

DRAFT



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS'

Board Members Present	Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present
Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected)	Katelyn Mock
Debbie Botchie (SCAT)	Caitlin Chaney
Susie Ball (Chair, Board-Elected)	Andrew McGowan
Pat Ragan (Board-Elected)	Chris Bason
Patti Drago (Board-Elected)	Marianne Walch
Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Vice Chair)	
Todd Lawson (Sussex County)	Board Members Absent
Aimee Issac (Senate Pro Temp Appt, Secretary)	Rony Baltazar-Lopez (Pro-Temp, Ex-Officio)
Claire Simmons (CAC)	David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)
Jenn Volk (STAC)	Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)
	Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC)
Public Present	Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)
Stephen Williams (DNREC)	Amie Howell (EPA)
Sharon Webb (DNREC)	
Ferry Akbar Buchanan (EPA)	Board Alternates Present
	Megan Mackey (EPA)

MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
March 18, 2022

ATTENDANCE

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.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aimee Isaac requested necessary revisions to the previous meeting's minutes. Hearing none she requested a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Claire Simmers made the motion and Pat Ragan seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

David Baird was unfortunately unable to make the meeting. Chris Bason presented the FY21 Audited Financial Statement, which has been reviewed and approved by the finance committee, as well as via email from board members. C. Bason reported that the Center's cash exceeds FDIC insurance levels and the finance committee will review and seek further insurance. C. Bason requested a motion from the board to approve the audited financial statements from FY21, Jerry Esposito made the motion, Debbie Botchie seconded, all were in favor. C. Bason reported on the FY22 Board Budget Summary, which was reviewed and approved by the financial committee. Increased Budget to nearly \$3 million about 46% income on hand. C. Bason states we have 1.2 million contractual consulting mostly due to JFMP and restoration Projects. Operating reserve balance is at \$360,000 and the endowment account increased slightly to \$214,278. No questions or comments, approved. C. Bason reported the current investment policy is too complex to allow us manage our investments, he asked the board for any recommendations for a financial advisor to look over our current policy. Susie Ball requested an approval of the Board Budget summary. Hearing no questions, Pat Ragan made the motion. J. Esposito seconded, all were in favor. S. Ball states that the committees are doing lots of work and to give kudos to everyone!

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers states the CAC met on February 17th with a focus on the importance of native plants. Cheryl Rehrig, co-owner of the Inland Bays Garden Center, spoke about the lack of trees and shrubs in the area, the importance of planting native species, and the resources available to accomplish this. Lisa Swanger spoke about CIB's workplanning process. A resolution on a partnership between Sussex County and the Center for the Inland Bays to address climate change was discussed and passed unanimously. Two CAC members resigned due to work obligations, C. Simmers stated they are always looking for new members.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jennifer Volk reported on the February 16th meeting. Avaiah Stillman gave an update on the Wastewater Subcommittee. Marianne Walch gave an update on State of the Bays. New STAC member Kristen Covelski gave a presentation on her work and watershed interests. Olivia Deveraux presented on the Delaware Targeting and Planning Tool (DTAP). Marianne shared updates on the Center's strategic plan efforts and draft FY23 work plan. The STAC is seeking new leadership for the coming year.

Development Committee

J. Esposito stated that there are three new members on the Development Committee. The committee is meeting monthly and very active. Current focus is on increased corporate support and growth of the Inland Bay's Legacy Circle. C. Bason reported there are two strong candidates for the open Development Associate position, interviews will be held next week. Annual appeal goal was \$35,000, we raised \$46,000. The James Farm Master Plan Implementation timeline has shifted slightly, ground breaking is projected for the fall, over \$1.2 Million has been raised. Decked Out will be September 14th at Big Chill Beach Club. Pat Colluzi asked if we had an information board at the James Farm detailing the Master Plan and asking for donations. C.

Bason said we do not but will look into that and thought it was a good idea. T. Lawson suggested adding a QR code to the kiosk for ease of seeking donations and educating the public.

Sussex County

T. Lawson said Rehoboth Beach sewer negotiation unfortunately didn't work out. The county had previously reported on a planned flyover that would provide imagery that may be useful to the Center and its committees. Imagery for the flyover will be ready in May. The state is doing an additional flyover and which should be available late summer. Vote on the final buffer ordinance will be in April. Sussex County Council has increased their budget and added an additional \$6M for open space property acquisition. J. Esposito asked how integrated The Sussex Land Trust is. T. Lawson said the Land Trust is integrated and they have new membership with experience which has helped. S. Ball asked if property was available to expand for things like trails and parks. T. Lawson said it's broad with many negotiations but could be possible. P. Drago asked if the acquisitions go into the Land Trust for future management and does the ownership stay with the county? It depends on what and where they buy.

EPA

Megan Mackey reported that the EPA is working on guidance for National Estuary Program on funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. They were able to share a draft with directors and regional coordinators and are working on pushing funding out to people as quickly as they can. S. Ball asked if there is an estimate as to when awards will go out. M. Mackey said unfortunately not until they receive terms and conditions from higher ups. C. Bason said that the draft was very broad and that the only thing he didn't see explicitly mentioned was education. M. Mackey said the draft was broad and the EPA is pushing for more clarity on the requirement to serve underprivileged communities.

NEW BUSINESS

CAC Resolution

C. Simmers reported she and Jeanette Akhter had a conversation about providing more structure on responses to climate change. The resolution is requesting that CIB prepare a proposal to explore a partnership between Sussex County and The Center for the Inland Bays to discuss climate change and sea level rise in the Inland Bays watershed. D. Botchie proposed involvement from SCAT. P. Coluzzi noted the association of coastal towns may want to be involved as well. T. Lawson asked if the Council could sit down with CAC to discuss. C. Simmer responded that conversation may be too broad for CAC. S. Ball asked how the board would like to proceed. C. Bason reported the staff is already working with many organizations broadly related to this approach, and suggested the proposed resolution is seeking to make those conversations more formal. Also, C. Bason said there is a capacity issue and would need guidance from the board on where this falls on the priority list. P. Drago motioned to accept the resolution as stated: **"Now, therefore be it resolved** that the Citizens' Advisory Committee is requesting that the Center for the Inland Bays Board:

Work with the Sussex County Council and other interested parties to explore and create a partnership on climate change and sea level rise mitigation and adaptation strategies." J. Esposito seconded. Motion carried.

Executive Director Report

C. Bason gave an update on the CAC's shellfish hatchery resolution. A small hat funded and underway. The Center is working with the University of Delaware on large shellfish hatchery. C. Simmers said this has also been brought up at CAC meetings and thanked the Center for helping

and giving guidance.

C. Bason reported the Center is working with the Department of Ag to reach the watershed's cover crop goals. More outreach and education is needed. C. Bason described the project structure and proposed costs.

C. Bason updated the board on the Delaware Land Protection Coalition activities. The partnership is up to 14 members with Michelle Schmidt being the leader. The year 1 goal is to increase state open space appropriations from 10 million to 25 million. Year 2 goal is to examine potential revision of the Open Space Law. A Conservation Day is scheduled at Legislative Hall for May 11th.

C. Bason provided and update on the Strategic Plan. The organizational assessment is complete. The Process & System recommendations are 100% complete. Draft Strategic plan is 90% Complete. Staffing structure element is underway. Consulting services are planned to finish in April. An RFP for additional services on organizational culture has been issued. Moving forward The Center is going to form 3 implementation teams and also execute structural recommendations.

Baygrass Presentation

Andrew McGowan gave a presentation on the Center's Baygrass Restoration project. He reported that 1600 acres of bay bottom were surveyed using drone ID and snorkeling to find and identify species of vegetation. The results yielded 10.69 acres of grasses and all beds were in three feet of water. No eelgrass was found. There is a need for more data as well as restoration.

Adjournment

The Chair made a motion to adjourn, P. Ragan made the motion to approve and Jerry Esposito seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45pm.
Respectfully submitted, Aimee Isaac.