



Barnegat Bay Partnership
Communication and Education Committee Meeting
August 26, 2020 at 9:30 am
WebEx Meeting

Attending CEC Members: Shari Kondrup (Chair, BTMUA), Kaitlin Gannon (Co-Chair, JCNERR), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Joel Mott (NJ Pinelands Commission), Peter Brandt (USEPA), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA), Karen Walzer (BBP Staff Liaison), GraceAnne Taylor (SBB), Wesley Dalzell (RCTB), Becky Laboy (OCSCD), Amber Mallm (Monmouth Co. Planning), Dr. John Wnek (OCVTS)

Attending Guests: Jenny Tomko (NJDEP Bureau of Marine Fisheries), Christine Raabe (OCSCD), George Murnyak (BBP Citizenship Representative to the Policy Committee), Murray Rosenberg (BBP Citizen Representative Alternate), Matt Garamone (BBP Citizen Representative Alternate), Susan Slim (BBP Citizen Representative Alternate), Heidi Thompson (Jersey Shore Style)

Barnegat Bay Staff in Attendance: Dr. Stan Hales

Absent CEC Members: Kelly Scott (IBSP), Angela Andersen (Long Beach Township), Chelsea Kulp (NJ American Water), Chris Claus (Ocean Co. Parks and Recreation)

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am by Shari Kondrup, who informed attendees that the meeting was being recorded. Introductions were made.

Review and Approval of June 24th, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Karen Walzer reported an edit in the Orsted partner update in the June 24th minutes. The funding available for businesses to get started with wind power was corrected to \$15 million. Joel motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Lynette, approved by all.

Citizen Representatives and Alternates

Report on Advisory Committee approval of Alternates; Plans for the new team of Alternates.

Shari Kondrup thanked the Citizen Representative Alternates for attending, all of whom had been approved by the Advisory Committee. She brought up the discussion by the AC at its last meeting about a formal citizen advisory council (CAC), and said that anyone interested in being part of the discussion should contact her. Dr. Hales clarified that the CAC was still only theoretical, and that the CAC's role and relationship to the existing citizen representative structure was still undecided.

George Murnyak said the Alternate Citizen Representatives had agreed to meet virtually about once a month. They also discussed how to divide coverage of committee meetings and communicate the CCMP priorities to the public.

CEC Input on Bay-Friendly Stewardship Certification Program

Brainstorming potential names and taglines.

Karen reported that in responses to her email requesting ideas for the certification program name, most CEC members recommended using Jersey-Friendly Yards. The JFY website, funded through a DEP grant in 2013 and launched in 2015, now has name recognition both within the watershed and throughout the state. Another advantage is that information about the new program can be hosted on the existing JFY website. The stewardship certification program developed for the Barnegat Bay watershed with JFY branding can be a model for similar programs in other areas of the state.

Following this discussion, the CEC approved a motion to recommend naming the new program the “Jersey-Friendly Yards Stewardship Certification Program” and using the JFY tagline, “Landscaping for a Healthy Environment.”

Suggestions for Technical Advisory Committee members

Karen explained that a Technical Advisory Committee will be created for the new certification program. This committee would review applications for certification and advise on the standards for the program. The committee will be formed at the beginning of the project in order to advise on developing the standards for the different levels of certification, particularly for municipalities, as the existing River-Friendly program has no such option. Karen asked for suggestions of potential members for the committee. Members ideally would have a range of expertise similar to that of the River-Friendly certification program’s committee.

BBP Communication Plan Revision

Draft of revised plan for CEC review and comments, Formation of subcommittee to work on revisions

Karen reviewed the prior Communication Plan and created a first draft of a revised plan based on the latest version of the CCMP. After discussion, the CEC decided it would be best to form a small subcommittee to work on revisions. The following CEC members volunteered: Kaitlin Gannon, Shari Kondrup, and Becky Laboy. Christine Raabe offered to participate since she had worked on the original CCMP and original Communication Plan. Christine suggested reaching out to the Advisory Committee and people from different partnership initiatives for additional input on the CEC plan. Karen asked that the subcommittee email their comments on the first draft to her by September 15th. Once the subcommittee finishes drafting the revised Communication Plan, it will be sent to the full CEC for comments and approval.

Partner Updates and New Business

In their updates, CEC members shared their progress over the summer and upcoming plans for the fall.

OCSCD: Becky reported on webinars she will be presenting, including *Attracting Birds to Your Jersey-Friendly Yard* (Sept 1) for the JFY series and *Don't Treat Your Soil Like Dirt* for a Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County series (Sept 9). OCSCD is assisting the Lighthouse Center with a proposal for a Watershed Institute grant for a series of webinars and/or events to showcase BBP partners' Jersey-Friendly landscaping.

Christine reported the OCSCD received a grant from National Association of Conservation Districts for a project (*Sustainable Practices for Aquaculture Resources Conservations*) to connect local shellfish growers with the resources of the USDA NRCS.

RCTB: Wes reported that the upwellers are fully operational. ReClam the Bay has been running socially distanced education programs in LBI. Their education committee has been producing videos of Shellfish in the Classroom topics for schools to use remotely. The Living Shoreline project at Iowa Court has also been completed.

NJ Pinelands Commission: Joel reported on the ongoing series of webinars happening Thursdays at 10 am. Upcoming presentation topics are rain gardens, the JC NERR, historical lectures on the Pine Barrens, the origins of names for parts of the watershed, "who discovered America," Dr. Still and the Underground Railroad, and research on native blueberries and cranberries. All these webinars are listed on the website and will be live streamed and archived on the Commission's YouTube channel.

JC NERR: Kaitlin reported on the three-day virtual Teachers on the Estuary workshop. In addition, the JC NERR was awarded a NERR Science Collaborative transfer grant for a citizen science program for eel monitoring in rivers and tributaries in the estuary. The grant was awarded late July/early August, but the start date has been delayed to October 2021 due to COVID. She will be in contact with BBP and NJDEP to discuss their respective eel monitoring projects.

MCDP: Their webinar series is underway, though off to a slow start. The county received a new grant for joint land use studies with Earle Naval Base and a follow-up grant for a living shoreline project which is set to begin in the fall.

SBB: Graceanne reported on the SBB virtual seining program, which will conclude this coming Thursday. The Meet the Author program has two upcoming events: Dan Fagan, author of *Toms River*, and the authors of *Great Storms of the Jersey Shore*. The Student Grant Program summer interns finished for the year; presentations are up on the website and on YouTube. Graceanne is also working on updating the SBB Barnegat Bay curriculum to next-generation science teaching standards.

MATES: John reported that the school year has started at MATES, with students alternating days. Student research continues. John requested that any partners with research needs,

especially ones able to be met remotely, contact him. Project Terrapin is also underway as the hatching season progresses; the latest information is up on the Project Terrapin website.

NJDEP Bureau of Marine Fisheries: Jenny reported that the outreach draft plan was sent to the Director, and in-house committees were forming to develop the program. She also reported on story maps for the Living Shoreline projects at Sedge Island and for NJ seafood retailers.

NJDEP: Lynette reported on the status of the REPS grants. She said some are still being processed, although three grants to the BBP have been finalized. She stated she could update individual grantees on when their grants were two steps from completion, and when they were complete. The Americorps volunteer interviews were completed, and virtual trainings will be underway soon. Most of the ambassadors' presentations will be virtual, with some possibly in-person following COVID safety precautions.

BTMUA: Shari reported on the new WaterSense campaign for water conservation in the summer, uploaded to BTMUA website. She also reported on several virtual presentations, including the Virtual Evening at the Reservoir programs about landscaping, an upcoming virtual rain barrel workshop and trainings, and a Project Wet Workshop for students at GCU. Finally, they are recording videos for the Effective Environmental Field Sampling and Data Collection course from the Rutgers School of Continuing Education in November.

BBP: Karen reported on the JFY webinar series and the Ask a Barnegat Bay Scientist lecture series. Dr. Wnek gave the 4th AABBS talk the night before, on diamondback terrapins. Recordings are available on the BBP website.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Next meeting: October 28, 2020 at 9:30 am