UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chair, Officer Personnel Board

FROM: Rear Admiral (lower half) Nancy Hann, NOAA
Deputy Director, NOAA Corps

Nancy Hann, RDML/NOAA

SUBJECT: Commander Selection Officer Personnel Board

Formation, Composition, and Function:

1. Pursuant to NOAA Corps Directives Chapter 4, Part 2, I appoint the members listed in Section 8 herein to an Officer Personnel Board (OPB). The members of this OPB will consider officers for promotion to the rank of commander.

2. During the board, all other duties of an assigned member are secondary. The member will give the utmost care to ensure the board process is not compromised or rushed to accommodate outside concerns. Your evaluation must afford each eligible officer fair and equitable consideration.

3. This OPB shall proceed under the NOAA Corps Directives, Chapter 4, Part 2, and the guidance in this precept, including Appendices A and B.

4. The OPB's selection criteria should include performance, leadership ability, management ability, professional development, and breadth of experience. The NOAA Corps' operational excellence requires an array of skills and expertise. Every community contributes to our overall success. Each community is essential and provides its own path to leadership and technical proficiency, though opportunities for command may come at different levels and numbers depending on the community. Operational competence, including the achievement of operational qualifications and certifications, is essential in demonstrating an officer's potential at this rank. Each OPB member is required to review the entire OPF of each officer.

5. The promotion zone shall consist of sixteen (16) lieutenant commanders on the lineal list, commencing with the most senior officer in the grade of lieutenant commander; namely, LCDR Megan A. Raymond, and those fifteen (15) officers junior to her. NOAA did not previously select the most senior officers in the grade of lieutenant commander for promotion, nor do they have an approved voluntary retirement or resignation. The officers have also completed at least 12 months of commissioned service in the NOAA Corps. In addition, there are three officers above zone. The OPB may, but is not required to, recommend up to twelve (12) best qualified officers for promotion.

6. Subject to existing law, directives, and the oath taken, each OPB member is to be governed by his/her own judgment when giving weight to the broad professional qualification criteria, which are contained in NOAA Corps Directives, Section 04303. Pay specific attention to Appendix A, Sections, 2 and 5 when discussing information about the officer and considering the material supplied to you. You should emphasize to the members of the OPB the importance of their obligation to confine themselves to facts of the records contained in the OPFs. At the end of your deliberations, all members must be able to say that the officers recommended for promotion are in the opinion of at least a majority of the OPB, the best qualified to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the rank for which they are selected.

7. The OPB shall convene virtually at 1000 EDT, or as soon after that as practicable, on Thursday, October 21, 2021, to consider all officers in the rank of lieutenant commander who are eligible for consideration for promotion to the rank of commander in the NOAA Corps. Members of the OPB shall swear or affirm under oath that they will, without prejudice or partialities, and having in view the records of the officers and the efficiency of the NOAA Corps, perform the duties imposed upon them by NOAA Corps Directive 10008.

8. The following officers will comprise the OPB membership for this board:

The following non-voting members are authorized to assist the OPB as needed:

Captain Douglas E. MacIntyre, NOAA – Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC)
Jason A. Merriweather – Deputy Director, CPC
Katherine P. Raymond – Chief, Officer Personnel Management Division (OPMD)
Commander Ryan C. Wattam, NOAA – Chief, Officer Career Management Division
Dave A. Thompson – Human Resources Assistant, OPMD
Lieutenant Stephen F. Moulton, NOAA – Staff Officer, OPMD

9. The OPB shall submit a report in writing signed by all members of the OPB. Except for the report of this OPB, the proceedings of the OPB will not be disclosed to any person not a member of the OPB. You will direct the members of the OPB that their recommendations and deliberations will be kept confidential and any violation of the confidentiality of the OPB may result in disciplinary action.

APPENDIX - A GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. Duties of the OPB Chair.

   The chair of the OPB is appointed by me and shall perform prescribed administrative duties. The chair has no authority to constrain the OPB from recommending for promotion those fully qualified officers whom the majority finds best qualified to meet the needs of the NOAA Corps.

2. OPB Proceedings. The following directions apply to all board proceedings:

   a. Each of you (chair, voting members, and CPC non-voting members) are responsible for maintaining the integrity and independence of this OPB, and for fostering careful consideration, without prejudice or partiality, of all eligible officers. NOAA Corps Directives and this precept provide specific rules governing the conduct of OPBs and the actions of OPB members.

   b. You must pay particularly close attention to the rules governing communications with and among other OPB members, the information authorized to be provided to you, and the procedures you should follow if you believe that the integrity of this OPB has been improperly affected.

   c. You may not receive, initiate, or participate in communications or discussions involving information that NOAA Corps Directives and/or this precept preclude from consideration by an OPB. You are to base your recommendations on the material in each officer's Officer Personnel Folder (OPF) and any information I have provided to the OPB in accordance with NOAA Corps Directives.

   d. To ensure the integrity of the board process, it is imperative that you advise the OPB Chair or me of any relationship you have with any eligible officer that may affect the perceived integrity of the board. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, spousal, immediate relative by blood, marriage, adoption, significant other, other intimate partner, ex-family member, business relationship, or an accuser/accused in misconduct/discipline proceedings of any kind. If you have any doubts or reservations, err on the side of disclosing the relationship. This is a continuing obligation throughout the board proceedings. If necessary, take such action necessary to protect the integrity of the board process as outlined in paragraph 2.f below.

   e. Before the report of the OPB is signed, the recommendations and proceedings may be disclosed only to members of the OPB and those administrative support personnel I have designated in writing. After you sign the OPB report and the public release has been made, only the recommendations of the OPB may be disclosed. Procedures and processes of the OPB may be discussed only in general terms. The proceedings of the OPB may not be disclosed to any person not an OPB member.

   f. If at any time you believe that you cannot in good conscience perform your duties as a member of the OPB without prejudice or partiality, you have a duty to request relief

by me from this duty. I will consider any such request. If you believe that the integrity of the OPB's proceedings has been affected by improper influence, misconduct by the OPB Chair or a member, or any other reason, you have a duty to request from me relief from your obligation not to disclose board proceedings and, upon receiving it, to report the basis for your belief.

3. Marital Status/Spouse

OPBs are prohibited from considering the marital status of an eligible officer or their spouse's race, religion, color, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, national origin, employment, education, or volunteer service.

4. Leadership of Diverse Organizations

a. Our differences give us the strength, courage, and creativity necessary to accomplish our mission in, and meaningfully contribute to, an ever-changing world. The ability to maintain current and future readiness requires that we seek to understand our differences and recognize the valuable contributions our differences make to our organization. When reviewing an officer's potential for the next higher grade, consider that the NOAA Corps benefits when the officer corps possesses a broad spectrum of experience, background, perspective, innovative talent, and a depth and breadth of vision, drawn from every facet of the society it serves and understanding of the world within which it operates. The NOAA Corps needs innovative and bold men and women leaders to lead, think creatively, challenge assumptions, and take well-calculated risks that maximize effectiveness.

b. Our NOAA Corps is composed of men and women representing a variety of different ethnic groups and cultural heritages. To be effective, the NOAA Corps must draw upon its diversity of experience, backgrounds, perspective, innovative talent, and depth and breadth of vision. You should give careful attention to selecting officers who possess these valuable attributes and have demonstrated the potential to lead large organizations in a complex world composed of men and women coming from widely varying backgrounds. The NOAA Corps' ability to meet this leadership challenge depends, in part, on having leaders for, and from, our entire organization who reflect our very best, including performance, background, professional experience, education, and the spectrum of professional communities. These are factors for you to consider in selecting officers who are best qualified for selection.

5. Adverse Information

a. Just as you must consider positive performance, you must consider incidents of misconduct and substandard performance documented in an officer's OPF when determining those officers who are best qualified for promotion. Adverse information may reflect negatively on an officer's suitability for promotion and future service in positions of greater responsibility and trust. OPB members must give careful consideration to each incident. For those eligible officers who are recommended for promotion and who have received disciplinary action, every OPB member shall

review the information contained therein personally prior to the final OPB recommendations.

b. The NOAA Corps is, and will remain, a service of the highest standards and strict accountability. We do not embrace blind adherence to a zero-defect mentality. Careful scrutiny of the adverse information at issue and the officer's overall record is necessary to ensure the OPB recommends the officers best qualified for promotion.

APPENDIX - B

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY GUIDANCE

1. The NOAA Corps is dedicated to equality of treatment and opportunity for all personnel without regard to race, religion, color, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, or national origin. Discrimination on any of these bases is contrary to the NOAA Corps' values. We strive to maintain a professional working environment in which an individual's race, religion, color, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, or national origin will not limit his or her professional opportunities. Accordingly, within this OPB's precept to determine the officers who are best qualified, you must ensure that officers of every race, religion, color, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, and national origin are given fair and equitable consideration.

2. Your evaluation of all officers must be fair and equitable. You should be particularly vigilant in your evaluation of records to take care that no officer's promotion opportunity is disadvantaged by service utilization policies or practices.

   You should evaluate each officer's potential to assume the responsibilities of the next higher grade. This includes his or her ability to successfully lead a diverse organization, the overriding factor being performance of duties as they were assigned.

3. The NOAA Corps benefits when we capitalize on the diverse experience, perspective, innovative spirit, background, and ideas in our ranks. Our officer corps must value diversity of talent, abilities and viewpoints- as well as ethnicity, gender, culture and creed. We need officers that are fully committed to broadening diversity and that enable our ranks to be more representative of the American public we are privileged to serve. We must focus our bias for action inward to successfully advance cultural change; tackling this challenge calls for the most adept leaders who dedicate themselves to influencing their people in a positive manner. Diversity is not founded on statistics, percentages, or quotas. Diversity is about achieving peak performance. Additionally, our leadership team must keenly remain focused on a continued commitment to fostering a culture of respect, and to ridding our ranks of sexual assault, harassment in any form, and disempowering behavior. Our NOAA Corps should draw upon the entire possible set of talents and backgrounds to maximize our capability, innovate to address new challenges, and take advantage of emergent opportunities.

4. Some officers have been assigned outside of traditional billets. Such assignment practices should not prejudice the selection of these officers for promotion; to do so would deny the NOAA Corps the diversity of talent, background, and experience we seek, and which is necessary for sustained success in our changing world. Successful performance of duties assigned, both in operational and shore/staff billets, should be evaluated for promotion potential for the next higher rank and be focused on the criteria of performance, leadership ability, management ability, professional development, and breadth of experience.

5. This guidance shall not be interpreted as requiring or permitting preferential treatment of

any officer or group of officers on the grounds of race, religion, color, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, or national origin.