



DRAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Center for the Inland Bays
Hybrid: CIB office and via Zoom
June 21, 2024

ATTENDANCE

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Other Attendees</u>
Pat Coluzzi (Speaker of the House Appt, Acting Chair)	Mike Harmer (Sussex Co. Engineer)
Jerry Esposito (Board-Elected)	Steve Hohman (EPA)
Nicole Bailey Ashton (Board-Elected)	
Claire Simmers (CAC)	<u>Board Members Absent</u>
Justin Healy (Board-Elected)	Sec. Shawn Garvin (DNREC)
Patti Drago (Board-Elected)	David Baird (SCD, Treasurer)
Jenn Volk (STAC)	Marlene Saunders (Board-Elected)
Aimee Isaac (Senate Pro Tem Appt, Secretary)	
Amie Howell (EPA ex officio)	<u>Center for the Inland Bays Staff Present</u>
Sec. Michael Scuse (DDA)	Christophe Tulou
Rony Baltazar-Lopez (Pro-Temp, Ex-Officio)	Anna Fagan
Todd Lawson (Sussex County)	Michelle Koenig
	Bob Collins
<u>Board Alternates Present</u>	
Stephen Williams (DNREC Alt. for Sec. Shawn Garvin)	

DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTION

Pat Coluzzi called the meeting to order at 9:30 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 meeting. A. Isaac called for comments or changes, and none were heard. P. Drago made a motion to approve the minutes. J. Esposito seconded. The vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Anna Fagan reported that the Finance Committee met on May 22, 2024. The committee reviewed the board budget summary and found it to be in order. Anna reviewed the format of the summary to the Board as a refresher. The Finance Committee met with representatives from Diamond State Financial Group. They spoke to the Committee about the services they offer including financial planning, asset management, and cash flow advice. The Committee will discuss the Center's possible needs before deciding on future engagement with Diamond State.

OTHER REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Claire Simmers reviewed the CAC meeting from April 25, 2024, and focused on Marine Debris. C. Simmers reported on the CAC activities, including their involvement in various events and their ongoing projects such as the Bays to Backyard Community Program (former HOA program). The CAC will have 2 new candidates to announce soon and is always looking for new members.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Jenn Volk reviewed the previous STAC meeting from April 26, 2024. The STAC invited different representatives from overlapping watershed, environmental, or conservation organizations for a networking session. The partners that participated were Maryland Coastal Bays, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, Partnership for Delaware Estuary, Delaware Nature Society, Sussex County Land Trust, and the Nature Conservancy. The meeting created the opportunity for collaboration and increased awareness of their respective missions and priorities. A new STAC member has been announced. Dr. Nick Ray, UD CEOE has submitted a formal application and has been approved. Nick will be introduced at the August meeting. The August meeting could be focused around GIS Resources with speakers from CIB, UD and USGS.

Development Committee

Jerry Esposito reviewed the Development Report for April and May 2024. J. Esposito also acknowledged the contributions of significant donors and highlighted the success of their recent fundraising events. The Decked Out event is coming up September 12th and the Grateful Shellabration event was announced for November 2nd, providing key opportunities for board members to participate and support the organization.

DEIJA

Anna Fagan reported on the last meeting. Items discussed included reviewing submissions for an essay contest related to environmental justice and climate issues. Also discussed was House Bill 422, the People's Anti-pollution Act, which seeks to completely overhaul permitting with DNREC for polluting industries. The Center emphasized the need for greater sensitivity to environmental

DRAFT

impacts, particularly in communities already bearing a heavy burden. Lastly, the Center has received a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to develop the Southern Delaware Critical Coastal Resilience Plan. The DEIJA committee will be helping with community engagement associated with the project.

Sussex County

Todd Lawson introduced Mike Harmer, the new county engineer, replacing Hans Medlars. M. Harmer shared his background and commitment to environmental sustainability, highlighting his ongoing work in public works, particularly on stormwater management. T. Lawson then discussed the County Council's approved budget for the fiscal year 2025-26, which included funds for various environmental projects, and shared updates about the expansion of the Inland Bays Wastewater Treatment Facility and an ongoing ordinance update related to perimeter buffers.

Delaware Department of Agriculture

There was no report from DDA.

EPA

Amie Howell reported on updates at the EPA. She spoke about the recent National meeting that was focused on addressing climate change and equity in the NEP's. Also, EPA administrator Regan delegated future approvals of comprehensive conservation management plan change to regional offices, which should speed up approval processes. A. Howell introduced Steve Hohman as an EPA Life Scientist in Region 3 and the new Project Officer for the Center.

House & Senate

Aimee Isaac reported on the House & Senate. Senate Bill 265 the Delaware Energy Act regarding offshore wind and renewable energy has passed the senate and is on the ready list. Senate Bill 318 would regulate the application of nutrients to turf by commercial nutrient handlers, that passed the senate and is onto the House. Next week the Delaware general assembly will be considering a resolution in consideration of the Center's 30th Anniversary. The Aquaculture Task Force is moving forward to address impediments to accelerated growth of the Delaware shellfish industry.

OLD BUSINESS

James Farm Master Plan Implementation and Capital Campaign Update

Anna Fagan shared pictures and press coverage from the groundbreaking of the new education center. A. Fagan provided a construction update for the project including the start of the paddlesports building for the concessionaire at James Farm, EcoBay Kayak. C. Tulou talked about the fundraising efforts for the capital campaign and the status of government requests for the project.

NEW BUSINESS

FY2025 Budget and Workplan Approval

A. Fagan reviewed the FY 2025 Budget and EPA 320 Workplan. P. Drago inquired about the balance of the workload and the Center's resources. C. Tulou shared that currently the resources exist. He also discussed the scope of the Center's mission as well as the potential future need to look at our priorities in relation to future funding. P. Drago motioned to approve the FY2025 Budget. J. Esposito seconded. The vote was unanimous. J. Esposito motioned to approve the FY2025 EPA 320 Workplan. N. Ashton seconded. The vote was unanimous.

DRAFT

Thompson Island Living Shoreline Project Update

Bob Collins discussed the ongoing Thompson Island Shoreline project, which aims to address coastal erosion using living shoreline techniques such as planting, shellfish, and public building blocks. The project, the Center's eighth living shoreline, intends to stabilize shorelines and provide easy access for wildlife, while also absorbing water energy. B. Collins also highlighted the potential of using living oysters for water cleanup and discussed an ongoing partnership with the division of parks for the Thompson Island Nature Preserve project. The goal is to prevent further human intrusion on the island and protect its cultural resources, while also addressing sea level rise.

Executive Director's Report

Christophe Tulou expressed concern about the lack of federal protection for Delaware's freshwater wetlands and praised Senator Stephanie Hanson's efforts towards a State-based program for their protection. The Center also discussed the importance of legislation for improving water quality in the state, highlighting the potential relocation of the Lewes Board of Public Works' wastewater treatment facility due to climate change. Lastly, the Center announced the Watershed Society, a major giving program for major donors who've contributed at least \$50,000 to the Center. The Society is named for Pete Okie, who is the inaugural member. Lastly, C. Tulou introduced the Center's seasonal interns and the Data Coordinator and GIS specialist for the Southern Delaware Critical Coastal Resilience Project.

Open Forum

No discussion

Adjournment

Pat Coluzzi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:52am.