



Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Citizen's Cafe Notes

DATE & TIME

April 17, 2025 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm

LOCATION

Option 1: In-person

Delaware Center for the Inland Bays office
39375 Inlet Road
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Option 2: Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83174379002>

Meeting ID: 831 7437 9002

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,83174379002# US

+19292056099,,83174379002# US (New York)

Dial by your location

Meeting ID: 831 7437 9002

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcEQnCJBLu>

ATTENDEES 38 (17 in-person 21 virtual)

- Meeting called to order by: Claire Simmers
- CAC: 10
 - Present: in-person (4); virtual (6)
Dennis Bartow, Lee Bunting, Gail Dubowe, Jay Headman, Mary Kunst, Irene Legiec, Frank Piorko, Cheryl Rehrig, Ken Sigvardson, Claire Simmers
 - Absent: Tianyin (Tia) Ouyang; Ken Silverstein; Richard Watson
 - Prospective CAC member: Cheryl Winston
- Public: 25
 - In-Person 10
 - Virtual 15
- Center staff: 3
 - In-Person 3: Lisa, Jackie, Christophe
 - Virtual 0

AGENDA

Topic: Innovative Solutions for Enhancing Water Health

6:00-6:10 pm — Welcome

Claire Simmers, CAC Chair

6:10-6:40 pm — Guest Storytelling 1

Charmaine Dahlenburg - Director of Field Conservation, National Aquarium, Baltimore

BIO: Charmaine Dahlenburg is the Director of Field Conservation at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, MD. With a master's degree in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University, she brings over 20 years of experience in community-based habitat restoration, including sand dune stabilization with the DoD and wetland restoration throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Charmaine played a key role in the planning and design of 8,000 square feet of floating wetland technology in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, a project aimed at creating a greener, more resilient waterfront ecosystem.

TITLE: From Prototype to Thriving Ecosystem: The Making of Harbor Wetland

ABSTRACT: Floating wetland technology has emerged as an innovative solution for enhancing urban water quality and restoring lost habitats. Over the past decade, the National Aquarium has led a journey of experimentation and adaptation—developing and testing various floating wetland prototypes to better understand their ecological potential. This presentation will explore our process, from early designs to the successful launch of Harbor Wetland, a fully functioning ecosystem that has exceeded expectations. We'll discuss key lessons learned, the return of biodiversity—including river otters—and the role floating wetlands can play in the future of urban conservation.

6:40-7:10 pm — Guest Storytelling 2

Dr. Nicholas Ray - Assistant Professor, School of Marine Science and Policy, University of Delaware

Dr. Nicholas Ray, Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware's School of Marine Science and Policy, presented his work on stormwater ponds in coastal Delaware. His research interests center on the biogeochemistry and ecology of aquatic ecosystems, and how these systems respond to environmental changes. These ponds are open water eco-systems with carbon burial and greenhouse gas emissions. He is interested in gas exchange mechanisms; emissions are bad, but carbon burial good. More rooted plants drive carbon burial and fish play a role in carbon burial as well. Delaware should include emissions and burial in ponds.

7:10-7:25 pm — Citizen's Input

Question: why are homes being built on State Park lands on Rt 1 just south of Indian River Bridge?

Answer: this is not state park land. Maps are available online for state parks

(<https://tinyurl.com/34u9swe5>). Many parcels of land have legacy approvals to build.

7:25-8:00 pm — CAC Discussion

- Approval of CAC meeting minutes - February 13, 2025 – approved as circulated
 - CAC “Rare Earth” working group updates – continue to meet monthly to plan actions
 - CAC Member Application (Cheryl Winston) – unanimous approval of all attending representing a quorum.
 - CAC Resolution Update: CAC DRAFT RESOLUTION 2025 Development of An Implementation Strategy Related to Loss of Forest Canopy and Associated Habitat in the Inland Bays Watershed (Frank Piorko) – unanimous approval of all attending representing a quorum.
 - Center Updates
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2025 CAC Meeting Schedule

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Thursday, February 13, 2025

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Thursday, August 28, 2025

Thursday, October 23, 2025