



Barnegat Bay Partnership
DRAFT Communications and Education Committee (CEC) Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2013 at BBP Office

Present:

Members: Angela Andersen (LBIF), Karen Walzer (BBP), Joel Mott (Pinelands Commission), Wes Dalzell (ReClam the Bay), Christine Raabe (OCSCD), Kyra Hoffmann (DEP), and via conference call: John Leonard (BBP Citizen Representative), Peter Brandt (EPA), Barbara Spinweber (EPA)

BBP Staff: Betsy Hyle

Members Absent: Lisa Auermuller (JCNERR), Scott Bruinooge (OCC), Helen Henderson (ALS), Chelsea Simkins (MTA), Chris Claus (OC Parks)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The July, August, and September, 2012 meeting minutes were approved. Mr. Mott made a motion to approve the minutes of the July meeting, seconded by Ms. Andersen, all in favor. Ms. Raabe motioned to approve the minutes of the August meeting, seconded by Ms. Hoffmann, all in favor. Ms. Andersen motioned to approve the minutes of the September meeting, seconded by Mr. Mott, all in favor.

CEC Grant Program

The CEC discussed the 2013 Communication and Education Grant Program and how to improve it in the future. The grant review committee recommended funding for five projects, which were approved by the Advisory Committee: “Harvest the Bay,” “Businesses for a Healthier Barnegat Bay,” Extending Environmental Education to a Non-English Speaking Population: Discovery Fridays in Spanish at the LBIF,” “Shellfish in the Classroom,” and “A Pathway to Possibilities.” Suggestions for improvements to the grant process included better directions for completing the budget form, adding a checklist of application requirements and stating that proposals will be disqualified unless all checklist items are submitted, and removing the certificate of liability as a requirement for a complete application and instead requiring its submission with the subcontract agreement for funded projects.

Action: Ms. Walzer will manage the grants and report on project progress to the CEC.

Education and Outreach Retreat

Ms. Raabe reported a positive outcome of the retreat was the addition of a soil health training session for the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors. This suggestion was made during the soils break-out session in the afternoon of the retreat. Training will be conducted by NRCS on March 6, 2013, and it will be incorporated into future ambassador programs.

DEP Education Update

Through EPA 319 funds, the DEP will be funding expansion of the NJ fertilizer law training for professional applicators. The Rutgers training program will be translated into Spanish, and an in-class option to the online training will be added. A need for both of these additions was identified during assessment of the 2012 training and certification program. The DEP will be incorporating information for boaters into the existing Fish and Wildlife app. The condition of the bay's environmentally sensitive areas post-Sandy will be assessed. Wet debris removal is underway. Education and outreach is needed to inform boaters, swimmers, and other bay recreational users about the debris and safety issues. CEC can assist with getting out this message. There is a delicate balance between the safety and tourism ("we are open for business") messages. The DEP Watershed Restoration Program will be issuing a RFP in the spring. The Blitz will be sometime in May, which is also watershed month. The DEP will be awarding a water festival prize as part of the Blitz's rain barrel challenge activity, and BBP is invited to be part of the water festival. There was discussion about having a Barnegat Bay month in May, with clean-ups, kayak trips, and educational programs leading up to the Barnegat Bay Festival. A DEP exhibit at the Festival could provide information about debris removal and other environmental issues related to Sandy.

Actions: Coordination between the CEC and DEP on outreach about Sandy debris and safety, and on Barnegat Bay month activities and outreach in May.

BBP Video Projects

Ms. Hyle reported that two videos have been completed and added to the BBP You-Tube website. One shows South Toms River Recreation Program children as they experience the bay at LBIF. The other one's theme is the impact of fertilizers in run-off to the bay and best management practices for fertilizer use. A third video is under production; it will focus on environmental services provided by wetlands and dunes.

Action: The BBP will share links to the videos with the CEC.

Communication Plan Revision

Ms. Andersen, Ms. Auermuller, Ms. Raabe, Ms. Walzer, and any other interested CEC members plan to meet sometime in March to start reviewing and revising the 2010 Communication Plan to reflect the 2012-2016 Strategic Plan and the BBP Workplan. Education and outreach about the effects of Superstorm Sandy and planning for future storm events will also be incorporated.

Action: The above-mentioned individuals will schedule a meeting to start revising the Communication Plan.

Festival

Ms. Hyle reported that the Barnegat Bay Foundation (BBF) is organizing a fundraising gala under the festival tents on the Friday before the festival, and asked for suggestions for use of the tents on Saturday. She also asked for ideas for the festival theme/tagline for use on the postcards and other festival promotions. Ms. Hyle is reaching out to municipalities to participate with exhibits/information about Superstorm Sandy recovery, and is requesting a larger DEP exhibit with a focus on Sandy recovery. Another festival idea is a participatory art project, which would involve having an artist design a panel on which people can leave a memory of the Jersey Shore.

Actions: Ms. Hyle will send an email requesting ideas for the festival theme.

Barnegat Bay Foundation

The BBF had its first official meeting in January, and will have an Appreciation Dinner on February 28th to thank the groups who raised funds for the BFF to help local students and families recover from Superstorm Sandy. It was suggested that the CEC meet with the Foundation and exchange ideas about education and outreach.

Partner Updates

Ms. Walzer reported that Downtown Toms River, an organization that promotes revitalization of downtown Toms River, is planning a community mural project. The public can contribute ideas for the mural and participate in the painting. An artist has been hired to create the mural design based on the ideas submitted. Mr. Jody Alessandrino, Executive Director of the Toms River Business Development Corporation, is looking for sponsors of the mural, and said that sponsors will be recognized by including their logos on the mural. The CEC discussed the opportunity to participate in the project by promoting a watershed theme and by being one of the sponsors of the mural.

Action: Ms. Walzer will email the link to the CEC for submitting mural theme ideas.

Ms. Raabe announced that the Environmental Educators Roundtable will take place on April 24th. She is looking for additional teacher training programs/workshops to add to the schedule.

Next CEC meeting

March 20th at 9:30 a.m. – BBP Office