Meeting Objectives:
1. Everyone has a full understanding of what ACH has accomplished to date
2. Setting the 2013 ACH Priorities, including participation from committee members and funding questions
3. Providing a setting for conversation and dialog to discuss waste management and pollution prevention priorities and solutions for harbors around the state.

Present in-person: Rachel Lord (Cook Inletkeeper), Brett Farrell (Marine Exchange), Shane Serrano (AK DEC), Bryan Hawkins (AAHPA/Homer Port & Harbor), Erika Ammann (NOAA)

Present by phone: Joe McCullough (AK DNR), Steve Russell (AK DEC), Alan Sorum (member-at-large)

Absent: Terry Johnson (Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program), Kim Kovol (Green Star)

Meeting began around 4:45pm.

The Advisory Committee met in Harrigan Hall in Sitka during the Alaska Assoc. of Harbormasters and Port Administrators annual meeting. Rachel welcomed everyone in person and on the phone and reviewed the rationale for holding an annual meeting during the AAHPA meeting. During that time there are a number of Advisory Committee members attending in person, and it’s a great opportunity to come together. Rachel reminded everyone that there is funding available to help get committee members to this annual in-person meeting. Next year will be held in Valdez from October 21-25, 2013. Looking further ahead, the 2014 conference will be held from October 13-17 in Ketchikan. Please try and attend these if at all possible, and talk to Rachel about funding requests.

Rachel reviewed the activities done in 2012 so far, and expressed interest in continued feedback from the Advisory Committee. Items on the agenda were briefly discussed and brought to the table.

Future funding needs were discussed briefly. Opportunity for direct state funding is really non-existent. This conversation will need to continue in earnest in the coming year. Rachel asked the committee to please keep it in mind, as well as any funding opportunities they hear of that could help harbor facilities with achieving certification.

When discussing harbor participation, Brett mentioned that Dutch Harbor had asked the Marine Exchange for help updating their best management practices manual. He has informed
their staff about Alaska Clean Harbors and we hope to work with Dutch Harbor in the future. Erika has also done some work with them.

Brett suggested finding a way to engage harbormasters and staff in dialogue and training with one another. Possibly finding a way to fly staff from one facility to another to learn first hand from certified Clean Harbors that have systems in place that could be useful.

Along those lines it was noted that while capital improvements are important, it’s equally important that those things (i.e. waste disposal units, washdown pads) are used and used properly.

Steve suggested that we might want to address city managers directly in addition to talking with harbormasters since the City management is often where pushback can come from. When traveling to different communities, it is suggested that we meet with city managers and staff to explain and discuss the benefits to the community from participation in Alaska Clean Harbors.

Bryan also discussed more conversations with fishing associations such as the North Pacific Fisheries Association in Homer to outreach and have dialogue with the commercial fishing customer base.

Rachel brought forth the idea of a project proposal to the NOAA/EVOS funding RFP that would develop a smartphone application dealing with waste management throughout Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Prince William Sound. This would be a good opportunity to talk with fishing communities and bring them a service/product that could be very useful to them.

Steve mentioned the work that processors can do in getting against ‘nuisance boats’ (those that are repeat offenders/constant polluters).

Rachel brought up the guide for harbor employees, which is another product funded through CIAP. She asked the AC to think about this, as she feels that this product should be changed somewhat from the original idea to make it more useful for harbor staff.

Erika suggested a resource manual that deals with conflict management and could be helpful for the network of AAHPA members in enforcement.

Bryan echoed that idea, suggesting clear and helpful headings. He used the step-by-step guide to denying access that the Homer Harbor developed with their legal council as an example of something other facilities have been very interested in.

Rachel brought up the question of sewage management and her challenge in getting regulatory clarity from various agencies on the legality of dumping treated sewage within 3nm. Brett noted the confusion within regulatory agencies concerning sewage discharge within 3nm. Steve said he would check with Environmental Health to see if they check seafood for bacteria; it’s a difficult issue to raise concern around. Rachel mentioned that in talking to the vendor who sells
Sanisailor pumpout equipment, even he said he didn’t think sewage would be a problem up here in Alaska because we have “just so much water moving”. Shane reminded everyone that harbors are still subject to state water quality standards, and Brett said this is an issue that could use more understanding on the regulatory side. Steve said this is extremely hard to enforce, and although they get frequent calls they often lack any evidence on which to proceed. We don’t really know how big of a problem sewage discharge is within AK harbors, nor do we have a great handle on the impact.

Rachel brought up a question about how broad of a scope to look at when working with facilities. Should ACH consider expanding to ore or cruiseship docks, and what about boatyard uplands? Can be difficult to draw the line. Shane suggested that with the current funding it’s good to focus on the small boat harbors. This is where there’s really a lack of regulatory power, and is why the voluntary program model was developed in the first place. That sentiment was generally agreed upon by the committee.

Rachel asked the committee for feedback on used antifreeze recycling. Steve said the components are very expensive, and seawater contamination can kill it. The costs are generally too high to be worth it, although it’s a great idea. It works really well for automobiles but not so good for the marine industry.

Along those lines, Shane felt that a huge amount of glycol goes into the water during the spring. Propylene glycol, although less toxic than ethylene glycol, increases biological oxygen demand in the water so it’s still really important to focus on keeping it out of the water. From a BOD perspective, 1 gal of propylene glycol is equivalent to 1,500 gal. of raw sewage.

Rachel will send out a contact list for Advisory Committee members so they can communicate with one another directly on issues. She will also solicit articles for the upcoming Winter ACH Newsletter.

Next Advisory Committee will be in late-January via teleconference. Rachel will send out a Doodle poll to set the final date and time.

Meeting adjourned around 6:45pm so we all could go eat!