



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
March 15, 2024

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)	Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)
Justin Healy (Board-Elected)	Todd Lawson (Sussex County)
Patti Drago (Board-Elected)	Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)
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
David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)	Anna Fagan
<u>Board Alternates Present</u>	Taylor Hoffman
Stephen Williams (DNREC Alt. for Sec. Shawn Garvin)	Bob Collins
Chris Brosch (DDA Alt. for Sec. Michael Scuse)	Jaime Argo
Hans Medlarz (Sussex County)	Michelle Koenig
	Marina Feeser
<u>Other Attendees</u>	
Angela Padeletti (EPA)	
Mike Harmer (Sussex Co. Engineer)	
Andy Haynie (PKS)	
Lindsey Keen (PKS)	

Erica VanVessen (PKS)	
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CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Pat Coluzzi called the meeting to order at 9:36 AM. P. Coluzzi led the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting attendees introduced themselves.

MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

P. Coluzzi called for any changes to the meeting agenda. There were none.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aimee Isaac confirmed that the Board members received the minutes from the previous regular meeting and the special board meeting regarding financing for Phase II of James Farm Master Plan Implementation. Steve Williams identified discussion from the special board meeting regarding the Center's office building, and clarified that the building cannot be used as collateral per the agreement with the state. J. Esposito made a motion to approve the minutes. P. Drago seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

David Baird reported that the Finance Committee met on February 19, 2024. The board budget report was reviewed and found to be in order. Lindsey Keen from PKS presented the findings of the single audit for 2023. P. Coluzzi asked if there were any questions, and none were asked. D. Baird made a motion to approve the audit report. H. Medlarz seconded. The vote was unanimous. D. Baird also noted that the Finance Committee updated the operations reserves policy. It maintains a 25 percent reserve and how those funds can be used. The reserves policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers reviewed the CAC meeting from February 15, 2024. The meeting topic was reforestation. Meghan Noe Fellows from CIB talked about what matters in achieving desired forest restoration outcomes. The guest storyteller was Charlie Garlow representing the Rehoboth Beach Sunrise Rotary Club. Charlie discussed tree planting efforts and the support that Sunrise Rotary is providing. The CAC will have an invasive species table and water quality table at the upcoming native plant sale. The CAC is also participating in the HOA pilot program at CIB to encourage communities to plant native and preserve their communities.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jenn Volk reviewed the previous STAC meeting from February 9, 2024. The meeting started with updates on ongoing initiatives including the Environmental Monitoring Plan, the Hydrodynamic Model, Offshore Wind Subcommittees, and the Habitat Plan. Lydia Franks and Andrew Homesy of UD presented on the Inland Bays shoreline. Erin Rogers and Kat Christie from DNREC spoke about Marsh and Waterbird monitoring. Bob Collins and Anna Fagan from CIB presented on James Farm updates. Meghan Noe Fellows from CIB spoke about planning for the 2026 State of the Bays. There was a discussion about planning a joint meeting among NEP partners for networking collaboration opportunities. This meeting would include the STAC Chairs, Coordinators and Interested Members, and those from Maryland Coastal Bays and Partnership for the Delaware Estuary.

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Development Committee

Jerry Esposito reported on the last Development Committee meeting on March 14, 2024. The Development report from February was reviewed. Current events are the Don't Chuck Your Shucks event at the Big Oyster Brewery, Green Screen Movie Night at Bayside, Chesapeake and Maine Dinner Party, and the Native Plant Sale.

DEIJA

Marlene Saunders reported on the DEIJA committee meeting held on February 29, 2024. The attendance doubled from the last meeting. Anna Fagan reviewed the goals and mission of the committee. The discussion was focused on the reasons community members might avoid civic engagement, including lack of trust or retaliation from employers or other groups in power. DEIJA has been added to the CIB website as a standing committee.

Sussex County

Hans Medlarz reported that Sussex County has purchased over 100 acres adjacent to the Inland Bays between Cannon Road and Route 5. They are working on a 6-year plan to renaturalize the property. Sussex County has also been working closely with CIB on reforestation projects, and the two are currently working together on a submerged gravel wetland in Georgetown on County property. The County is also actively working on several septic elimination projects.

Delaware Department of Agriculture

Chris Brosch reported on the Nutrient Management Commission. The Commission is undertaking law changes and regulation changes for lawns and lawn care companies across the state. It is expected to change the threshold from 10 acres to .25 acres for applying nutrients to a lawn. Some limits in application rates will be required as well as a knowledge-based exam and continuing education.

EPA

Amie Howell reported on updates at EPA. EPA did receive its FY24 appropriation from Congress and they are now working on their operating plan. The FY24 EPA appropriation brought about more community grants, formerly known as earmarks. CIB received an earmark and plans for that project are forthcoming. The National NEP meeting is coming up April 29th-May 2nd. The agenda is heavily focused on climate resilience and equity strategies.

House & Senate

Aimee Isaac reported on the House & Senate. New Senate Bill 197 amends the Delaware Code regarding native plants. It updates an existing native plant bill and requires state agencies to use native plants in landscaping. That bill has passed the Senate and is in the House. This week Senate Bill 237 was introduced regarding comprehensive planning. It would require municipalities with populations greater than 2,000 to include in their comprehensive plans community resiliency and response climate change.

OLD BUSINESS

James Farm Master Plan Financing and Capital Campaign

Anna Fagan provided an update on James Farm construction plans, including the Campus project cost, funds on hand, and the Community Bank loan. A. Fagan talked about the next steps, which are finalizing the master budget to include signage, boardwalk replacement, and a new entrance sign. The development committee is engaged in campaign activities and a launch is planned at the Native Plant Sale event on 5/4/24. In the near future, a groundbreaking event

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will occur, as well as hard hat tours and fundraising events. Long-term planning involves ideas for donor recognition and ways to leverage the new facility for CIB.

James Farm Master Plan Implementation

Anna Fagan presented the construction timeline. A. Fagan reviewed the final rendering and blueprint for the education building as well as the signage that has been designed. B. Collins talked about the James Farm schedule for the upcoming season. The programs will continue during construction and some trails will stay open for walking or access to the beach.

NEW BUSINESS

CAC Member Application

Claire Simmers presented the application for Mary Kunst. Mary is a long-time volunteer for CIB, a previous CIB employee, and a retired elementary school teacher. A. Isaac made a motion to approve Mary Kunst's application to the CAC. J. Esposito seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

DEIJA Plan and Board Training

Anna Fagan spoke about planning a DEIJA training workshop and proposed additional dates that might accommodate the Board's schedule.

Executive Director's Report

Christophe Tulou reflected on his first year of work with CIB and what climate change means to our watershed.

Open Forum

J. Esposito inquired whether there was an update regarding the status of the State Aquaculture Task Force. The Board was not aware of the current status. A. Isaac will follow up.

Adjournment

J. Esposito made a motion to adjourn. P. Drago seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.