



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Draft Meeting Agenda

DATE: Friday, Mar 20, 2026

TIME: 9:30 am

LOCATION: 39375 Inlet Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

by computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84913994182>

by phone: (301)-715-8592 Meeting ID: 849 1399 4182 #

MEETING CALLED BY: Aimee Isaac, Board Chair

ATTENDEES

Board Members Present:

Aimee Isacc (Board Chair), Patti Drago (Secretary) Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected), Jimmy (Dept of Ag) Claire Simmers (CAC Chair), Jamie Burke (Town of Millsboro), Andrew Wozniak (STAC), Amie Howell (EPA ex officio), Mike Harmer (Sussex Co. Engineer), Steve Hohman (EPA), Brian Jones (Sussex Conservation District), Steve Williams (DNREC)

DE Center Staff: Christophe Tulou, Bryan Ochs, Bob Collins, Shannon Clark, Jaime Argo, Nivette Perez-Perez, Taylor Hoffman, Meghan Noe Fellows

Call to Order- 9:33am by Aimee Isaac

Pledge of Allegiance & Introductions- The meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Meeting Agenda Review- A. Issac called for any changes to the meeting agenda. There were none.

Secretary's Report- Aimee Issac confirmed that the Board members received the minutes from the previous meeting. A. Issac called for comments or changes. C. Simmers had a edit to the CAC report to remove "as well as" on page 5. C. Simmers made a motion to approve and Aimee seconded it.

Treasurer's Report- In lieu of the Treasurer, J. Argo gave a Financial update from the latest Financial Committee meeting. PKS is wrapping up the FY 25 audit this week. Results will be shared prior to the next board meeting. No comments or questions for Jaime.

Other Reports

CAC- C. Simmers gave an update from the last meeting. 16 virtual public attendees at last meeting. CAC continues to support the Bays to Backyards and Mini Forests projects. Next meeting on April

15th. Looking to review the prospect of another CAC member. This year's theme is Resilience of the Delaware Inland Bays. Next meeting will be on April 15, 2026.

STAC- Andrew Wozniak shared updates on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee's activities. Last meeting topics focused on Oyster farming and aquaculture. Talk from Nick Ray from University of Delaware. Zena Hents from DNREC talked about aquaculture. Megan Noe Fellows talked about The Center's efforts with oyster reefs. Next meeting on April 10th talking about contaminants.

CPE- C. Tulou gave an update in Marlene's absence. Community Pathways to Engagement is the official new name of the committee. Last meeting was on February 19th. Black Summitt 2026 is coming up in September at Del State. There was a discussion on potential data centers in Delaware with a focus on water use and power drains. Next meeting will be April 23.

CCMP- C. Tulou gave an update on the last meeting on February 9, 2026. Tracking is one of the biggest challenges facing the committee. Christophe and Bryan attended the National Estuary Program in Washington, D.C. last week. They connected with other NEPs about their tracking systems.

Development- J. Esposito discussed updates to upcoming events from the Green Screen Film Night to the Decked Out event at Big Chill in September. Reviewed the Development Report from the month of February.

Sussex County- M. Harmer shared updates on the reforestation project at the Inland Bays Sanitation property. Thanks to Bob Collins for assistance on this project of planting 40,000 trees. Update included projects at Slaughter Beach, Love Creek and solar projects at Wolf Neck. They are partnering with DNREC on the Piney Neck project.

DNREC- S. Williams discussed the Ocean Beach nourishment project with Bethany Beach being the highest priority. Parking and public access is a requirement for the state's Bay/Beach communities. Sand bypass system at the Inlet is active until mid-May with a break during the Summer and will resume again after Labor Day.

DDA- J. Kroon gave an update on the Dept of Agriculture budget cycle. There is \$10M for open space preservation. Also low interest loans for farmers to buy equipment for aquaculture.

EPA- NEP meeting was in D.C. this week. Next year is the NEP 40th Anniversary and they are looking at ways to promote the program. \$850K funding for NEPs in 2026. Thank you to Meghan and Sussex County for their work on the submerged gravel wetland project. She also discussed the 350 projects that her team oversees.

House & Senate- C. Tulou discussed the development of a Wetlands bill. There are currently no state protections for freshwater wetlands.

Old Business

Federal Funding/Fundraising Status- ???

New Business

Staff Presentation- Nivette Perez-Perez gave a presentation on The Center's robust Volunteer Program

Strategic Plan Approval- C. Tulou updated the status of the full and final Strategic Plan after many edits and incorporating notes and edits from the Board. J. Esposito made a motion to approve the official Strategic Plan and Jamie Burke seconded. The plan was approved. Vote: Passed (ayes, none opposed).

Treasurer Vacancy- C. Tulou explained the position and there is a vacancy. He asked interested parties to reach out to him or Aimee. Responsibilities include a 30 minute quarterly meeting, overseeing audits and working directly with Jaime and Bryan.

Executive Director's Report- C. Tulou gave a staffing update. Three positions have been filled. Requesting funding through the Congressional (CDS) funding on the continuation of the Thompson Island Living Shoreline project.

Public Comment- No public comment

Adjourn: J. Esposito made a motion, M. Harmer seconded to at 11:50am

Please note that this is a business meeting of the Center. The Board will not consider any questions or comments from the public until the Public Comment period. Thank you for your understanding and adherence to this policy.