



## Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Citizen's Cafe Agenda

DATE & TIME: *THU: October 27, 2022 from 6:00 – 8:00pm*

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/82116595292>

Meeting called to order by: Claire Simmers

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CAC (8): Lee Bunting, Rick Chamberlin, Gail Dubowe, [Amanda Pappas](#), [Frank Piorko](#), [Jalyn Powell](#), Claire Simmers, [Richard Watson \(highlighted blue attended online\)](#)

CAC not present (5): Dennis Bartow, Gary Cannon, John Grandy, Pete Keenan, Cheryl Rehrig

CIB (6): Caitlin Chaney, Anna Fagan, Andrew McGowan, Lisa Swanger; Megan Noe Fellows, Mary Hartnett

Public (7) (in person 3; via Zoom 4)

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**Theme: State of the Bays**

### AGENDA

6:00-6:05 Gathering – Welcome

6:05-7:05 CIB Storytelling

1. Andrew McGowan — Manager of Estuary Science

State of the Bays report – not public yet; Release in February, 2023.

6 Indicators with multiple measures.

1. Watershed (salt marsh degradation alarming decrease) – fair but degrading
2. Managing Nutrient Pollution – fair, no trend
3. Water Quality – poor-fair, no trend
4. Living Resources – fair, no trend
5. Human Health Risks – fair, no trend
6. Climate Change – poor, degrading

Summary:

Progress in point source pollution; water quality in Little Assawoman Bay improved; nutrient management practices strong; some of our living resources improved like eagles and ospreys.

Challenges in nonpoint source pollution; land use change; salt marsh degradation & buffer loss; bay grasses decline; negative effects of climate change

2.Lisa Swanger — Director of Outreach & Education

Economic Valuation report summary

Released and accessible at:

<https://www.inlandbays.org/about-the-bays/economic-value-of-the-inland-bays/>

Ecological & Environmental significance of the Bays and Economic & Cultural significance (tourism, recreation & development & related industries).

**September 6, 2022-** The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays (CIB) and the Delaware Sea Grant College Program have completed a first-ever assessment of the Economic Value of the Delaware Inland Bays, which reports that the Inland Bays generate over \$4.5 billion in annual economic activity and support over 35,000 jobs. A key finding of the study is that the economic contributions are felt locally – 89 percent of the economic activity and 94 percent of the jobs occur in Sussex County. The report was authored by Christian Hauser of Delaware Sea Grant and Christopher Bason of CIB. Key-Log Economics, an independent ecological and economic research firm based in Charlottesville, Va., performed the data analysis. Key-Log helps focus ecological and economic information on land use issues and ecosystem management.

**Here are some of the highlights of the economic reporting:**

- Economic activity within the Inland Bays study region provides tax revenue to federal, state, and county governments estimated at \$458 million.
- The Bays' thriving marina and boating economy contributes \$76 million in activity
- Accommodations, including at least 13 privately operated RV and tent campgrounds near the Inland Bays, contribute \$144 million in activity and over 1,000 jobs.
- The study cites research indicating that in 2019, 7.5 million visitors came to Sussex County and that tourism is now the fourth largest employer in the state.

3. Anna Fagan — Deputy Director

- Center's Strategic Plan FY 2023-2025; a summary will be available to the public in early 2023.
  1. Mission statement
    - a. To preserve, protect, and restore Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed. The Center achieves this through science-based: research, restoration, education, outreach, public policy, and advocacy
  2. Vision statement

- a. A healthy and resilient watershed, where diverse wildlife and habitats thrive, and all who live, work, and visit contribute to its betterment as informed stewards.
- 3. Values
  - a. Integrity. We operate, communicate, and advocate with scientific, organizational, and individual integrity.
  - b. Collaboration. We are successful when we work together.
  - c. Inclusivity. We embrace the potential unleashed when all are represented.
  - d. Respect. We act with respect for the environment and the perspectives, knowledge, and contributions of others.
  - e. Empowerment. We empower the community to be responsible stewards of the Bays through our educational and scientific efforts. We are empowered by a positive work culture that fosters innovation, fun, and doing good.
- 4. 6 strategic goals; 24 objectives; 54 Key Performance Indicators (KPI)



Note: Diversity Equity Inclusion Justice and Accessibility (DEIJA) efforts – this was also a CAC Proposal which is now part of the Center’s Strategic Plan. A board committee will be formed in 2023.

- Status updates on the CAC Resolutions
  - 1. **RESOLUTION: Development of an implementation strategy related to loss of tree canopy in the Inland Bays watershed. (Approved August 2021)**
    - a. Action: Update data in the watershed from 2016 to present regarding continued changes in land use and the number of forested acres lost to land development.
      - i. Update: Sussex County has conducted a flyover to capture raw data. They are awaiting a license to publish the completed maps. Once this is complete, the resulting maps will be shared with the Center.

b. Action: Continue dialogue set forth with the Wetlands and Buffer Workgroup to complete those efforts and to develop new strategies for the protection, preservation, and mitigation of forested tree canopy.

i. Update: Efforts continued up through the passage of the new buffer ordinance for Sussex County. No progress has been made since. New strategies must be developed once the Center's new Executive Director comes aboard and advocacy committee of the Board of Directors is formed. Sussex County is open to discussion on new strategies.

c. Action: Center/Sussex County coordination on the creation of an Inland Bays environmental planner position at the Center or within Sussex County P&Z to specifically work to satisfy goals within the CCMP and the 2018 County Comprehensive Plan

i. Update: No update at this time. Progress to resume with new Executive Director.

- Question: Frank Piorko, can we start gathering data not based on staff time?
- Update: Lisa Swager, Anna Fagan, Frank Piorko and Claire Simmers will meet to discuss

**2. RESOLUTION: Support the feasibility study, site design, construction, and execution of an aquaculture development center with members of the shellfish farming industry, Delaware Sea Grant, and Delaware State University. (Approved August 2021)**

a. Action: Work with the entities listed above to help garner support for this endeavor at municipal, state, and federal levels, as well as aiding in obtaining funds from philanthropic organizations that might contribute to this project.

i. Update: The Center has been successful in engaging with dignitaries and securing funding for a feasibility study (\$200K awarded through the state's Community Redevelopment and Reinvestment Fund). Center representatives have also participated in outreach events designed to bring awareness to the project.

ii. Oyster Hatchery Update – Rick Chamberlin

- Work is progressing at the Lewes facility and almost ready to open
- A Center will be established at Univ of DE. Several actions planned for November, 2022
- Looking for additional funding

**3. RESOLUTION: Develop a proposal for partnership between Sussex County Government and the Center to address climate change and sea level rise in the Inland Bays watershed. (Approved March 2022)**

a. Action: Work with Sussex County Council and other interested parties to explore and create a partnership on climate change and sea level rise mitigation and adaptation strategies.

i. Update: looking at possible Center position to include this work. Progress to resume with new Executive Director.

#### 7:05-7:30 Citizen Storytelling and Citizen's Input

Lisa Swanger – HOA outreach goals introduction.

Looking to establish more contacts through HOAs for education and outreach; HOAs have reached out to the Center;

Continuing work of the shoreline homeowner's brochure and PEEP. The Public Education and Engagement Plan (PEEP) is a living, 5-year action plan that was developed in collaboration with a network of entities working throughout the Inland Bays watershed and beyond. Through the development and implementation of the actions outlined in the plan, the goal is to collectively enhance public awareness of and engagement in the health of coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. This plan will serve as a supporting document to the Center's revised CCMP while guiding partners to leverage diverse knowledge, resources, and skill sets to meet mutual education and outreach goals throughout the region.

Discussion continued with citizen comments to continue exploring education and outreach opportunities with the Center.

#### 7:30-8:00 CAC Storytelling – Administrative discussions

a. Approval of minutes: August 04, 2022; no changes and approved as distributed

b. CAC 2023 meeting schedule – continue to meet Thursdays 6:00-8:00pm. CAC meetings coordinated with other Center committees and the Board.

c. Center Updates: Lisa Swanger

- Volunteer Appreciation & Friends of the Bays event — November 3 at 5pm at Crooked Hammock Brewery. Light fare and cash bar. **Register [HERE](#).**
- The Center has a new store! **Click [HERE](#)** to purchase merchandise (e.g., hats, shirts) to show your support for the Center. The store will close November 6 at midnight and all orders will be processed together after that. Finished orders will be distributed about 4-5 weeks later.
- The Center's new Winter Lecture Series launches November 17. The theme of the first of 3 sessions this year is "The Science of Oysters: A Shucking Good Time". The evening is sold out, but there is a waitlist. **More details on our [website HERE](#).** The remaining 2 sessions will occur after the new year. Stay tuned for more information.
- Public Education & Engagement Plan (PEEP) has been approved. The Center and its partners are now moving into the implementation stage.

- For those interested in water quality and DEI — The Delaware Environmental Accountability Coalition is hosting a virtual community conversation on the cumulative impacts of pollution and potential solutions. State Representatives Kendra Johnson and Larry Lambert will be speaking. ***It will take place November 17 from 6:30 - 8 pm on Zoom. Register at [tinurl.com/deac2022](https://tinurl.com/deac2022)***

d. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.