

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Citizen's Cafe Agenda

DATE & TIME: *THUR: August 05 2021 from 6:00 - 7:45pm*

LOCATION: Zoom* and in person.

Center for the Inland Bays

39375 Inlet Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Draft Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by: Claire Simmers, CAC Chair 6:02 PM

Attendees:

CAC: Dennis Bartow, Frank Piorko, Rick Chamberlin, Richard Watson, Linda Grande, John Grandy (member elect)

CIB : Lisa Swanger; Dr. Marianne Walch

CIB Storytelling: Nivette Perez-Perez

Citizen Storytelling: Zina Hense, DNREC

Public: Various Watershed residents primarily interested in oyster gardening and aquaculture.

CAC not in attendance: Tom Brett, Gary Cannon, Pete Keenen, Amanda Pappas, Jalyn Powell, Cheryl Rehrig

Theme: Oysters: Protection on the Half Shell

AGENDA

6:00-6:15 Gathering – Welcome

6:15-6:45 CIB Storytelling - 10 min presentation; 20 min Q&A

Nivette Pérez-Pérez – Project Manager

Center's Volunteer Oyster Gardening Initiative

- CIB Oyster Gardening Program began 2003 as a cooperative effort with CIB, DNREC and UD
- Goal is to produce oysters for structure for restoration and NOT for sale for consumption
- Discussion proceeded as to how waterside residents could volunteer for Oyster Gardening Program. Area residents had questions regarding size of the cages, depth of the water necessary to grow oysters, and where the oysters could be grown. Marianne Walch and Nivette Perez-Perez emphasized that oysters can be grown anywhere but used ONLY in approved areas for restoration. Oysters are used for restoration reefs and living shoreline projects. These oysters are not for public consumption.
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6:45-7:15 Citizen Storytelling – 10 min presentation; 20 min Q&A

Zina Hense, Environmental Scientist with DNREC

Shellfish Aquaculture Program, Division of Fish and Wildlife

Zina Hense provided an excellent historic perspective of the oyster industry and relevant historic abundance of oysters both in the Delaware Bay (primarily) and few natural oyster beds in the Inlands Bays. Zina discussed the “vibrio” shellfish disease that decimated the industry in the Delaware Bays.

In 2013 the discussion of shellfish aquaculture began to mature as a discussion initiated with the Inland Bays as the lead of the “TIGER” team assembled to lead this program. The effort culminated with the support of the Delaware General Assembly and CIB/DNREC led Shellfish Aquaculture Program. The ensuing years saw the program and regulations become developed and lease operations began.

In 2020, there were 43 leased acres in the Inland Bays held by 14 lessees. Covid issues took a toll on the production with oysters being grown and fewer outlets for them to be sold. Half of the oysters were planted in 2020 (727,000) than in 2019 (1,453,900).

Delaware Sea Grant Program is also participating as a partner.

- Zina discussed a survey of lessees in 2020 to ask about issues related to new markets, poaching (none), boating accidents and oyster mortality. Questions from the audience asked included:
 - Is each acre still being marked? (yes)
 - Can Oysters overwinter? (yes)
 - Can Oysters escape the cages and re-populate? (no)
- Zina discussed the types of oysters grown and local demand in the area restaurants for them.
- Other questions and comments were related to natural oysters in riprap, how crabs don't predate oyster cages, questions about triploid oysters, were early oysters farmed? (yes) and do they dredge for oysters in the Bays? (no).
- Claire emphasized the discussion centered around two different programs – oyster gardening and oyster aquaculture.
- Other questions from the audience were related to non-topic and concerned Inlet bathymetry, and impact of climate to the inlet.

7:15-7:45 CAC Storytelling - administrative discussions

- a. Approval of minutes: April 15, 2021 – Frank Piorko motioned; Richard Watson second, passed.
- b. Discussion and vote on CAC membership application of Mr. John Grandy. Dennis Bartow motioned; Richard Watson second, passed unanimously.
- c. Discussion of CAC Proposal 6.2021 Delaware Hatchery - Rick Chamberlin
Rick discussed the proposal for UD Aquaculture Hatchery. \$100K authorized by Delaware General Assembly for model hatchery to grow spat for oyster production. Marianne discussed the Center support for the project and active partner for funding support. There is an effort to secure funds from infrastructure funds being identified by federal programs. Rich mentioned the conversations with Sussex County Administrator Todd Lawson and he was waiting for CAC support.

CAC was very supportive of moving this proposal along to the Board unanimously. Lisa described the format of the proposals and how they needed to be formatted to make it a final for a resolution. Next Board meeting August 18 Executive Committee.

d. Center Updates: Lisa Swanger – Outreach and Education Coordinator

Lisa provided the Center updates including the introduction of Mary Kunst a former art teacher in Montgomery County, MD. Mary will be joining the CIB education team. Mary provided a short bio of her experience.

Other Center updates included

- Former Environmental Educator, Jared Ryan, has left for graduate school and we wish him well.
- Tickets are on sale now for the Center's annual fundraiser, Decked Out (9/30/21 from 6-9pm) at the Big Chill Beach Club. Visit inlabdbays.org/deckedout for more information and to purchase tickets.
- The shoreline property guidebook is anticipated to be complete in October 2021.
- A lecture series on diverse topics (including topics covered in the property guidebook and key elements in the revised CCMP) will be offered in FY22.

e. Discussion of CAC Proposal Development of an Implementation Strategy Related to Loss of Tree Canopy in the Inland Bays

The proposal and rubric were briefly discussed, and Dennis expressed concerns for clear cutting. Motion to move forward by Richard Watson and Rick Chamberlin second. Unanimously carried forward. Frank to work with Lisa for presentation to the Executive Committee.

f. Citizens' Input

John Grandy inquired about a presentation and proposal centered on Turtles and Terrapins. Amanda and Linda are developing a rubric.

Questions about whether a native plant sale – Spring/Sale 2022

Rick spoke of a UD Webinar series and asked about the Power Plant decommissioning.

Meeting moved for adjournment – Linda motioned, and Richard seconded. 7:55 P.M.