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**Barnegat Bay Partnership
Communication and Education Committee (CEC) Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2016 (9:30 a.m.) at BBP Office**

Present:

Members: Angela Andersen (LBIF), Wes Dalzell (ReClam the Bay), Shari Kondrup (BTMUA), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Kimberly Belfer (SBB), Joel Mott (Pinelands Commission), Karen Walzer (BBP); by phone: Barbara Spinweber (EPA), Peter Brandt (EPA)

BBP Staff: Betsy Hyle

Guests: Debbie Bennett (BEAR)

Members Absent: Scott Bruinooge (OCC), Becky Laboy (OCSCD), Chris Claus (OC Parks), Melanie Reding (JCNERR)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Shari made a motion to approve the February 17, 2016 meeting minutes, seconded by Kimberly, all in favor.

BBP State of the Bay (SOTB) Conference

BBP staff continues to invite people to participate on the panels. Ocean County College will be recording the conference. The BBP is planning a video introduction summarizing the objectives and findings of the report, as well as a short video introduction to each panel about pertinent indicators related to that panel topic. The CEC decided to delay working on suggested questions for the panels until a draft of the report is available.

CCMP Revision Public Outreach

Karen and Betsy reported the results of two phone conversations with Sara Doran, who works for a global survey/marketing company and volunteered her time to talk to us. She explained the advantages and disadvantages of using a survey vs. public meetings to get CCMP revision public input. Due to the cost of designing and analyzing a survey in order to get representative quantitative data, she recommended taking a qualitative approach through more open-ended public forums and focus groups. CEC members suggested reaching out to specific stakeholder groups with questions about how and why they think certain ways about the bay and about their concerns for the future.

Action: BBP staff will work on a plan and schedule for CCMP public outreach.

BBP Education Report

Barnegat Bay Festival

Betsy updated the CEC on festival plans. Both the Barnegat Bay Blitz and the Barnegat Bay Foundation Gala will be on June 3rd, the Friday before the festival. A handicapped van for the festival is not available through Ocean County Parks this year. One suggestion was to designate a drop-off/handicapped parking area adjacent to the field for those needing it. This year the BBP will be placing an ad in the Asbury Park Press summer guide for the festival, and the ad will also list a few other partner events during the summer.

Education and Outreach Retreat

The agenda for the retreat on April 6th was discussed. The agenda includes a breakout session to develop a list of stakeholders and topics for public sessions for input into the CCMP process.

Betsy reported that repair work is underway at the Cooper Environmental Center at Cattus Island Park with an anticipated re-opening in mid-June of this year. A waterproof barrier along the juncture of the floor and wall will protect the building from water damage in case of future flooding. New interactive exhibits will be installed in the building. Outside, boardwalks will be replaced except in areas within regulated wetlands.

Partner Updates

ReClam the Bay (Wes): The Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program is holding its annual open house event on April 26th from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension office in Toms River. The spring course will start the following week. RCTB has been working on their Traders Cove project, which consists of a new upweller, information kiosk, giant clam sculpture, and native plant garden.

NJDEP (Lynette): The NJDEP received 37 entries in the Rain Barrel Challenge. The barrels will be photographed at FREC, and voting will open sometime in April. The Governor's Fishing Tournament will be on Sunday, May 15th. Sea nettle "Bulkhead Blitz" dates have been scheduled for May 13th (Northern barrier island lagoon) and 19th (Brick). A kayak paddle event is being planned to introduce people to the new water trails in the Sedge Marine Conservation Zone. A NJ Recreational Trails grant is funding the creation of the four new trails, with kiosks and signs to be placed at A15 and A21 in Island Beach State Park. The IBSP marina will re-open this year.

SBB (Kimberly): Kimberly held the first of four teacher workshops for SBB's "This Way to Barnegat Bay" curriculum for fifth and sixth grade teachers in Berkeley Township. SBB received a grant from the Watershed Institute for funding the teacher workshops. The Friends of Forsythe group is funding interpretive signs for the deCamp trail. There will be a large kiosk and 5 to 6 interpretive signs along the trail with sign topics including Reedy Creek, wildlife, and history of the area.

BEAR (Debbie and Mike Bennett): The Bennetts now have 50 children in the 4H/HOFNOD Reel Fun Fishing club. They held their first fishing event, did a clean-up at the beach complex at Ocean County Park, and worked on two rain barrels (one for the Clarke School where they meet and one for their fishing club). The Bennetts are starting a Lakewood BEAR club for clean-ups in the township.

BTMUA (Shari): Shari has several upcoming presentations, including to the Kiwanis and HOFNOD volunteers. She is also assisting John Zingis with a Rutgers water sampling seminar, and is partnering with the OCSCD on a rain barrel workshop at the Brick Reservoir on May 21st.

Pinelands Commission (Joel): The Commission passed a resolution to hire the contractor to install the new Pinelands Interpretive Center at the Commission's office. The expected completion date is January of 2017.

Long Beach Township (Angela): The Township is planning projects on two new waterfront properties. One project will be a maritime walking trail on a property in Beach Haven, and the other will be a marine education field station on property in Holgate. The Township's planning efforts for the arts, resiliency, and public access are all coming together.

LBIF (Angela): The LBIF has a new business manager, Jeanine Erico. A new nature trail is being constructed around the wetlands at LBIF. A local artist is willing to design the signage for the new trail, and someone is working on a trail curriculum for summer campers.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on April 20, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.