



DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE
INLAND BAYS
 Research. Educate. Restore.

DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
 Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
 December 9th, 2022

ATTENDANCE

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|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <u>Board Members Present</u> | <u>Board Alternates Present</u> |
| Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected) | Terry Deputy (DNREC) |
| David Baird (SCD, Treasurer) | Hans Medlarz (Sussex County) |
| Claire Simmers (CAC) | Chris Brosch (DDA) |
| Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected) | |
| Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Vice Chair) | <u>Other Attendees</u> |
| Jenn Volk (STAC) | Ferry Akbar Buchanan (EPA) |
| Aimee Isaac (Senate Pro Tem Appt, Secretary) | Sharon Webb (DNREC) |
| Patti Drago (Board-Elected) | Mark Casey (Observer) |
| Amie Howell (EPA ex officio) | Christophe Tulou |
| Todd Lawson (Sussex County) | Cathy Magliocchetti (US EPA) |
| Rony Baltazar-Lopez (Pro-Temp, Ex-Officio) | Kyle Buck (EPA) |
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| <u>Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present</u> | <u>Board Members Absent</u> |
| Anna Fagan | Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC) |
| Mary Hartnett | Debbie Botchie (Sussex County) |
| Michelle Schmidt | Susie Ball (Chair, Board-Elected) |
| Meghan Noe Fellows | Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA) |

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Vice Chair Pat Coluzzi called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting attendees introduced themselves.

MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Coluzzi called for any questions or changes to the agenda. Hearing none, P. Coluzzi requested to change the new business item of the Executive Director Candidate Approval to the first task on the agenda and the Sussex County report next due to time constraints.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aimee Isaac confirmed that board members received the minutes from the previous meeting and called for their approval. P. Drago made the motion and N. Ashton seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

David Baird reviewed the minutes from the finance committee meeting on 11/16/22 including the financial report and budget summary. The Center will be changing auditors this year as the requirement of a single audit due to the addition of BIL funds has been identified. The Center is considering firms now and the decision will be made in the near future. D. Baird announced that Laurie Snyder, the current Financial Director, has decided to resign from the Center but will be working contractually. It will be a priority to find her replacement. D. Baird made a motion to approve the finance committee meeting minutes. N. Ashton seconded. The vote was unanimous.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers reviewed the last CAC meeting that focused on the State of the Bays. Andrew McGowan of CIB reported on the State of the Bays. Lisa Swanger of CIB discussed the Economic Evaluation of the Bays and outreach to Homeowners Associations. Anna Fagan of CIB discussed resolutions that were accepted by the CAC.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jenn Volk reviewed the previous STAC meeting from last October. Meghan Noe Fellows was introduced as the new Center Director of Estuary Science and Restoration, and presented an update on BIL funds. Andrew McGowan and Scott Andres summarized the 2021-2022 Water Quality monitoring season. They also discussed location options for the newest 9th station and how to analyze the data. Dr. Matt Parker (UMD) spoke about developing oyster nutrient trading in Maryland. Alex Soroka (USGS) spoke about water quality trends on the Eastern shore. Dr. Yun Li spoke about water quality modeling lessons, successes and new developments.

Development Committee

Jerry Esposito reviewed the last two Development Committee meetings. Annual Appeal letters have been mailed. Giving Tuesday was very successful with the goal of \$3,000 surpassed and a total of \$9,625 was raised. The Decked Out location and date has been set for September 21, 2023 at Hyatt Place Dewey Beach. Dogfish Dash has selected the Center as beneficiary for 2023. Merchandise sales raised approximately \$1,000. N. Ashton discussed what the Center could include in the handouts at the next Dogfish Dash to raise awareness for the Center.

Sussex County

Todd Lawson started by reviewing a new county stormwater quality management ordinance that, if approved, would create a stormwater bank for the county to receive credits from the State system. The credits would be used for water enhancement projects that the Center could help manage and would align with the CCMP. T. Lawson then continued the discussion of the drinking water supply at James Farm. The cost to bring Sussex Shores water to James Farm versus drilling a new well is more than anticipated. Drilling a new well at the site may not bring the desired outcome if the water quality is not usable. T. Lawson stated that the improvements to James Farm that are upcoming will need to include water at the facility that meets drinking water standards. Hans Medlarz added that Sussex Shores will bid the project to 3 bidders and could reduce the final cost. P. Coluzzi stated that making a decision should be a priority for the Board to get the project improvements moving forward. Jerry Esposito made a motion to move forward with the Sussex Shores connection. D. Baird seconded. The vote was unanimous.

EPA

Amie Howell discussed NEP BIL funding over the next two years. NEP equity strategies are due to the EPA on June 1st, 2023. Future bill funds will be matched to strategies that benefit underserved communities. Build America Buy America (BABA) will be tied to all federal funding. Grants going forward will be subject to BABA and there are waivers available to BABA regulations until March 2023. EPA region 3 recently held a climate summit and the 2 day workshop should be available on the website.

House & Senate

Aimee Isaac reviewed updates for the Senate. A joint resolution has passed the legislature directing DNREC to investigate options for establishing a nontidal wetland permitting program. The goal is to establish a state level protection and DNREC is looking at four options to implement the program.

OLD BUSINESS

CAC Resolution Update

Anna Fagan presented the update to three CAC resolutions that have passed. The first resolution is the development of an implementation strategy related to the loss of tree canopy in the watershed. This calls for updated land use data. Sussex County is working on that data and should be available soon. The second resolution is related to the Lewes shellfish hatchery that is overseen by the University of Delaware and Delaware Sea Grant. The Center has been selected to help support those efforts and is currently moving forward and CIB is monitoring the progress. Last, the third resolution is the proposal of a partnership between Sussex County and the Center to address climate change and sea level rise in the Inland Bays watershed and address mitigation and adaptation strategies. The Center is looking forward to more movement in these resolutions in 2023.

2023 Board and Committee Meeting Schedule

No changes or concerns noted with the schedule.

NEW BUSINESS

Executive Director Candidate Approval

Jerry Esposito made a motion to approve Christophe Tulou as the new executive director of the Center. P. Drago seconded. The vote was unanimous.

NEP BIL Funding, Workplan, Ratification of Approval

Patti Drago made a motion to ratify an earlier email vote to approve the workplan, A. Isaac seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Inland Bays R2P2 Project Presentation

Ferry Akbar Buchanan introduced Kyle Buck, a human geographer with the EPA, to discuss the R2P2, Regional Research Partnership Program Project, which is a study of vulnerable communities within the watershed and what the vulnerabilities are. This research will be necessary in developing an equity plan and to deepen the Center's efforts to engage underserved communities in the watershed. K. Buck explained that the project goal is to identify Inland Bays communities that may exhibit negative health outcomes influenced by social vulnerability, flood exposures and lack of access to services.

Executive Director's Report

Anna Fagan presented the Executive Director's Report and reviewed the 2021 State of the Bays release and press event. Publication is anticipated in February with a press event in early to mid-March and the Center has engaged Mike Smith with GreenSmith PR is coordinating the release.

The Inland Bays Public Education and Engagement Plan (PEEP) has been approved by the EPA and can now move on to implementation. The inaugural Winter Lecture series event "The Science of Oysters, A Shucking Good Time" was held at the Center office and was very well attended. The next lecture on microplastics will be held in January at the South Coastal Library in Bethany Beach.

The Conservation and Watershed planning updates include the oversight of the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant for \$250,000 for the Thompson Island Living Shoreline Project. The project will be completed in several phases with Delaware State Parks. Several other grants are pending and will be intended for Spring reforestation projects.

Development recap of successful events including the Dogfish Dash, a record breaking Giving Tuesday and the ongoing 2022 Annual Appeal. The Development team is piloting a new Annual Event Sponsorship Program.

The Organizational Culture project is wrapping up and A. Fagan shared the 11 operational values that the staff have identified. The values will be approved by staff in December and a committee will be formed to support continued conversations and integrate the values into the organization.

Strategic Plan progress report for FY23-25 includes key performance indicators have been initiated including HR functions, organizational culture values and process improvements. The James Farm Master Plan implementation is ongoing. The Delaware Targeting and Planning Tool are Functional for use as well as the Wastewater Nutrient Loading Budget and White Paper are complete. DEIJA Initiative has work that needs to start in FY23 to prepare for FY24, and a DEIJA workgroup will need to form. A DEI assessment has been arranged to kick off the initiative and it will be offered to us by DANA in January.

Upcoming events in January are a Teacher Open House, Marine Debris Lecture Series, Fire and Ice Festival Event. March will feature the DoMore24 Fundraising Event and the State of the Bays Press Event at Hyatt Place Dewey Beach.

The Angola by the Bay living shoreline project is near completion, the planting window closed and the Center will return in the Spring to complete. The first meeting of the shellfish enhancement plan steering committee was on December 2nd. Andrew McGowan is coordinating the efforts to facilitate a path forward for the role of oysters in restoring the Inland Bays.

The Center recently hired new part-time staff members, a Shellfish Program Specialist Jack Gazda and new Science Tech Gabby Fritz who was a previous CIB Intern.

The Friends of the Bays Awards were held November 3rd at the Crooked Hammock. It was a fantastic event and over 70 volunteers attended.

Open Forum

No discussion.

Adjournment

Jerry Esposito called for a motion to adjourn. Aimee Isaac seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:34am.