



Policy Committee Meeting Approved Minutes Meeting of June 4, 2015 – Conference Call

Policy Committee Members Present: Ms. Joan L. Matthews (Co-chair, USEPA, Region 2, for Regional Administrator Ms. Judith A. Enck), Ms. Kerry Kirk Pflugh (Co-chair, NJDEP, for Mr. Dan Kennedy), The Honorable Joseph Vicari (Ocean County Freeholder Liaison), The Honorable Paul J. Kennedy (Ocean County Mayors' Association), Dr. Jon Larson (Ocean County College), Mr. George Murnyak (Citizen Representative, Alternate), Dr. Stan Hales (Barnegat Bay Partnership Director and Advisory Committee Co-Chair, *ex officio*), Mr. Tim Dillingham (American Littoral Society Director and Advisory Committee Co-Chair, *ex officio*), Ms. Angela Andersen (Long Beach Township and CEC Co-Chair, *ex officio*).

Policy Committee Members Absent: Mr. Wes Dalzell (ReClam the Bay and CEC Co-Chair, *ex officio*), Dr. Matthew Poach (STAC Committee Chair, *ex officio*), Mr. John Zingis (Citizen Representative).

BBP Partners Present: Ms. Barbara Spinweber (USEPA, Region 2 Program Liaison), Mr. Jeffrey Gratz (USEPA, Region 2), Ms. Kerry Kirk Pflugh (NJDEP), Mr. Jeff Reading (NJDEP), Ms. Patricia Gardiner (NJDEP), Mr. Tom Belton (NJDEP), Ms. Lisa Auermuller (Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve), Mr. Charles Caruso (Pinelands Preservation Alliance), Mr. Peter Brandt (USEPA), Mr. Rick Balla (USEPA), Mr. Dave McKeon (OC Dept. of Planning)

Others Present: Ms. Martha Maxwell-Doyle (BBP), Ms. Mary Judge (BBP), Mr. James Vasslides (BBP).

Welcome and introductions – Ms. Kerry Kirk Pflugh for Mr. Dan Kennedy, Acting Policy Committee Chair

Mr. Kennedy sends his apologies and his greetings. The meeting was called to order at 1:07 PM by Ms. Kirk Pflugh.

Review and Approval of the May 19, 2014 Meeting Minutes and the June 4, 2015 Policy Committee Agenda – A motion to approve the minutes from the May 19, 2014 meeting and the agenda for the June 4, 2015 Policy Committee meeting was made by Freeholder Vicari. The motion was seconded by Dr. Larson and was passed unanimously.

BBP Policy Committee Citizen Representative – Dr. Hales

Dr. Hales advised the Policy Committee of Mr. Leonard's March resignation. He is a long-time resident of Plumsted Township, New Jersey and set a high standard for the Policy Committee. Mr. Leonard volunteered hundreds of hours annually with Island Beach State Park and strengthened the BBP's relationship with the park, which led to more dune restoration activities. In addition, he participated in many BBP events and CEC meetings. He enjoyed his time helping the BBP and his time as Citizen Representative. The BBP sent a letter of recognition and thanks to Mr. Leonard for his service, but Dr. Hales asked the Policy Committee to acknowledge his service and his serving as a role model.

Action: The BBP will prepare a certificate of appreciation for signature by the Policy Committee members. All are in agreement.

Nomination and recommendation of new member, Mr. John Zingis, for Policy Committee approval.

The Advisory Committee approved the recommendation of Mr. Zingis as Citizen Representative. Mr. Zingis has been serving as the alternate member, lives on the water in Toms River, works for a number of consulting firms and is currently CEO of Air, Land, and Sea, a Pt. Pleasant-based Consulting Company. He has also supported the Foundation's activities and is active in many groups. Mr. Zingis is a certified diver and works with the county on various restoration activities. Dr. Hales made a motion to the Policy Committee that Mr. Zingis be appointed to serve a term of three years as Citizen Representative. The motion was seconded by Dr. Larson and with the abstention of Ms. Matthews, the motion was passed unanimously.

Action: Dr. Hales will email a copy of Mr. Zingis' resume to the Policy Committee.

2015-16 BBP 320 Workplan Review and Approval – Dr. S. Hales

Total funding for the 2015-16 BBP Workplan is \$736,000, which represents a minor change in previously circulated documents, as three supplemental awards have been received by the USEPA. Dr. Hales provided the following Workplan highlights:

Water Quality

The BBP will continue to support the water quality monitoring network and will expand it with additional funds received by the USEPA with locations to be determined by partners. Commercial shellfish operations in the bay will hopefully be supported by the placement of those sensors.

The state has made a commitment to provide technical assistance to address data gaps in the past and a science symposium was held last week (130 attendees). The BBP will work with the NJDEP and partners to work out a new science prospectus. The pathogen workgroup will continue its work on pathogen impairments and is currently working mostly in the Beachwood/Pine Beach/Ocean Gate area.

Healthy Lawns, Healthy Waters Initiative: NJDEP has provided funds to BBP to develop demonstration riparian buffers and natural space. The projects will be placed in highly visible areas in senior communities in the Berkeley Township and Toms River areas.

Metedeconk Watershed Protection Plan: A draft low-impact development ordinance from the Brick MUA will be completed later this year. A flood management plan is being prepared with Brick Township with BBP, BTMUA and other groups participating in the development.

Impaired Lake/Stream Restoration: BBP continues to provide technical assistance in Pt. Pleasant Beach and Bay Head on their respective lake projects.

Water Supply

A review of the state water supply plan and development of conservation and re-use campaigns are dependent on release of the master plan.

Habitat/Acquisition and Restoration

The county continues to provide the matching funds through the Natural Lands Trust, for which the BBP is thankful.

Shellfish/Eelgrass Restoration Development: A commitment has been made by the Advisory Committee for new and existing funds to support two new shellfish projects dealing with oysters and clams. The need for an eelgrass assessment was discussed and Stockton University has agreed to help with a bay-wide assessment. The BBP is also beginning a bay-wide oyster recruitment assessment. The BBP will continue its efforts to support ongoing projects. The shellfish white paper included identification of a number of data gaps and priority recommendations. A separate recommendations document was developed and reviewed by the STAC and AC; an additional communications piece to promote awareness of shellfish priorities is being considered.

Climate Adaptation and Preparedness

Supplemental funds have been received for new activities which will better communicate municipal vulnerabilities. Dr. Craghan and Ms. Spinweber were thanked for their technical assistance.

BBP is working with Toms River Township and the Institute on Science for Global Policy's Climate Change Program (ICCAP) to hold a rising seas/coastal storms symposium in late September.

The BBP received \$40,000 from EPA Headquarters through its "Blue Carbon" Initiative. The BBP will be collaborating with the Delaware Center for Inland Bays, The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, and the Academy of Science at Drexel University.

Fisheries and Wildlife

The BBP's juvenile nekton and jellyfish monitoring efforts are continuing. Additionally, BBP is working with USFWS on two dam removal projects (Cedar Creek and Westecunk Creek) and providing pre- and post-monitoring.

Restoration Projects

The BBP continues to work with the county to monitor and assess the Berkeley Island County Park living shoreline project. We are also working with the NJDEP to develop a living shoreline project to stem erosion at Sedge Island.

Citizen Science Initiative

The BBP has developed a citizen science shoreline assessment program ("Paddle for the Edge") which will begin later this month. There has been a great demand to participate in the program and additional training has been scheduled.

Brown Property Public Use and Management Plan

The draft plan for the property is in review; the goal was to promote more appropriate use of the property in a variety of ways. The BBP and Toms River Township have jointly applied for a Green Acres trail grant.

OCC Sustainability Initiative

Language has been received from the USEPA for consideration by OCC. Some items have been identified and that language will be incorporated therein.

Action: Dr. Hales will follow-up on OCC's workplan initiative with EPA to ensure workplan approval.

BBP Program Administration/Implementation

BBP staff continues to build upon its previous success in securing additional funding in support of the implementation of its Strategic Plan. In the last year, BBP has successfully sought and was awarded over \$250K in grant funding.

Barnegat Bay Foundation

Dr. Bageac was unable to participate in the call due to the BBF Gala preparations. The Foundation gala is tomorrow and the BBF continues to support workplan activities. The OCC Foundation Director is interested in developing a closer relationship with the BBP and Dr. Hales is meeting with the Foundation Board soon.

Program Evaluation

In accordance with EPA Headquarters Guidance, the BBP's Performance Evaluation package was submitted earlier this year and a site review is set for August 4-6, to include Dr. Michael Craghan (EPA HQ), Dr. Alison Branco (Peconic NEP), and Mr. Tom Borden, Esquire (Narragansett).

CCMP revision

All NEPs are required to revise their CCMPs and USEPA guidance will be forthcoming from the region by the end of September. A schedule needs to be submitted for this revision and they are

considering a “lessons-learned” program, which would be a worthwhile endeavor, as climate change and other topics were not included in the originals. A work group will be formed and the BBP will need some contractor support for writing/editing.

Communication Plan Implementation

A new outreach activity has been proposed by Save Barnegat Bay to install signage for all waterbodies which cross a road in the Barnegat Bay watershed).

A motion to approve the 2015-16 work plan was made by Freeholder Vicari. The motion was seconded by Ms. Matthews (with the proviso that some editing of the language regarding the OCC Initiative is done, to be worked out between Dr. Hales and Ms. Spinweber) and was passed unanimously.

BBP MOU Review - Dr. S. Hales/ Dr. Larson

Review of Director by OCC: Matt Kennedy will perform the assessment, which will be reviewed by Dr. Larson. Ms. Kirk Pflugh requested a template so members can review the parameters of the evaluation. The Roles and Responsibilities MOU states that the Policy Committee has a role in giving input to this process and they would like that participation to be arranged. Dr. Larson agrees and will be in touch. The last review was performed by Dr. McGinty and Policy Committee members were contacted for their input. Ms. Kirk Pflugh indicated that the Policy Committee needs to be represented on the review by a delegate.

Governor’s 10 Point Plan for Barnegat Bay Update/Next steps – NJDEP Staff

Ms. Kirk Pflugh reported that it has been a busy year for the NJDEP, especially as to the science and water quality agendas. Action Item 3 (fertilizer initiative) has been concluded. The Rutgers certification program and enforcement continue, as do stewardship and education. The recent Barnegat Bay Blitz just concluded, picking up thousands of items of trash in partnership with towns, schools, and organizations. The rain barrel and state lands illegal dumping enforcement program are other great spin-off efforts.

Ms. Gardiner reported that the NJDEP has been conducting long-term monitoring for Barnegat Bay for two years and the plan is to have it continue. They are completing the water-quality portion of the model and all work will be completed by spring 2016. They are updating their website to provide information to show the public the process the NJDEP used to develop a model to determine the actions needed to improve the bay. Some tools will be demonstrated at the Barnegat Bay Festival this weekend.

Mr. Belton spoke about the NJDEP’s development of 10 comprehensive Barnegat Bay-specific research projects designed to answer key management questions. The status of these projects was discussed. Once reports are complete, they will be reviewed, next actions determined, and a communications plan developed to get information to the public.

NJDEP Commissioner Martin spoke at Barnegat Light for the Barnegat Bay Blitz and was then taken to the Sedge Islands to speak with researchers and get their input as to their perceived needs. They are planning a fall symposium with 10 researchers available to the public at a larger meeting. A mini-symposium of researchers will present lunchtime seminars either at the

Academy or Drexel in order to get the science to the public. The Commissioner developed an Action Plan to include: jellyfish and what homeowners can do to help lessen the problem; open water marsh management system (County Mosquito Commissions); and fisheries management plans. The goal of Action Item #9 is to develop a management plan based on science. Sixteen ecologically sensitive areas have been mapped to help the public change its behavior, which was also put on a boater app by Fish & Wildlife as part of its 2011 and 2014 education campaigns for safe boating activities in these areas. Enforcement sweeps were also held. Dr. Rick Lathrop was hired to analyze the environmentally sensitive areas in more detail for a rigorous update of the mapping/designation.

Action: Dr. Hales and Mr. Belton will discuss and develop public outreach opportunities regarding the NJDEP's Action #9.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Poach and Mr. Vasslides discussed the well-received Science Symposium. Most of the presentations will be put online in a couple of weeks with a video posted in early fall. The NJDEP was thanked for allowing its researchers to participate. Two STAC projects are basically complete – modeling of seagrass, and the joint Rutgers/Montclair State study on the role of plant and soil communities in retention of nutrients, which will help determine restoration opportunities and potential. The seagrass monitoring report will be available in the middle of next week.

The State of the Bay report will go out next spring and a work group will be formed at the next STAC meeting. The same format will be used and indicators will be updated; new indicators based on recent research will be added.

Communication and Education Committee Report

Ms. Andersen reported that the CEC is a very productive and diverse committee. A successful Education and Outreach retreat was held in March at the Lighthouse Center. The retreat was very well attended and used a new format to match education and science. Social media strategies were also discussed. The CEC grant program funded six grants which showed a good diversity in awards/projects. The 18th Barnegat Bay Festival motto is “Citizens and Science, Partners in Protection.” The CCMP review is their next task. Mr. Zingis has been very helpful and she believes he will be a great new citizen representative. All partners are very proactive in helping the BBP disseminate their information/publications. Dr. Hales thanked Ms. Andersen for her personal efforts on the bay and for her continuing support of the program.

Partner Updates

Ms. Matthews said the USEPA continues to be committed to climate resilience and sustainable planning, but improved water quality is at the core of everything they do and this goal needs to be pursued aggressively. The BBP has made great strides and non-point sources of nutrients work continues.

There are clearly positive and sustained benefits from Green Infrastructure on surrounding waterbodies and all partners should be looking to promote Green Infrastructure and sustainable development.

There is an increasing investment in Citizen Science and she was glad to see the ReClam and similar projects in the work plan. All partners should continue to seek opportunities to advance citizen science.

Freeholder Vicari thanked Dr. Hales for his continued communication with the freeholders and Dr. Larson was thanked for his partnership. The county has six pumpout boats in the water and a new boat has been purchased. The Natural Lands program continues to buy new land with over 16,000 acres purchased to date. Stormwater improvements continue to be made, which is an ongoing program with no end as technology changes. Ocean County is the second largest county in the state of New Jersey so he welcomes suggestions from all.

Mayor Kennedy expressed his concerns about the bay. He expressed his concern regarding serious shoreline erosion problems and he speaks often with Dr. Hales about this issue. The Ocean Gate beach prism project was discussed. Mayor Kennedy feels it is working and his engineer has surveyed different times/tides and has information to send to the NJDEP.

Dr. Larson said that Dr. Hales has done a marvelous job. The state, township, and county are wonderful partners who have invested in preserving land from development all around the college. Other Policy members were thanked. He will be meeting with Mayor Kelaher to improve issues on the Brown Property and he thanked the county for its efforts controlling stormwater on campus. He is proud to have the BBP on campus and wants the college to be a role model for best practices in every way it can.

Mr. Dillingham reported on the American Littoral Society's oyster reef restoration on Good Luck Point and its shell recycling program. They are moving into construction in the fall with the Toms River Board of Education for low-impact development and green infrastructure projects (green roofs and conversion work on their parking lots to minimize and reduce stormwater input to the bay). This project is supported by the NJDEP through the 319 program. They are also working on living shoreline projects to serve as models to deal with shoreline erosion due to sea-level rise.

Dr. Hales announced that Bob Nicholson has retired and will be the recipient of the Guardian of Barnegat Bay award for the coming year.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment – Ms. Kirk Pflugh
The meeting was adjourned.