

DRAFT



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS'

MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
June 10th, 2022

ATTENDANCE

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Board Alternates Present</u>
Susie Ball (Chair, Board-Elected)	Terry Deputy (DNREC)
David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)	
Claire Simmers (CAC)	Other Attendees
Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)	Ferry Akbar Buchanan (EPA)
Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Vice Chair)	Sharon Webb (DNREC)
Jenn Volk (STAC)	
Aimee Isaac (Senate Pro Temp Appt, Secretary)	
Jerry Esposito	
Todd Lawson (Sussex County)	
Patti Drago	<u>Board Members Absent</u>
Megan Mackey	Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)
<u>Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present</u>	Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC)
Chris Bason	
Michelle Schmidt	
Anna Fagan	

Mark Carter	
Marianne Walch	
Andrew McGowan	

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Chair Susie Ball called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM and led the pledge of allegiance. The meeting attendees introduced themselves. S. Ball stated that Pat Ragan has resigned from the Board and invited the board to provide suggestions for her replacement.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

S. Ball called for approval of the consent agenda, which included the Endowment Holding and Investment Policy Update, Inland Bays Public Education and Engagement Plan (PEEP), and the FY23 Annual Work Plan Approval. She also called for approval of the use of a consent agenda during the board meetings going forward. J. Esposito made the motion. D. Baird seconded. The vote was unanimous.

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 J. Esposito seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

David Baird presented the Treasurer's report, beginning with the FY22 Board Budget Summary. He stated that the revised budget is up approx. \$1,000,000 from the original budget due to new funding and projects. The breakdown can be found in the packet. D. Baird made a motion to approve the board budget summary. P. Coluzzi seconded. The vote was unanimous. Next D. Baird presented the FY23 Budget and Grant Plan, proposing a \$3.5 million budget, which is approx. \$600,000 higher than previous years due to Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding and James Farm Master Plan Implementation. D. Baird made a motion to approve. A. Isaac seconded. The vote was unanimous. S. Ball called for ratification of a previous vote by email to use \$50,000 in reserves funding for the executive search firm. S. Ball made a motion. J. Esposito seconded. The vote was unanimous.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers Presented the CAC Report. She stated that they had a meeting April 28th about flooding issues and reforestation. M. Walch presented on changes to land use around the Inland Bays, specifically discussing new development and flooding in Oak Orchard. The CAC also received updates on the oyster hatchery project, which is on track. The climate change and tree canopy resolutions were also discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for August 4th. Gail Dubowe submitted an application for CAC membership and it will be discussed during the August 4th meeting.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jennifer Volk presented the STAC Report. She discussed two agency-nominated position changes (DDA and DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife). There have been 6 resignations due to

retirements and 1 due to other commitments. Doug Janiec and J. Volk have been re-elected as Vice-Chair and Chair. Rich Watson and C. Simmers will continue to serve as the Secretaries. J. Volk stated that STAC will discuss Marianne's retirement plan at the next meeting. J. Volk stated that the April 13th meeting went well. Aviah Stillman presented the Wastewater subcommittee update, the STAC reviewed the key takeaways of the State of the Bays Report. All members were present and approved the trends and statuses presented.

Development Committee

Jerry Esposito presented the Development Committee report. J. Esposito welcomed Mark Carter and stated that once he is up to speed, they will bring aboard a Development Specialist to further support the program. The capital campaign continues to make progress. Construction will likely begin at the end of this year or early next year. The Center requested \$300,000 from the Delaware General Assembly through the Community Redevelopment and Reinvestment Fund, plus additional funding from Sussex County. The Center is also considering using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding to complete the project. J. Esposito also reminded the board about the 2022 Dogfish Dash on September 25th and Decked Out on September 14th. Tickets for Decked Out go on sale in July.

Sussex County

Todd Lawson presented on behalf of Sussex County. T. Lawson reported level management funds for the James Farm for FY23. \$100,000 will be carried over for James Farm Master Plan implementation. Land preservation and conservation efforts continue with signed contracts for multiple properties totaling over \$3 million dollars. One approx. 30-acre parcel is located on Herring Creek. T. Lawson also referenced a potential property off Rt 24 that is approx. 40 acres. There is an additional 60-acre parcel off Rt 9 that will be officially announced in the coming weeks if everything goes as planned. Finally, there is a potential property in Piney Neck that will be a great location for water quality monitoring testing. All these properties will be announced on the 21st at the Council meeting.

EPA

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding draft guidance is at the highest level for review. but will let you know when it's finished. It should be ready around February.

House & Senate

No report for the House. A. Isaac presented a report on the Senate. SS1-SB134 would prohibit single use plastics like straws and coffee stirrers would only be provided by request only. It passed through the Senate and went to the House. SB305 is the Delaware Climate Solution Act; it requires the state to address climate change with a goal of 50% less greenhouse gas by 2030. This bill was supported by the Center and was passed. The Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice Act is currently in house and will be discussed further in the next board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Executive Director Transition and Search

S. Ball reported on Chris's resignation as Executive Director and his new role as an

independent contractor with the Center. Anna Fagan was promoted to Deputy Director and is serving as Acting Executive Director until Chris's successor is hired. A search committee has been formed. It is led by P. Coluzzi and members are comprised of A. Fagan, J. Esposito, A. Isaac, C. Brosch, M. Walch, and S. Ball. The Center has contracted a national search firm called Kittleman to help with the search.

2023-2025 Strategic Plan Summary and Approval

Anna Fagan presented on the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. She reviewed the Center's mission and new supportive statement, as well as the new vision statement and values. She then highlighted the six strategic objectives, which include Growth Management and Operations, Fund Development and Sustainability, Outreach and Education, Science, Restoration and Watershed Coordination, Land Protection and Restoration, and Advocacy. Next steps are to orient the full staff to the FY23-25 Strategic Plan, develop a 1-year Tactical Plan, and produce an external facing publication of the plan for outreach and development purposes. Implementation will begin in FY23 and A. Fagan will report on progress to the Board quarterly. A. Isaac made a motion to approve to the plan. J. Esposito seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Staff Structure and Reorganization

Anna Fagan reviewed the updated staffing chart, highlighting positions that are vacant and reporting on new staff titles to better fit their work and roles in the office.

Buffer Ordinance Discussion

Todd Lawson provided a recap of the buffer ordinance revision process, which was initiated by the previous County Council. This led to the formation of a working group, comprised of various stakeholders with expertise, including the Center. After 2 years, a draft ordinance was introduced, put through public hearing, and was recently approved. The ordinance takes effect in 6 months. T. Lawson shared that this is one of the biggest endeavors undertaken by Council in updating County code and was much needed given the original ordinance and its lack of specificity. He then reviewed the ordinance in detail.

S. Ball asked the board: Where do we go from here in terms of the Center's work towards an even better buffer ordinance? She then asked Chris Bason to facilitate discussion. C. Bason began by highlighting the steps backward in the ordinance and proposed actions for the board to consider taking: no action; explore state-level legislation through wetlands protection bill to include protecting buffers; work with Council to make amendments. C. Bason asked T. Lawson to give his input on the third option. T. Lawson said that amendments may be possible, but there is no certainty due to the upcoming election. Amendments are not likely before it takes effect in December because Council will need to see it enacted before agreeing to revise it. J. Esposito suggested incentivizing the preservation of mature forests for developers in Sussex County but is not hopeful for state-level legislation. P. Drago disagreed and sees opportunities in the potential outcomes of the statewide election. Suggests exploring what might be feasible at state-level—don't dismiss it. A. Isaac agreed that it's possible and worthy of the Center's support. C. Simmers expressed concern for waiting too long to see what happens, especially given what was presented by M. Walch on the State of the Bays. S. Ball asked if it would be possible for the Center to present to Council on the State of the

Bays. T. Lawson was agreeable. Some discussion was had about the advocacy role that the Center will further develop, as identified in the strategic plan. S. Ball suggested that the advocacy committee that the strategic plan calls for should play a big role in deciding how to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 State of the Bays Report

Marianne Walch presented on the 2021 State of the Bays Report. The indicators discussed include: watershed condition, for which overall status and trends has been degrading since the last State of the Bays Report; point and non-point source pollution to the Bays, for which the overall status is poor to fair with no trends; water quality, for which the overall status is poor to fair with no trends; living resources, for which the overall status is fair with no trends; human health risks; and climate, for which the status is poor and degrading. Overall, the State of the Inland Bays is fair to poor and is continuing to degrade. M. Walch stated that more dedicated resources, stronger environmental policy, and bold partner commitments are needed.

Economic Valuation Report

Chris Bason presented on the Economic Valuation Report. He talked about the three kinds of total economic contributions of the Bays, which are direct, indirect and induced. The report found that the Inland Bays support \$4.5 billion in economic activity, 35,000 jobs, and \$458 million in tax revenue. C. Bason discussed the policy implications of study and made the following recommendations: \$100 million annually statewide to Clean Water Trust, minimum of \$25 million state and \$15 million county annual open space protection funding, pursuit of County impact fees on new development to fund restoration, explore \$1 million state capital appropriation for Bay restoration to match federal infrastructure money.

Adjournment

S. Ball called for a motion to adjourn. D. Baird made the motion. P. Coluzzi seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm.