



**Advisory Committee Meeting
Ocean County College, Gateway Building
Conference Room 401
Call in Number - 732-255-0428
January 19, 2016 9:00 am**

DRAFT Minutes

Attending Advisory Committee Members: Stan Hales (BBP Co-Chair), Charles Caruso (PPA), Victoria Pecchioli (OCPD), Karen Greene (NOAA), Britta Wenzel (SBB), Bob Schuster (NJDEP), Barbara Spinweber (EPA R2), Willie deCamp (SSB), Rob Tunstead (USDA-NRCS), Rich Warren (OCUA), Ed Wengrowski (Pinelands Commission), Matthew Poach (NOAA – Fisheries), Lisa Auermuller (JCNERR), Will Ruocco (BTMUA), Clint Lehman (RCTB), Rick Bushnell (RCTB), Christine Raabe (OCSCD), Dave McKeon (OC Planning Dept.), Kerry Kirk-Pflugh (NJDEP), Virginia Rettig (E. Forsythe Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge).

On the Phone: Steve Yergeau (RCE-OC), Alyssa Arcaya (USEPA R2), Steve Venezia (USEPA R2), Pete Rowe (NJSGC).

Guests: Lindsey Sigmund (Watershed Ambassador), John Case (NJDOT), Karen Argenti, Michele Kropilak (NJDEP – Coastal Enforcement), Mike Hayduk (US ACOE), Ray Bukowski (NJDEP), Scott Stephens (NJDOT), Dave Lambert (NJDOT), Brett Callanan (NJDEP – Water Enforcement), Lee Gashlin (Berkeley Waterways Commission).

Barnegat Bay Partnership Staff: Martha Maxwell-Doyle, Jim Vasslides, Mary Judge, Betsy Hyle, Karen Walzer.

Welcome and Introductions: S. Hales

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. and introductions were made. Dr. Hales noted that Mr. Dillingham was attending an ALS project groundbreaking at Wreck Pond and had expressed his regrets.

Review of draft AC agenda and AC minutes of November 10, 2015: S. Hales

A motion to approve the minutes of November 10, 2015 was made by Ms. Greene. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rettig and was passed with Ms. Raabe, Mr. Wengrowski, and Mr. Ruocco abstaining.

Director's Update: S. Hales

Climate Change Conference, November 20-21, 2015 TR/OCC. The conference was a success and attendance more diverse than most outreach events within the watershed. Members were asked to review the ISGP website for information about the speakers. Dr. Hales reviewed the event and its outcomes. ISGP staff are putting together podcasts which can be added to partner websites. ISGP wants another follow-up meeting to discuss implementation and would like 400-500 attendees. Anyone interested in getting involved, please let Dr. Hales know and they will be added to the work group (to be comprised of 25-30 people for this second meeting).

Ms. Auermuller provided some feedback that her staff (who participated from the JCNERR) felt that: 1) the conference did not reflect the amount of climate-change and related work already being done in New

Jersey, and 2) the ISGP had its own agenda. Others agreed with the comments but also stated that the program had a lot of value.

The ISGP requested that the follow-up meeting be held in the spring, but the tentative target is now September or October of 2016. Ms. Spinweber asked that no additional commitments of NEP funding be made without further discussion at the Advisory Committee level.

BBP EPA HQ Performance Evaluation Letter. Dr. Hales thanked the AC for their participation. Ms. Spinweber stated that while the PE letter outlined some tasks for the BBP it was a very strong and positive letter. The challenges were briefly reviewed and should be focused on before the next evaluation (which takes place every five years). The NEP's have asked for a review of the process and that discussion will take place in late February of this year.

Action: Dr. Hales will forward the NEP Region 9 letter regarding the EPA process to Ms. Spinweber.

Desktop Audit Update. The year-long audit with Region 2 is almost complete. The EPA audit team has been meeting with Dr. Hales and Ocean County College. With the greater requirements on reporting at the federal level, the college is posting a part-time accountant position for the BBP. Dr. Hales will draft a letter and asked partners to request the EPA make consistent rules program-wide. Specifically, Dr. Hales would like to spend down older grants first. Dr. Hales would like this rule changed in order to facilitate closing out non-competitive grants.

Action: Working with OCC, Dr. Hales will forward the account position announcement to partners for distribution and draft a letter to the US EPA regarding consistency.

Personnel/Work Plan Commitments (Wetlands/WQ & CCMP). The US EPA would like the BBP work plan by April 1st. The BBP is contemplating adding another staff member funded by non-320 money.

Budget issues may be resolved within the next two weeks and an update will be provided. CCMP review will require help from partners and should reflect the community's efforts on behalf of the bay. Ms. Pflugh asked that Dr. Hales identify his specific needs, which would help her identify the right NJDEP people to involve. A "doodle" poll will be sent for an upcoming meeting.

2016 BBP Annual Report. 2015-2016 Annual report has been drafted. Partners were thanked for providing their input and photos.

ANEP Fall Meeting – San Juan, PR, December 1-5, 2016. There was great participation from EPA R2 at this meeting (Judith Enck and personnel from the Office of Water). The San Juan Program is facing extraordinary challenges. A huge restoration is underway, which involves relocation of 30,000 people from filled wetlands (*i.e.*, garbage dumps). Their financial challenges were also discussed. An innovative land trust exists there which may be applicable in relocating people from storm-damaged area elsewhere.

NEP re-authorization bills. Discrepancies in House and Senate versions of reauthorization bills, both of which passed unanimously, are still being discussed. The goal of the legislative sponsors is to pass a bill (likely, the Senate's versions since it has a lesser authorization amount) and put it on the President's desk for signature by the end of the year.

Relocation of the BBP Office. Dr. Hales reported that BBP relocation back to campus would take place no sooner than 2017. If BBP leaves the Brown Property, the Township's likely plan is to tear the building down. A suggestion has been made to have a Policy Committee meeting about this. The college's concerns are operating costs and potential liability from the drug use and other criminal activity on the property.

CCMP Update Strategy and Climate Vulnerability Assessment: S. Hales

The PE letter mentions EPA funds available to support a vulnerability assessment. The CCMP Steering Committee will discuss this at its meeting and will report back to Mr. Craghan.

Route 35 Update: NJDOT (Asst. Commissioner J. Case, Central Region Constr. Manager B. Parker and Supervising Env. Specialist B. Fairfax); NJDEP (Assistant Commissioner Bukowski)

Asst. Commissioner Bukowski provided an update. The communication between agencies has been very good. He met with Commissioners Martin, Hammer, and Lambert (from DOT). Everyone is working together to resolve the issues. As the project progresses, Asst. Commissioner Bukowski's role will change to one of oversight. If any issues arise, please call the NJDEP hotline immediately so things can be addressed as soon as possible. Ms. Pflugh is the manager for constituent relations and will be taking over Asst. Commissioner Bukowski's role, at Commissioner Martin's direction.

NJDEP water and land use enforcement personnel are responding to complaints and working in coordination with DOT staff at the field level to address physical concerns at the property. Assistant Commissioner Lambert provided an overview of the status of the pump stations. The drainage system was improved, but is below the water table. The pipe being used is gasketed metal pipe (which is supposed to be leak-free). Sections of concrete pipe were installed down south and during installation, some pipe settled and some sections were leaking. There was also infiltration at some of the manholes. In addition to water, some silt was making its way down to the holding tanks at the pump station, resulting in a large plume. They video-taped most of the system and 80% has been sealed. The entire southern section should be sealed by the end of March, which will take care of siltation. Some pumps are being fine-tuned. The electronics weren't working right and should be corrected by the end of March.

The majority of the pipes have been sealed in the northern section. Infiltration through manholes should be fixed by the end of February. The odor may be coming from groundwater that's infiltrating the system. Once sealed, the odor issue should go away.

The new drainage systems (north/south) can handle a 25-year storm. The existing system could only handle a two-year storm. Their system has chambers installed to filter the water (not for silt, but for oils, etc. from runoff), as required by the DEP permit.

Mr. Parker (NJDOT regional construction engineer) provided more detail on completing the project. There are corrective action items on the project. He is committed to making sure the contractor makes the needed corrections. Each pump station has five pumps and has the capability of pumping 9000 gallons a minute per pump and will turn on as needed. Some of the pipes that were installed weren't lined and they are being replaced. Additionally, some of the pipes that were installed had check valves that were too large, resulting in an issue of water coming back in from the bay and this is being changed. Water was coming out with too much force which resulted in some scouring. People will be trained on setting the logic this week. Landscaping and some repair of the scour area needs to be done. A contract exists for 24/7 monitoring after all work is complete. Each pump station has an alarm system and the contractor is required to respond within a given period of time. They are working with the NJDEP to determine the parameters regarding monitoring before entering the maintenance phase.

Sampling for water quality was discussed at length. Right now the results are good, other than some TSS. Additional testing is needed to determine mitigation aspects of the scour. The NJDOT will continue to do some sampling to augment what's being done by other agencies. If ground water and surface water standards are not being met, they'll move forward from there. There are hydrocarbon issues (coming from an old contamination site) in the southern end and the NJDEP is looking into this.

Ms. Wenzel thanked Assistant Commissioner Bukowski for the improvement in communications. The lesson to be learned is that this kind of communication with environmental groups state-wide needs to be better on an ongoing basis. The drone photos are worse today than they were initially. The water-quality testing SBB did was not as bad as anticipated. She continues to be concerned about safety issues, the effect of freezing water on the system, and monitoring – this is state infrastructure and there needs to be a plan in place so it doesn't become an OC Health Dept. task. Local elected officials who have a state highway as a main artery into their town need a good relationship with the NJDOT, which needs to take ownership of storm basins, etc. Written assurances need to be given regarding the safety of the water for recreation. The NJ DOT has met with every mayor in the area, but all concerns should be addressed to their communications people and then Mr. Parker will receive notice of this. A request was made that the NJDOT join the BBP and begin attending meetings. They would like to begin landscaping before the summer season. All pipes will have tide check valves on the outside. The landscaping plan is also a stabilization plan and native vegetation will be used.

A discussion was held about the difficulty of getting a copy of the stormwater prevention plan. The Program interest number and the R12 NJPDES number were provided to facilitate this: PI number is 223739 and the actual permit number is NJG0154288. If there are questions, please contact James Murphy (Bureau Chief), but the best contact would be the MS4 permit writer, and Mr. Callanan can research this. Information on the contact for the program submitting the application to the DOT will be given to Ms. Pflugh.

Mr. deCamp thanked the DOT for its attendance and asked how water-tight the infrastructure will be and how long it will remain water-tight. The DOT's goal is to seal it 100%, but due to hydrostatic pressure, it's unlikely. The permit allows for dry-water flow. There is existing infrastructure on the barrier island

that the DOT does not have ownership of. They're taking in some local drainage (which is compromised to one degree or another). Route 35 was originally bought by the county in 1928. The NJDOT has rebuilt the entire road from top to bottom. Some of the local water, gas, and sewer pipes were in very bad condition and the DOT corrected a lot of this. A question was posed as to whether this job should be done at all – from the standpoint of the bay, you want nutrients to stay out of the bay and be dealt with by denitrification plants on land. Therefore, leaky stormwater systems keep some water on land to allow nutrient removal. Express-routing the water into the bay is not ideal and water should be treated by swales, or other mechanisms. It's too late to do this now, but if the system works as designed, it's still far from ideal.

The viability of long-term resilience of projects like this was discussed. There's a transducer on each pump – if the bay water comes up to that level, the pumps will not come on. If the level is permanently higher, there is no choice but to head for high ground. The plans did not include a sea-level rise projection. There will be no pumps in the LBI Route 72 job and it will rely completely on gravity.

STAC Update: J. Vasslides, M. Poach

Dr. Poach discussed the GFO process, which focused on shellfish rehabilitation or water supply projects. Three proposals were received and were briefly reviewed. The proposals were presented at the STAC meeting, were discussed, and the recommendation to the AC is to fund the restoration of hard clams in Barnegat Bay for \$51,965. Next in ranking was the Brick MUA project, followed by the assessment for bay scallops. Ms. Spinweber, speaking for Nesmarie Negron, recommends that we only fund the first project and if additional funds are received, revisit the issue. A motion was made by Ms. Wenzel to approve funding the restoration of hard clam project for \$50,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Spinweber and was passed with Mr. Ruocco abstaining. This is the first project which will act on the White Paper previously prepared by the BBP. This is a modeling project, but Mr. Schuster's group will be kept in the loop.

The first draft of indicators for the State of the Bay report is complete. The goal is for a completed draft to be given to the STAC for review by the end of January (the STAC now meets the third Wednesday of roughly every other month). Other segments of the report (sidebars and informational components) will be added. The document will be ready by the mid-June meeting. An interactive web version will also be created for additional information. A request was made to have a Spanish version (hard copy or electronic copy). The EPA should be able to help, as most federal agencies are required to do this, and Ms. Spinweber will check with her agency.

CEC Update: A. Andersen, W. Dalzell, K. Walzer

Ms. Walzer reported on the CEC subcommittee, which is planning the SOB conference to take place on June 15, 2016 in the Gateway Bldg. (pending final OCC approval). An invitation was issued to STAC and AC members to attend the planning committee meeting on Feb. 10, 2016, at 9:00 AM at the BBP office. This will be a one-half day conference with panel discussions rather than power-point presentations, kicked off by Dr. Hales' keynote overview of the plan. Panels will be held on water quality/supply, habitat/land use, and then a "what's next" panel re citizen involvement. Moderators and panel members (4-5) are being identified. Live questions will be received from Twitter and audience participation is

encouraged. The program will be videotaped and can be streamed live on TV 20. A suggestion was made that a well-edited video would be helpful for taking into the community.

The topic of the April 6, 2016 retreat is “Communicating about Climate Change.” Sara Watson (former AC Press reporter) who has a specialty on climate change will be the keynote speaker.

The Gala is set for Friday June 3, and the Barnegat Bay Festival is Sunday, June 5th. It will be important to tie in the State of the Bay at the Festival (and the CCMP revision – to get public input).

Partner Updates

Ms. Rettig announced that the Westecunk Creek barrier has been removed and there is an agreement with the BBP for post-construction monitoring to take place in March.

The new headquarters in Galloway is breaking ground next month with a 9-month construction window. A public meeting is being held on Thursday in Berkeley Twp. at 7 PM for removing the telephone poles in Manahawkin and Good Luck Point to facilitate marsh restoration. Two thin-layer deposition projects are planned in Brick and Good Luck Point in Berkeley. There’s a 100-page environmental assessment for review for anyone who is interested.

Mr. Ruocco reported that the BTMUA stormwater improvement project in Howell Township is complete and they’re moving forward with an infrastructure project at Brick Plaza. They are also in the planning stages of a Lake Carasaljo project and a new basin will be added off of Route 88 in Brick.

Save Barnegat Bay has launched its “This Way to Barnegat Bay” program for K-8 environmental education, as well as the “Barnegat Bay Defender” Boy Scout/Girl Scout badge to include a lesson in advocating for the Bay. An amicus brief was filed last week supporting thin-layer deposition and other beneficial use of spoil materials as an alternative to CDF sites. Comments were filed on the County’s wastewater plan amendment and a response was received. An appeal will most likely be issued.

Ms. Raabe reported on the OCSCD presentation at the annual Reno, NV conference. Tony DiLodovico will focus on the SHiP project, giving it national exposure. They’re co-sponsoring the NE regional NADC meeting in August at Sea View Golf and Country Club, which will include a tour of the Jakes Branch SHiP gardens. Ms. Laboy gave a monthly program at Jakes Branch, which will be continued this year. The OCSCD is celebrating its 19th Annual Barnegat Bay Roundtable on April 20th. Soil restoration standards (topsoiling and land grading) which incorporate the soil restoration law have not yet been posted for public comment, but have been approved by the Soil Conservation Committee and are supported by the NJDEP. There should be opportunity for public comment.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.