Communication and Education Committee (CEC)

Charter and Operating Guidelines

2021 Revisions

Approved by the CEC on June 23, 2021
As Approved by the Advisory Committee on July 13, 2021

I. NAME AND AUTHORITY

The Barnegat Bay Partnership (BBP) Communication and Education Committee (CEC) shall operate under the authority of the BBP Advisory Committee (AC). All BBP Committees, sub-committees and work groups are established under and governed in accordance with BBP's Memorandum of Understanding.

The Study Area for the CEC is the study area identified in the Barnegat Bay Partnership's *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan* (CCMP), a guiding document for this National Estuary Program (NEP). As appropriate, the Study Area may be expanded by the Policy Committee (upon the recommendation of the Advisory Committee).

II. LOCATION

The principal mailing address of the CEC is the Barnegat Bay Partnership (BBP), Ocean County College, P.O. Box 2001, Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2001; Attention: CEC. Phone: 732-255-0472.

III. PURPOSE

The principal purpose of the CEC, where authorized by all applicable laws, regulations, and other pertinent authorities, is to provide the BBP and collaborating entities with objective, expert advice and peer review for overall communication, education and outreach matters related to NEP activities and goals, such as those specified in the CCMP and BBP's Communication Plan. The CEC works with the Advisory Committee to identify and prioritize communication, education and outreach needs within the Barnegat Bay-Little Egg Harbor Estuary and its watersheds, and assists with the BBP's efforts to raise awareness and resources for addressing these needs. The CEC also facilitates public participation and diverse stakeholder involvement in BBP-related activities and assists with the selection of the Citizen Representative and Alternate Citizen Representatives to the BBP Policy Committee.

Specific roles and functions are described in more detail in Sections IV and VI.

IV. ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

To fulfill its purpose as stated in Section III, the CEC undertakes initiatives based upon broad direction from the AC, and regularly reports on progress to the AC. More specifically, the CEC:

- Oversees the development and implementation of the BBP's Communication Plan, which supports CCMP implementation directly or indirectly;
- Provides advice and peer review regarding overall communication issues, programs, grant proposals, and funded projects that the BBP and collaborating entities may consider or take part in to advance CCMP action items;

- Facilitates communication and collaboration among education and outreach professionals in the watershed, and considers ways to help address their needs where they are consistent with the BBP mission and goals, as articulated in the CCMP;
- Serves as the planning committee for BBP education and outreach events, including an annual Education and Outreach Retreat;
- Oversees the nomination process of the BBP Citizen Representative and Alternate Citizen Representatives and provides advice and support to them regarding citizen engagement (see Section VII);
- Provides priority Communication Plan funding recommendations to the Program Office for inclusion in annual 320 work plans;
- Assists in identifying funding opportunities to address communication needs and advance overall NEP and regional science communication; and
- Assists in developing BBP grant funding opportunities to address communication needs, and contributes expert peer review of submitted proposals and other documents.

V. MEMBERSHIP

A. Composition and Membership Criteria

The CEC is comprised of a body of experienced communication, outreach and education professionals, who represent the diverse interests of the watershed's stakeholders. In part, the CEC is comprised of standing members drawn from organizations belonging to the AC. Membership on the AC does not automatically confer representation on the CEC (see Section V.D. for appointment procedures). Membership on the CEC is automatically conferred on the Citizen Representative to the Policy Committee (see Section VII.)

CEC also seeks participation by members of the general public who are not affiliated with current BBP partners. Membership in the CEC is open to public and private entities who have an interest in communicating Barnegat Bay watershed-related issues as delineated in the BBP's CCMP. See Section V.D. for nomination and election procedures for individuals requesting membership who are not affiliated with a current BBP partner. Elected members are expected to have general knowledge and interest in the Barnegat Bay-Little Egg Harbor estuary and watershed, including water quantity and quality, land use, and living resource management issues as they relate to the estuary and watershed.

B. Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and BBP Staff Support

The CEC is led by a Chairperson and Co-Chairperson selected from the broader CEC membership. The term of service for the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson is two years and runs concurrently with the state fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The CEC Co-Chairperson will normally succeed the Chairperson, at which time nominations will be accepted for Co-Chairperson and an election held by the CEC to select the new Co-Chairperson.
The Co-Chairperson is nominated and voted on by the CEC biennially at its last meeting before the end of state fiscal year (see Section V.D. for recommendation for approval by the AC). The BBP staff support to the CEC is provided by the Public Outreach Coordinator or a designee

selected by the BBP Director. With approval by the BBP Director, other BBP staff may serve as non-voting, ex-officio members and provide technical support to the CEC.

C. Number of Members and Vacancies
The CEC membership will include no less than 6 and no more than 20 members excluding BBP staff. CEC membership is open to all who fulfill the criteria listed in Section V.A. Membership is voluntary and a member may resign at any time by written notice to either the Chairperson or BBP Public Outreach Coordinator. A member may also be subject to removal for failure to attend meetings (see Section VI.E.).

D. Terms and Appointment Procedures

1. Term of Service. The term of service for standing members who are appointed as representatives of an AC organization is indefinite and at the discretion of the groups being represented. The term of service for elected members is two years and runs concurrently with the state fiscal year. Reappointment is permissible through standard election procedures for members who have demonstrated a firm commitment to performing the functions and roles (as stated in Section IV) during their previous term.

2. Nomination for Membership. CEC membership is open to all who fulfill the criteria listed in Section V.A. An interested AC organization not already represented on the CEC must petition the AC for inclusion by submitting to the AC chair a curriculum vitae and/or a short description of expertise for its proposed CEC representative; the AC will then vote on the petition at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Nominations for elected positions may be submitted by any interested party or by self-nomination, and must be submitted by March 15 of an election year (see V.D.3). Nomination letters should be submitted with a curriculum vitae and/or a short description of expertise, as well as brief paragraph explaining why their expertise/region/interest would be a value to the CEC, to either the CEC Chairperson or BBP Public Outreach Coordinator.

Current elected CEC members whose two-year terms are ending and who wish to be considered for re-appointment must submit a self-nomination letter of intent and their updated curriculum vitae to either the CEC Chairperson or BBP Public Outreach Coordinator by March 15 of the year their term expires. All nominations and names of nominating individuals are reviewed by the CEC Chairperson, BBP Public Outreach Coordinator, and BBP Director to ensure that they satisfy criteria for membership in the CEC.

3. Elections. Elections are held biennially for elected members. In the spring of each year, the CEC will discuss whether its existing size and composition is appropriate to perform its roles and functions and to meet changing demands. Election packets will be sent by the Public Outreach Coordinator to all CEC members by April 15. Election packets will contain the list of all candidates, summaries for all candidates, the number of open seats to be filled, and a voting form. Voting forms will be returned to the Public Outreach Coordinator before a deadline (mid-May) for consideration. Election to the CEC will be decided by summary scores of the top-ranked candidates needed to fill the number of open seats. Election results and the elected

members must subsequently be reviewed and approved by the AC.

4. Chairperson and Co-Chairperson. The term of the CEC Chairperson and Co-Chairperson is on a biennial basis and is set up to provide continuity in the functioning of the CEC. The CEC Co-Chairperson will normally succeed the Chairperson, at which time nominations will be accepted for Co-Chairperson and an election held by the CEC to select the new Co-Chairperson.

VI. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION

A. Meetings

A schedule of regular meetings of the CEC will be established at the end of each calendar year for the next year. This calendar will be posted on the BBP's website along with a membership list for the CEC. Regular meetings of the CEC are open to the public, and agendas for regular meetings will be posted on the BBP's website in advance of regular meetings. Visitors are welcome to attend, and are invited to participate in discussions at the discretion of the CEC Chairperson or Director.

1. Frequency. Meetings of the CEC are held at least once per quarter. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

2. Location. Generally, meetings are held at the BBP office in Toms River, New Jersey. CEC meetings can be rotated to member locations and other locations at the discretion of the Chairperson and Director.

3. Governance. The Chairperson (or in his/her absence, the Co-Chairperson) of the CEC presides over each meeting, calls the meeting to order, reviews the agenda, reviews the previous meeting's minutes, leads the meeting to ensure progress towards completion of the agenda, and adjourns the meeting at an appointed time.

The Public Outreach Coordinator, in consultation with the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and BBP Director, prepares an agenda in advance of each meeting, makes necessary meeting arrangements, facilitates during each meeting, records minutes, and disseminates minutes following each meeting. If the Public Outreach Coordinator is unable to attend a CEC meeting, the BBP Director will designate a staff alternate.

4. Voting. Each member of the CEC will have one vote. A member can designate an alternate from their organization who can vote in the absence of the member.

5. Parliamentary Procedures. To ensure democratic process and efficiency, meetings of the CEC may be operated under standard parliamentary procedures by the presiding person (*e.g.*, the Chairperson); however, at his/her discretion, parliamentary procedures may be waived. Should disputes arise, the presiding person will implement Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Agenda Items

Agenda items generally consist of topics germane to the roles and functions that the CEC is expected to provide. Agenda items can also include topics related to CEC business and operation. Emerging issues and opportunities are to be regularly considered as well.

Anyone is welcome to submit agenda items to any CEC member for consideration. However, matters may only be placed on the agenda for consideration at meetings of the CEC by a member of the CEC, a member of the Policy or Advisory Committee, and/or the BBP staff, with the approval of the Director.

The CEC Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Public Outreach Coordinator are responsible for reviewing and prioritizing agenda topics, and for distributing the agenda (preferably at least 7 days) before a CEC meeting.

C. Responsibilities of the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Public Outreach Coordinator

The Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Public Outreach Coordinator are responsible for:

- Communicating recommendations, concerns, and peer review outcomes on behalf of the CEC to the BBP's Advisory Committee and Policy Committee;
- Serving as spokespersons for the CEC to collaborating entities, the media, and the public, both locally and nationally; and
- Directing the production and content of CEC documents.

The Chairperson and/or Co-Chairperson and Public Outreach Coordinator are expected to attend each meeting. In accordance with the CCMP, the CEC Chairperson serves as a non-voting, *ex officio* member of the Policy Committee.

D. Responsibilities of All Members

All CEC members are responsible for:

- Attending and actively participating in as many meetings as possible;
- Responding to interim and *ad hoc* peer-review requests; and
- Working to fulfill all roles and functions of the CEC, as listed in Section IV.

E. Attendance, Alternates and Voting

Attendance and Alternates: In the event that a CEC member is unable to make a meeting, it is the member's responsibility to notify the CEC Chair as to his/her absence. CEC members are permitted to designate an alternate to serve in their place at meetings and to vote on their behalf. Alternates are counted as voting members in determining a quorum. If any member of the CEC or his/her designated alternate fails to attend more than one regular meeting for any year without sufficient explanation, the Chairperson or BBP Director may introduce a motion to remove and replace that member.

Voting: The CEC will strive to reach consensus in matters before the committee. Each CEC member has one vote. A quorum is defined as 8 voting members, or a simple majority of members, whichever is less. Votes can be held whenever a quorum is present. Deciding votes are determined as the majority of votes cast by a quorum.

F. Subcommittees and Workgroups

The CEC may form subcommittees and/or workgroups to focus on specific issues or needs. Subcommittees and technical workgroups can consist of both CEC members and additional experts from the region who are not CEC members.

Any CEC member or the BBP Director may propose formation of subcommittees/workgroups. Subcommittees and technical workgroups shall be formed for a specific purpose. Proposals for new standing or *ad hoc* subcommittees and workgroups must provide a summary of the needs and values that would be provided, and describe the tasks, expectations, potential staffing, and duration of the group. Group formation must be carefully considered by the CEC, balancing needs and projected positive outcomes with feasibility, access to interested and capable expertise, and availability of support services and resources.

Following discussion, a proposal for the formation of a subcommittee or technical workgroup will be decided by majority vote of the CEC members present during the vote. The CEC should provide a specific charge to any new subcommittee. CEC subcommittees/workgroups should be chaired by a current CEC member and held to the same professional standards as the CEC. Workgroup members who are not CEC members must abide by CEC rules. Once established, CEC subcommittees and workgroups must report to the CEC about current activities on a regular basis. If a CEC subcommittee or workgroup fails to report or show progress, the CEC may disband the group by majority vote of the CEC members present at any regular meeting as delineated in BBP's Memorandum of Understanding.

G. BBP-Funded Implementation

Depending upon funding levels and budget priorities for the BBP, the BBP may periodically administer a BBP subaward competition by issuing a Grant Funding Opportunity (GFO) to address critical needs identified in the Communication Plan. The role of the Partnership office will be to develop the GFO, including the funding amount, and to conduct an external review of all proposals which are received by the BBP via an unbiased and uniform competitive process. The CEC provides a forum for the presentation and discussion of all proposed projects; CEC members will make use of the presentations, discussion, external reviews, CCMP and/or Communication Plan, and their own expertise to reach consensus regarding a recommendation for funding projects to the AC. CEC member participation in this process will be established taking into consideration actual or potential conflict of interest as described in Section J. below.

H. Media and Public Representation

The BBP depends upon public support and enthusiasm generated by the BBP for implementation of the CCMP and support of other BBP activities that benefit the Barnegat Bay estuary. To this end, active media participation is invited and encouraged by CEC members.

However, only the CEC Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, BBP Public Outreach Coordinator, and BBP Director (or designee) will speak on behalf of the CEC, including interactions with the media or at public meetings. Individual members of the CEC are free to speak to any group and identify themselves as members of the CEC as long as any CEC reference is made with a linked disclaimer that their opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the entire CEC, the BBP, or affiliated entities that work with the BBP.

I. Liability Disclaimer

To the extent permitted by the law of the State of New Jersey and federal regulations, neither the CEC nor any of its members individually, shall be liable for negligent acts or omissions of an employee, agent or representative selected with reasonable care, nor for anything the CEC may do or refrain from doing in good faith, including the following: errors in judgment, acts done or committed on advice of counsel, or mistakes of fact or law.

All documents produced with the assistance of the CEC are to be considered as associated products of the BBP and are not to be construed as reflecting the views or support by any particular CEC member or affiliated entity.

J. Conflicts of Interest

No member of the CEC (or staff representative or alternate) shall participate in any discussion, decision, or vote that would constitute a conflict of interest under federal or state law or policies or procedures of Ocean County College. Any potential conflicts of interest shall be clearly stated by the member (or staff representative or alternate) prior to any discussion on the agenda item with which the member (or staff representative or alternate) may be in conflict. Following full disclosure of real or potential conflicts, the BBP office will decide whether the CEC member should recuse him/herself from discussion or vote regarding the agenda item in question.

Reviewers may be disqualified from reviewing proposals with respect to which they have any actual or potential conflicts of interest. An individual may not serve on a review panel if he/she has any direct personal, familial, or financial relationship or connection with any of the proposals to be reviewed or with any of the applicants. In addition, individuals who have other types of relationships with the proposals being reviewed or any of the applicants cannot serve on a review panel if that relationship would impair or influence their objectivity or impartiality in reviewing proposals and the conflict of interest cannot otherwise be mitigated or avoided. Some situations that may constitute a conflict of interest include the following.

- Principal investigators, consultants, or any other participants in proposals cannot serve on review panels to review proposals submitted in response to a BBP solicitation and/or announcement.

- The application or proposal being considered is from the reviewer's parent institution, one legally a part of that institution, or is from an organization of which the reviewer is a member. This condition applies to subcontractors or sub-recipients.

- The reviewer and the applicant are related through family.

- The reviewer and the applicant have collaborated within the last five years on a related project, article or paper.

- The reviewer will benefit directly from the project, *e.g.* as an investor, consultant, or paid collaborator.

K. Staff Support

In addition to services provided by the Public Outreach Coordinator, staff support for the operation of the CEC may be provided through the BBP, contingent on the availability of funds and approval of the BBP Director. Staff support may consist of part-time assistance from regular BBP staff, part-time staff of the BBP, part-time staff contributed by collaborating entities, or students.

Duties of BBP staff, with the BBP Director's approval, may include assisting with meeting arrangements, agenda dissemination, recording and dissemination of minutes, preparation of CEC products, website updates related to CEC functions and products, or other tasks.

VII. SELECTION OF THE CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE POLICY COMMITTEE (PC)

As a National Estuary Program, the BBP continues to promote participation by the broad spectrum of interested stakeholder groups in the region on matters related to the estuary and its watersheds. To promote greater citizen involvement in the BBP, the Citizen Representative to the Policy Committee was established to gain further public perspective on issues of importance to the Barnegat Bay watershed. The Citizen Representative and Alternate Citizen Representatives work together to represent the public on issues which impact, or are impacted by, the condition of the bay and its resources.

Citizen Representative Position on the Policy Committee

- The Citizen Representative represents non-partner entities (partners are members of existing BBP standing committees or organizations that have taken on direct responsibilities for CCMP implementation);

- In the event of the absence of the Citizen Representative at a Policy Committee meeting, one of the Alternate Citizen Representative will fulfill his or her duties at the meeting;

- The Citizen Representative and Alternate positions have a specified term of three years; and can be held for consecutive terms if re-appointed, and

- The Citizen Representative will be a voting member of the CEC for the duration of his/her term. In the event of the absence of the Citizen Representative at a CEC meeting,

one of the Alternate Citizen Representatives can fulfill his/her duties as a CEC member at the meeting and vote on his/her behalf.

Duties of the Citizen Representative and Alternate Citizen Representatives include:

- Seeking input from citizens about Barnegat Bay issues and representing the interests and concerns of the public to the BBP;
- Attending Policy Committee meetings and reporting on citizen interests and concerns;
- Attending CEC meetings and participating in CEC activities and events, including the annual Education and Outreach Retreat;
- Facilitating at least one meeting or event with watershed citizens each year; and
- Advocating for the BBP on matters related to CCMP Implementation.

The CEC oversees the process of selecting a Citizen Representative to the Policy Committee and Alternate Citizen Representatives and provides advice and support to them regarding citizen engagement. The selection process is delineated as follows:

- The CEC will issue a call for nominations for the Citizen Representative and Alternates in the winter of an elective year;

- Nominated individuals must apply, as developed by the CEC and approved by the Advisory Committee, by the deadline set by the CEC;

- Nominations will be reviewed by the CEC, which will forward top candidates to the Advisory Committee, which in turn will review and submit a recommendation to the Policy Committee for their approval; and

- The Citizen Representative and Alternates recommended by the AC will be presented to the Policy Committee for approval and installation at the next PC meeting.

VIII. AUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS

This CEC Charter and Operating Guidelines (CEC Charter) is effective with the approval of the AC. Future amendments to this CEC Charter must be proposed to CEC members and the BBP's Director at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which they will be acted upon. Proposed amendments to the CEC Charter will be treated as an agenda item for a CEC meeting. Any amendments to this CEC Charter must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the CEC members. The AC will have final authority over the recommended amendments.

CEC Charter Revisions Approved by Advisory Committee on July 13, 2021