



-

**Barnegat Bay Partnership
Communications and Education Committee (CEC) Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2015 (9:30 a.m.) at BBP Office**

Present:

Members: Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Shari Kondrup (Brick MUA), Lisa Auermuller (JCNERR), Karen Walzer (BBP), Becky Laboy (OCSCD), Joel Mott (Pinelands Commission), Chris Claus (OC Parks); by phone: Barbara Spinweber (EPA Alternate), Angela Andersen (LBIF)

BBP Staff: Stan Hales, Betsy Hyle

Guests: John Zingis (Citizen Representative), Kim Belfer (Save Barnegat Bay), Dana Lancelotti (Ocean Co. Tourism)

Members Absent: Scott Bruinooge (OCC), Wes Dalzell (ReClam the Bay)

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Shari made a motion to approve the May 20, 2015 meeting minutes, seconded by Becky, all in favor.

Communication and Education Grant Funding Opportunity (GFO)

Karen reported the subaward agreements have gone out to CEC grant recipients for review and signatures. The BBP will be conducting a risk assessment for each grant recipient – a federal requirement prior to awarding federal funds.

STAC Update

Jim Vasslides, BBP Program Scientist, provided an update for the STAC GFOs. The STAC and AC had approved funding for two research projects. However, one of the applicants, Rutgers University, withdrew its project proposal (“Assessment of factors influencing the reproductive performance of hard clams in the Barnegat Bay Marine Conservation Zone”) – Monica Bricelj, the lead investigator, is unable to work on the project since she has received a Fulbright scholarship to conduct research in South America. The STAC recommended and the AC approved issuing a new GFO (approximately \$50,000) for proposals addressing either shellfish or water supply topics. The new GFO will include the CEC-approved language regarding education and outreach requirements for STAC projects. The BBP is targeting the end of the year for completion of the new GFO process and announcement of the grant recipient(s).

Action: Jim will circulate the STAC GFO to the CEC chairs for review before its release.

Jim talked about the upcoming State of the Bay report, which is due in 2016. The overall appearance will be similar to the 2011 report, and most of the indicators will be the same.

Barnegat Bay Festival

Betsy reported on the 2015 festival. The crowd was the largest yet (about 4,000), and the weather

was great. Exhibitors had more requests for information from teachers at the festival this year. The crowd also seemed more diverse this year, which may be a result of people attending after leaving the Mumford & Sons event (the BBP and partners exhibited at the Barnegat Bay Foundation table next to the second stage at this two-day music event in Seaside Heights). Betsy set up additional festival signs visible to people coming off the bridge into Toms River.

The date for the 2016 festival is June 5th. The Barnegat Bay Foundation has committed to supporting the festival again next year. Ideas for next year include offering an 8:30 a.m. eco-tour, tie-ins with other events prior to the festival, and having an expanding the partnership with the DEP's Blitz leading up to the festival.

National Estuaries Week

Lisa and Betsy will compile a list of hashtags and messages created at the 2015 Education and Outreach Retreat and send out a "cheat sheet" for everyone to use in a social media blitz during National Estuaries Week (September 19-26, 2015). Restore America's Estuaries/American Littoral Society has submitted a National Estuaries Week resolution to the Governor's office.

Action: Betsy and Lisa will complete the "cheat sheet" for emailing to BBP partners and education and outreach practitioners.

BBP Program Evaluation

Stan discussed plans for the Program Evaluation site visit on August 4th - 6th. On the morning of the 4th, Michael Craghan from EPA's Climate-Ready Estuaries Program will talk about the CCMP Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and use the water quality section of the Strategic Plan as an example. Evaluators will be visiting various watershed sites during their visit, going on a pontoon boat tour of the northern part of the bay and traveling by van to other areas. On the evening of the 5th BBP partners and volunteers will have a chance to meet the evaluation team during an informal dinner at the BBP office.

Jersey-Friendly Yards

After beta testing by volunteers, the Jersey-Friendly Yards website had its soft launch (www.jerseyyards.org). Kevin Sparkman of Fusionspark Media previewed the new website for the CEC. CEC suggestions included developing a branding guide and establishing standards for the use of the logo; trademarking the logo; developing a marketing plan; contacting local nurseries about offering a discount for native plants; and contacting Habitat for Humanity about using the website to landscape the homes after construction. The usability of the website will be tested by six groups (five homeowner associations and the Visitation Relief Center) as they plan and implement demonstration gardens.

Action: Karen will email a Doodle poll for a CEC subcommittee meeting to plan marketing strategies for the new website.

DEP Education Update

Lynette reported the 2015 rain barrel tour brochures are available.

Partner Updates

Ocean County Parks (Chris): The Bunker Challenge Crabbing Contest will be held at Mantoloking County Park on July 25th. There will be a new event, "I Learned to Fish Today," at Lake Shenandoah Park in Lakewood on August 16th. Chris is partnering with Mike and Debbie

Bennett of Boating Education and Rescue and the DEP Urban Fishing Program on the event, which is being marketed to under-targeted audiences in Lakewood. Children will learn how to fish and what they can do to keep the water clean, and they will leave with a fishing rod and learning materials.

Pinelands Commission (Joel): The Pinelands Commission has revised its website, adding many new images and videos, and will be issuing an RFP for installing Pinelands exhibits at the center.

JCNERR (Lisa): The JCNERR is looking for volunteers to participate in an evaluation of the effectiveness of the sea level rise websites (takes about an hour and done by phone).

OCSCD (Becky): Their worm program, “Worms – Heroes of the Earth,” continue to be presented at Ocean County library branches. The district is starting a “Treasure Trove Tuesday” for teachers who can pick up materials for their classrooms. Contributions to the trove are welcome.

Next meeting is on September 16, 2015. (No August meeting.)