainability with reference to climate change impacts, particularly in the eastern and northern Bering Sea and diminishing crab populations. Due to the fundamental and possibly irreversible changes occurring to iconic Alaska seafood species, Kimball suggested the need for ASMI to revisit how sustainability is defined and suggested shifting climate messaging from crisis conversations to be a part of everyday conversation. Heimbuch followed by stating that because climate awareness and sustainability are a priority among targeted consumers, there is benefit in expressing shared values in ASMI messaging. Kimball agreed and said it's important to be authentic instead of shying away from uncomfortable conversations. Vice Chair Squibb recommended adding more information on climate change to the ASMI website. Katie Goldberg of Edelman shared Climate Week begins September 25, which could be a good time to have reactive statements ready to share. Heimbigner informed the committee of an opportunity to extend the conversation and establish talking points in an upcoming Communications Crisis sub-committee meeting and acknowledged the need for conscious integration of climate change messaging on the website and social media platforms.

Chair Shanahan asked if there were additional topics anyone would like to discuss. Kimball said based on recently released stock survey results, it appeared that the king crab harvest would

remain closed for a second year with the potential of the snow crab fishery being closed for the first time. She recommended that ASMI establish talking points in advance with reference to key statements and research provided by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center.

Hathaway pointed out that there are funds available in the Inflation Reduction Act for port infrastructure and for NOAA to upgrade science centers, which could mean a large influx of money to coastal and fishing communities. She recommended ASMI stay aware on where the funds will be invested by aligning with NOAA, the council, and science centers.

Fanning brought up the low carbon emissions inherent of the fishing industry as opposed to land based meat production. She referenced research done on this topic by Ray Hilborn and his team at the University of Washington. She shared there is opportunity to shine light on the positive aspects of Alaska seafood being a more environmentally friendly protein source.

Curry recommended ongoing efforts to educate Alaska legislators about the Alaska fishing industry to help reduce the spread of misinformation. Chair Shanahan asked Heimbigner how ASMI has worked with the legislature in the past and asked if there were plans for continued outreach. Heimbigner stated ASMI creates and distributes educational materials, attends and presents at committee meetings and “Lunch and Learn” events. Parker asked if ASMI plans to provide information for freshmen legislators in which Heimbigner confirmed that ASMI always reaches out and provides information to incoming legislators. Woodrow added he holds one on one meetings with legislators as requested or specifically with members of committees that influence ASMI activities including House Fisheries, Senate Resources, and House and Senate Finance. He mentioned there is a large class of incoming freshman legislators this year, which will require a lot of effort to share information and teaming up with the DCCED who helps advocate work done by ASMI.

Heimbigner shared information on the annual All Hands on Deck that will take place in Girdwood November 9-11.

IX. Public Comment

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

X. Old Business and Good of the Order

Chair Shanahan asked the committee if they had anything to share for the good of the order.

Heimbigner shared news about the exciting new partnership with Holland American Line who became the first cruise line to become certified by Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM). Susan Marks of RFM thanked Ashley and shared her excitement about the partnership.

Adjourn

Chair Shanahan requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Curry made a motion to adjourn, Parker seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 3:12pm