



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
December 15, 2023

ATTENDANCE

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Board Members Absent</u>
Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Acting Chair)	Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC)
Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected)	Debbie Botchie (Sussex County)
Marlene Saunders (Board-Elected)	Rony Baltazar-Lopez (Pro-Temp, Ex-Officio)
Claire Simmers (CAC)	David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)
Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)	Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)
Patti Drago (Board-Elected)	Todd Lawson (Sussex County)
Jenn Volk (STAC)	
Aimee Isaac (Senate Pro Tem Appt, Secretary)	<u>Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present</u>
Amie Howell (EPA ex officio)	Christophe Tulou
<u>Board Alternates Present</u>	Anna Fagan
Stephen Williams (DNREC Alt. for Sec. Shawn Garvin)	Meghan Noe Fellows
Hans Medlarz (Sussex County)	Bob Collins
Chris Brosch (DDA)	Taylor Hoffman
<u>Other Attendees</u>	Morgan Krell
Megan Mackey (EPA)	Marina Feeser
Angela Padeletti (EPA)	Michelle Koenig
Mark Casey	
Justin Healy	

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CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Pat Coluzzi called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM. P. Coluzzi led the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting attendees introduced themselves.

MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

P. Coluzzi requested to move the voting for Justin Healy to the Board-Elected Director Seat up to the first item.

Nomination of Justin Healy to Board- Elected Director Seat

P. Coluzzi asked the Board if they had received Justin's bio and asked for a motion to nominate Justin to the Board. J. Esposito made a motion. N. Bailey Ashton seconded. The vote to approve his membership was unanimous.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aimee Isaac confirmed that the Board members received the minutes from the previous meeting. No suggestions or modifications were made. P. Drago made a motion to approve the minutes. N. Bailey Ashton seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Anna Fagan reviewed the Treasurer's Report in the absence of David Baird. A. Fagan asked the Board to review the Board Budget Summary in their meeting packet and called for any questions regarding the budget. J. Esposito made a motion to approve the Board Budget Summary. P. Drago seconded. The vote was unanimous.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers reviewed the CAC meeting from October 24, 2023. Christophe Tulou from CIB spoke at the meeting about climate change. Lisa Locke was a speaker regarding getting people involved in positive conversations about climate. A CAC working group on invasive species went to the Invasive Species Council annual meeting. A presentation from Nivette Perez-Perez from CIB discussed capturing volunteer hours with the new Better Impact volunteer software.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jenn Volk reviewed the previous STAC meeting from October 20, 2023. There were several updates from standing subcommittees, including an update on the Habitat Plan being put together by Biohabitats. An update was given on the volunteer hours tracking application. Chris Hauser from SeaGrant gave a presentation as a new CAC member. Marianne Walch returned to discuss the State of the Bays technical report that accompanies the State of the Bays report. The group talked about sub-aquatic vegetation.

Development Committee

Jerry Esposito reported on the last Development Committee meeting. The Dogfish Dash generated \$70,000 in unrestricted funds. Giving Tuesday generated \$15,700 for CIB. The Annual Appeal 2023 report is going in the mail soon and the new format is a CIB calendar. The Center has seen a steady uptick in monthly donors and merchandise sales.

DEIJA

Marlene Saunders reported on the first DEIJA committee meeting. The committee discussed CIB Board involvement. A. Fagan added that the Center is working with Chanta Howard-Wilkinson as a DEIJA consultant who will help with assessments and training.

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Delaware Department of Agriculture

Chris Brosch mentioned that mental health and wellness is at the top of the mind in agriculture, especially at this time of year in the farming community. There is an effort to reallocate cover crop cost savings from last year to a cover crop accelerator program. C. Brosch and J. Volk co-lead LEADelaware, an agricultural leadership program. They just announced a new class of fellows, of which 5 of 12 are farmers. The Nutrient Management commission has created an ad-hoc committee to identify opportunities to further regulate applications of nutrients to turf. There is more legislative support now than in the past and the committee is coming up with ideas before initiating stakeholder outreach to help find a balance between agriculture and development.

Sussex County

Hans Medlarz discussed final reviews for the James Farm project. The bid opening is today. It is expected that several bids will come in for review. The County Council is discussing buffer issues for next year as well as prioritizing open space.

EPA

Amie Howell reported a few changes at the EPA. Ferry Akbar-Buchanan, the Region 3 CIB Coordinator, has taken a new position in the Environmental Justice program in Region 4. The Office of Water released an updated NEP program evaluation guidance. It is an update to capture reporting on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. EPA published the 2022 NEP Program accomplishments report. EPA has been working with leadership of ANEP and a tentative date in April for the national meeting at EPA headquarters offices in Washington, DC.

House & Senate

Aimee Isaac reported no updates on the House & Senate.

OLD BUSINESS

FY23-25 Strategic Plan Update and Tracking

Anna Fagan presented the new tool to help CIB track progress with the project management program Monday.com.

James Farm Capital Campaign Update

Anna Fagan provided an update on the capital campaign for James Farm now that the bidding process has begun. The official project cost and timeline will reinvigorate campaign efforts. If there is a funding gap, CIB needs to develop an updated gift pyramid. A groundbreaking event will be planned as well as other community engagement opportunities.

Review of 2024 Committee Meeting Schedule

Anna Fagan reminder about the meeting schedule in the packet. No concerns were mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS

Results of 2023 NEP Program Evaluation

Christophe Tulou reported that every 5 years each NEP is evaluated to measure how well they are meeting their commitments within the CCMP. The EPA deemed CIB proficient in their program, which is a passing grade.

Center Comments on US Wind Environmental Impact Statement

Christophe Tulou provided an update on the Center's comments on the US Wind Environmental Impact Statement. The STAC subcommittee on wind was created to look at

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what the impacts might be to run the offshore wind cables through the Bay to connect with the power grid in Dagsboro. The wind subcommittee along with the Center looked at the justification with the data and modeling provided in the impact statement and decided the information used is inadequate.

Executive Director's Report

Christophe Tulou reported that the Center is in great shape. A recent staff survey about company culture was completed. The survey results stated that 87% of staff believe the Center is a good place to work and more than 60% are comfortable with their work environment. The goal is for Center staff to have open discussions in a safe environment to express concerns. The T.E.R.P. (Trust, Empowerment, Respect & Prosperity) committee has been formed and is populated by staff at the Center to work on overcoming challenges (i.e. work-life balance.) C. Tulou also acknowledged recent grants that will help put skills to work building resilience in the watershed. The first grant will begin the process of shoring up Thompson Island. The second grant will be a kick-start on a broader resilience effort working with communities to help understand what resilience means for our watershed. The Habitat Plan should be completed by the end of 2024. Michelle Koenig from the Center gave an update on the working goals to complete the project.

Open Forum

No discussion.

Adjournment

J. Esposito made a motion to adjourn. N. Bailey Ashton seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40am.