



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
October 11, 2024

ATTENDANCE

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Other Attendees</u>
Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Acting Chair)	<i>none</i>
David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)	
Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected)	
Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)	
Claire Simmers (CAC)	<u>Board Members Absent</u>
Justin Healy (Board-Elected)	Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC)
Patti Drago (Board-Elected)	Marlene Saunders (Board-Elected)
Jenn Volk (STAC)	
Aimee Isaac (Senate Pro Tem Appt, Secretary)	
Amie Howell (EPA ex officio)	<u>Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present</u>
Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)	Christophe Tulou
Rony Baltazar-Lopez (Pro-Temp, Ex-Officio)	Anna Fagan
Todd Lawson (Sussex County)	Michelle Koenig
Jamie Burk (SCAT)	Bob Collins
	Mark Carter
<u>Board Alternates Present</u>	Marina Feeser
Chris Brosch (DDA)	Taylor Hoffman
Mike Harmer (Sussex Co. Engineer)	Nivette Perez-Perez
Stephen Williams (DNREC Alt. for Sec. Shawn Garvin)	

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Pat Coluzzi called the meeting to order at 9:34 AM. P. Coluzzi led the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting attendees introduced themselves.

MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Coluzzi called for any changes to the meeting agenda. There were none.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aimee Isaac confirmed that the Board members received the minutes from the previous meeting. A. Isaac called for comments or changes, and none were heard. T. Lawson made a motion to approve the minutes. D. Baird seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

David Baird stated that the finance committee met on August 24 and the committee found everything to be in order.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers presented the CAC's activities, highlighting successful outreach and education efforts, and announced an upcoming panel discussion called Caring for the Land.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jenn Volk shared updates on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee's activities, including a cancelled August meeting and the next meeting is scheduled for October 18. The topics will be around living resources including osprey reproduction, submerged aquatic vegetation, oysters, living shoreline, terrapins and coastal marsh restoration. J. Volk announced her intention to step down as the chair of the STAC after six years in the role.

Development Committee

Anna Fagan reviewed the Development Report for July, August and September. A. Fagan highlighted a significant increase in revenue from various sources, and announced upcoming events including the Center's 30th Anniversary event named the Grateful Shellabration in November..

DEIJA

Anna Fagan reported on the committee's recent activities and future plans, including supporting Melina Vela's work on the Southern Delaware Coastal Resilience Plan and providing advisement for upcoming community listening sessions. The committee will also be undertaking a DEI Audit of the 2021 State of the Bays report to assist with the preparation of the 2026 State of the Bays report.

Sussex County

Todd Lawson provided updates on the current election season and membership among the Sussex County Council. Negotiations are ongoing between the Lewes Board of Public Works and the City of Rehoboth regarding the connection of their ocean outfall to the new wastewater

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treatment plant at the Wolfe Neck facility. T. Lawson reported on the county's progress in passing the subdivision perimeter buffer ordinance, which increased buffer sizes and included woodland protections. T. Lawson also announced the county's purchase of the Layfield property, a 165-acre land with potential for water quality restoration and trail creation.

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

Steve Williams provided updates on the watershed assessment and management section, mentioning the upcoming release of the 2024 integrated report for water quality assessment and impaired waters listing. S. Williams also discussed a community meeting held on September 24th at the Bethany Beach Town Hall, focusing on the North Inlet beach project and plans for a large-scale beach nourishment project.

Delaware Department of Agriculture

Chris Brosch reviewed updates from the Delaware Department of Agriculture, including the successful turf bill, upcoming regulations, two open positions including Environmental Science and Trainer position. C. Brosch clarified that new regulations regarding the Turf Bill only apply to those in pay-for-service agreements with landowners.

EPA

Amie Howell reported on updates at the EPA. A. Howell announced EPA region leadership changes, updated National Estuary Program funding guidance incorporating climate resiliency, and gratitude for progress on the Habitat Plan and FY24 funding.

House & Senate

Aimee Isaac reported on the House & Senate. The Delaware Energy Act Offshore Wind and Renewable Energy Bill was signed into law. C. Tulou gave an update on the Aquaculture Task Force and the CIB staff with the DDA are working on a final report due by year-end.

OLD BUSINESS

James Farm Master Plan Implementation and Capital Campaign Update

Anna Fagan shared that the education building construction is suspended until November 4th due to material delays. A. Fagan reported on the progress of the capital campaign, noting a successful community redevelopment and reinvestment fund request and pending funding requests, including a request from Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester's office and five foundation grants.

CAC Member Applications

Claire Simmers announced two new additions to the CAC, Joseph J. Hedman Jr. and Dr. Irene Legiec, both of whom were unanimously approved at the August meeting. C. Brosch made a motion to approve Joseph (Jay) Headman, Jr. as a CAC member. A. Isacc seconded. The vote was unanimous. J. Burk made a motion to approve Irene Legiec as a CAC member. A. Isaac seconded. The vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Delaware Inland Bays Habitat Management Plan

Michelle Koenig, Director of Conservation and Watershed Planning, presented the habitat plan, which has been in development since 2021 with the help of Biohabitats. M. Koenig discussed the progress of the habitat plan, a complementary document to the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) completed in 2021. The Habitat Plan aims to be finished by year-end. It is not a duplication of the CCMP but an addition, focusing on data analysis to understand the

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distribution of habitats, agriculture, and development. M. Koenig explained the concept of early successional habitat and identified development, sea level rise, and nutrient pollution as threats to habitats. M. Koenig emphasized the importance of landscape connectivity and presented a map showing the effects of sea level rise on wetlands and marsh migration. M. Koenig discussed the development of focal areas, including upland and marsh migration areas, and the challenges of updating maps due to limited data from 2017. C. Simmers motioned to approve the Habitat Plan. D. Baird seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Board Elections - Board Elected Directors

P. Coluzzi announced the re-election of Patti Drago as a board-elected member, as her term is up at the end of the year. C. Brosch motioned to approve the election. C. Simmers seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Nomination and Election of Offices of the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary

D. Baird led a discussion about the reshuffling of officer positions. A new slate of officers was proposed, with Pat Coluzzi as Chair, Aimee Isaac as Vice Chair, and Patti Drago as Secretary. C. Simmers motioned to approve these elections. T. Lawson seconded. The vote was unanimous. Jamie Burk, the new SCAT appointee, introduced himself and expressed his commitment to Sussex County.

Annual Recognition of the Board of Directors

Christophe Tulou expressed his gratitude and admiration for the board members and the leadership team, highlighting their dedication and care for the Center.

Executive Director's Report

Christophe Tulou emphasized the importance of the Habitat Plan and the commitment of partners to achieve its goals. He highlighted the economic significance of the Inland Bays, which contribute \$4.5 billion annually to Sussex County, and the need for a partnership in the North Beach restoration effort. He also discussed the progress of various projects and legislation, including the Water Resources Development Act, the Back Bay study, and the wetlands legislation led by Senator Stephanie Hanson. C. Tulou expressed optimism about the legislation's potential passage in the next General Assembly session and the successful passage of the wind procurement legislation. He also discussed the importance of sustainability and reducing the impact of climate change through the use of renewable energy sources like offshore wind turbines. Lastly, he expressed gratitude to Anna Fagan for her professional work and contributions to the center.

Open Forum

No discussion

Adjournment

Pat Coluzzi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:24am.