



DEIJA COMMITTEE

Meeting Agenda

DATE: Tuesday, October 14, 2025

TIME: 6 - 7:30 pm

LOCATION: Delaware Center for the Inland Bays

39375 Inlet Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Remote via Zoom:

By computer:

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85847880765?pwd%3DKgUaneFarmte3al8FOnDkZl4P6oDb3.1&sa=D&source=calendar&ust=1760287379961878&usg=AOvVaw2g05PwD73EA2vJn0sfE5B4>

By phone: (301) 715-8592 Meeting ID: 858 4788 0765 #

Meeting called by: Christophe Tulou, Executive Director

Attendees:

Committee Chair Dr. Marlene Saunders

Center Staff: C. Tulou, B. Ochs, N. Perez-Perez, M. Noe Fellows,

Committee Members and attendees: Loretta Benson, Gerald Esposito, Bruce Wright, Dr. Bonnie Hall, Jane Hovington, Marissa McClenton, Sherita Belle, Chris Brosch, Asua Ofosu

Welcome / Call to Order – 6:00PM

N. Pérez-Pérez

- Land Acknowledgement – Delivered

Introductions / Icebreaker:

M. Saunders

- Why isn't October the 8th month? (brief round-robin introductions)

Meeting Agenda Review

M. Saunders

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

M. Saunders

Old Business

Updates Southern Delaware Coastal Resilience Plan

M. Noe-Fellows

- **Southern Delaware Coastal Resilience Plan – Update**

- Shifted to community-first outreach at existing events (e.g., Juneteenth in Lewes, Soil Quality Day; Indian River Yacht Club).
Open houses: Lewis (9/9 done), Frankford (tomorrow), Georgetown (next week), Millsboro (in two weeks).
Emerging top concern: Nuisance/tidal flooding across communities.
- Nanticoke engagement: Planning a small-group deep-dive session.



New Business

Operational Updates

C. Tulou

- **Federal Environment & Committee Naming**
 - Current federal algorithmic scans flag terms like “diversity,” “vulnerability,” “justice” in grants/web content; risk to >\$1.5M in federal funding noted.
 - Intent: *Substance of work does not change*. Exploring a name change to reduce algorithmic hits while maintaining mission.
 - Member feedback: Mixed; preference to avoid a rushed decision, hold a dedicated meeting, and review mission/goals together.
- **Membership & Participation**
 - Reviewed current roster; welcomed interest from new participants.
 - Organizations may designate representatives (multiple allowed).

Staffing Updates

C. Tulou

- **Center Staffing**
 - Deputy Director: Bryan Ochs succeeding Anna Fagan.
 - Departures: Mark Carter (Development), Michelle Koenig (Watershed) Caitlin Chaney (Comms).
 - New: Clare Magargal, Communications Specialist.

Legislative Updates

C. Tulou

- Noted budget/federal uncertainty; strong NEP network support nationwide.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

N. Pérez-Pérez

- Special naming/mission meeting: Tue, Nov 18, 6:00 PM (CIB + Zoom).
- Board meeting: Fri, Dec 12 – DEIJA segment planned.
- Future cadence (Proposed)
 - Various Locations
 - Thursday, February 19, 2026
 - Thursday, April 23, 2026
 - Thursday, August 13, 2026
 - Thursday, October 15, 2026

Motions & Votes

- Motion: Table approval of Nov 2024 minutes and seek electronic approval for both Nov 2024 and this meeting’s minutes, then post to website.
 - Second: Received.
 - Vote: Passed (thumbs up/raised hands); no opposition recorded; abstentions not recorded.



Action Items

- Nivette/Christophe/Bryan : Email Nov 2024 minutes + draft of today's minutes to committee; collect electronic approvals; post once approved.
- Megan: Share open-house flyers (Frankford, Georgetown, Millsboro).
- Coordinate community conversation with Nanticoke members (5–6 participants; date TBD).
- Bonnie: Post Millsboro event flyer on Millsboro Chamber & Nanticoke Indian Association sites.
- Bruce/First State CAA: Promote Georgetown open house.
- Christophe/Staff: Send membership invitation/process to interested participants (org designees allowed).
- Center Staff: Consider temporarily removing the DEIJA web page header until naming discussion is resolved; keep agendas/minutes accessible.
- Center Staff: Add a DEIJA segment to the Dec 12 Board agenda for member remarks.
- All Committee Members: Hold a special meeting focused on mission refresh & potential renaming before the Dec 12 Board meeting -- When/Where: Tue, Nov 18, 6:00 PM, at CIB (food provided) + virtual option.

Public Comment

All

PBS documentary on the Nanticoke People to air Nov 15 @ 8 PM (noted by Bonnie).

Adjourn – 7:19PM

M. Saunders