



Science and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

June 9th 2021

9:00 am

Minutes

Attending STAC Members: Dr. Steven Yergeau (Chair, RCE-Ocean), Dr. Elizabeth Lacey (Vice-Chair, Stockton University), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA-R2), Charles Caruso (PPA), Christine Wieben (USGS), Gregg Sakowicz (JCNERR), Robert Karl (BTMUA), Robert Shertenlieb (OCUA), Keith Marcoon (OCUA), Vicki Pecchioli (OC Planning), Dr. Peter Rowe (NJ SeaGrant), Kimberly Cenno (NJDEP), David Steinman (NRCS), Dr. Jim Vasslides (BBP)

Attending Guests: Sheri Shifren (NJDEP-WMS), Colleen Adams (OCC), Sandra Lazarro (OC Business Development and Tourism), Patricia Butch, Matthew Csik (NJ American Water)

Staff Members in Attendance: Dr. Stan Hales, Ceili Pestalozzi, Emily Pirl, Shannon Vasquez

Welcome and Introductions – S. Yergeau

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM EDT and call-in attendees made introductions

Review of April 14th Meeting Minutes and draft agenda–S. Yergeau

No changes were proposed. Keith Marcoon motioned to accept. Bob Shertenlieb seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with no changes.

BBP Programmatic Update–S. Hales

CCMP: The program office has received the first draft of final product as of this morning. Staff are taking a look and getting feedback to the designer; thus far we have been generally pleased.

Policy Committee meeting: We did not present the revised MOU at the recent PC meeting but it will be sent out near the end of June 2021. The CEC needs to make some changes to their charter in response to suggestions from the MOU workgroup. Once those changes are made and approved the MOU will sent out to the Policy Committee.

RAE RFP: The Letter of Interest submittal period closed earlier this week. The Program Office provided 3 letters of acknowledgement. One project was for outside the watershed. One project was from a Rowan University faculty member and has to do with shellfish restoration. The Program Office submitted a proposal for restoration at Jeffreys Creek along the Toms River.

Program Office Relocation: The relocation is in flux. Matt Kennedy is retiring at end of June; it is unlikely that we will move until sometime in July.

Metedeconk Protection Plan – Ms. Kimberly Cenno, NJDEP

Ms. Cenno's presentation was recorded and is available to watch by contacting the Program Office.

- The Protection Plan (PP) is built off of the WPRP in the Metedeconk that was completed by Brick MUA as well as the 2016 Integrated Report from NJDEP.
- The goal of the PP is to keep non-impaired status for 11 HUC-14s in the Metedeconk watershed.
- A Performance Partnership Agreement with EPA is required for water quality work that is not a TMDL. The

protection plan is to recognize that there is a concerted water quality improvement effort in the Metedeconk watershed.

2021 State of the Bay Report – J. Vasslides

Dr. Vasslides informed the STAC that work is continuing on the report. We have data for all but one section and most sections are written and have preliminary figures prepared. The data for the last section should be received soon. Our goal is to have drafts of each target sections and the introduction in the next week and half. We are planning a discussion at the end of the month with the working group. After the working group gets comments back on these sections (mid-July) we will send out to the STAC for comments. We plan to have an electronic version completed by the beginning of December. The timeline for printing is still about 4 weeks due to paper availability and other factors.

FY22 STAC Grant Funding Opportunity – S. Yergeau

Dr. Yergeau provided an update on the FY22 GFO process. The Program Office received one Letter of Interest, which is being processed following the proscribed procedure. It is being reviewed by the Program Office and STAC leadership for conformity with the GFO standards, and we will respond back to the project team by June 18. A discussion ensued as to why only one proposal was received. Some changes for future GFOs were discussed, including removing the match requirement.

Working Groups' Updates – S. Yergeau

- a. Wetlands (Martha Maxwell-Doyle) – Ms. Maxwell-Doyle let everyone know that the visioning statements for the working group are complete. They have a meeting scheduled later this month to finalize the action items for the group.
- b. Pathogen (Sheri Shifren) – Ms. Shifren updated that the beach monitoring is ongoing. Surveillance flights for HABs started May 24. There are no observers, only pilots, due to the pandemic. They are able to get the remote sensing data on chlorophyll and some observations from the pilots. They are currently trying to get observers back in the planes. High levels of chlorophyll were observed along the Raritan bay and in the Ocean, but no toxic species were identified in samples.

Ms. Shifren also updated that NJDEP has been focusing point source tracking (for pathogens) on the Toms River to address the problems at Beachwood Beach. Storm studies were completed this spring, in addition to an ebb tide study and a flood tide study for 6 tidal cycles. NJDEP met with the Beachwood Engineer and sampled in manholes on Spring Street. They are still poking around for this and trying to find the smoking gun. Dr. Vasslides asked about the results from the storm studies and Ms. Shifren replied that further analysis is needed.

Ms. Shifren also updated that the Clean Ocean Action project focusing on source tracking in the lower Toms River has kicked off. MATES students are sampling for the second year in a row.

- c. Stormwater (Charles Caruso) – Mr. Caruso updated that recently Lacey Township provided a summary of their enhanced stormwater mapping project to the working group. They found 100 outfalls that were previously unknown. The working group recently completed a poll to determine which CCMP objectives to focus on; WQ action items 1-4 and 1-5 were highest priority for the group.

The working group also recently discussed stormwater utilities, and invited Dr. Clay Emerson from Princeton Hydro to give a presentation. He is doing a feasibility study for Hammonton Township for a stormwater utility. Princeton Township is also getting ready to release an RFP for a stormwater utility feasibility study. Dr. Yergeau asked if DEP has released guidelines for stormwater utilities. Mr. Caruso answers that, yes, they have and it includes instructions on how to do a feasibility study. NJ Future also has good information.

- d. Shellfish (Jim Vasslides) – Dr. Vasslides indicated that the Shellfish Working Group has not met since the last STAC meeting as it is a busy time of year for all involved in the industry.

Vice-Chair Elections – S. Yergeau

A nomination for Gregg Sakowicz was received at the Program Office; no other nominations were received or made from the floor. Dr. Elizabeth Lacey seconded the nomination, and Mr. Sakowicz was unanimously elected Vice-Chair.

Change in Chairs – S. Yergeau/ E. Lacey

Dr. Yergeau officially ended his tenure as Chair of the STAC and passed the torch to Dr. Lacey.

Partner Updates

- Dr. Lacey informed the group that field research has resumed at Stockton University, with COVID mandates updated.
- Dr. Yergeau updates that the Marine Debris action plan was released about two weeks ago. https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/regional-action-plan/mid-atlantic-marine-debris-action-plan?utm_medium=email&utm_source=GovDelivery
- Dr. Vasslides updated that the Program Office seining crew has begun sampling efforts for the juvenile fish and gelatinous zooplankton survey. Stream and road crossing surveys are ongoing (with thanks to NJDEP fish and wildlife), and wetlands and MACWA fieldwork continues. The Toms River and Cedar-Forked-Oyster Watershed Plans are finishing up the stream visual assessments and continuing with water quality sampling
- Mr. Shertenlieb indicated that OCUA has taken over the beach samples for OCHD. The full suite of sampling locations will start June 19.
- Charles Caruso updated that the PPA has a rain garden exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show, which won second place in the plant pocket garden category.
- Mr. Sakowicz updated that the graduate research fellow at JCNERR has started sampling again in Barnegat Bay watershed. RUMFS has restarted ichthyoplankton and other sampling in reference to the Oyster Creek shutdown.
- Mr. Csik shared that 1,4 dioxane has been found in water samples from the lager region and is widespread. Mr. Sakowicz responds that resin sampling by the JCNERR fellow may be helpful in detecting 1,4 dioxane.
- Rob Karl reports that BTMUA has tested for 1,4 dioxane and it was not detected in the Metedeconk.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 EDT.