

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Agenda

DATE & TIME: Thurs., Feb. 13, 2025 at 4 pm

LOCATION: *Center for the Inland Bays,
39375 Inlet Rd
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971*

Remote: [Use google calendar link](#)



**DELAWARE
CENTER FOR THE
INLAND BAYS**
preserve • protect • restore

Meeting called by: Jerry Esposito, Chair

Attendees: Patti Drago, Ken Sigvardson, Jerry Esposito, Aimee Isaac, Pat Coluzzi, Dave Keil, Mark Carter, Marina Feeser, Christophe Tulou

AGENDA ITEMS

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm

Meeting Agenda Review

Agenda was reviewed, no changes were made

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Dave motioned, Aimee seconded and meeting minutes were approved unanimously

Old Business

[Dec/Jan.](#) Development Reports

M. Carter / M. Feeser

Jan update: \$36,061.26

Annual Appeal Update: \$39,521.00 (79%)

Mark reviewed the December 2024 Development Report, total fundraised was over \$285k. Highlights to note: \$25k from Annual Appeal, \$8k from Giving Tuesday, \$1,450 from IBJ. \$1175 from Education Programming, EcoBay donation this year was \$6,000, \$922 from monthly donors (would love to grow that number!), \$12k from DAF, \$2,000 for oyster restoration, \$71k donation from Sheila Tiedemann upon her death donated via Episcopal Church Foundation, several donations in Mark Kunst's memory, several large grants for JFCC. Mark also went over January 2025 - total was over \$38k, we're at 79% of the Annual Appeal goal, more in memory donations (\$2600), 1 annual sponsor at \$10k (Freeman), 2 donated boat slips, went over the Dewey Dine to Donate event - brought in more than last year, Fire & Ice Event brought less donations this year but still a great outreach event.

Bay Banter and Brews - 1st session was sold out, second session was about 22. Proceeds will be about \$700-800. OVB will host 2 more and TI brewery will host one more event with us over the spring-fall.

Statement of Purpose: The Development Committee of the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays is a network of Board members, loyal donors, business and community leaders working to achieve the philanthropic goals of the Center through a collaborative effort with the Board and the Center's staff.

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays mission is to preserve, protect and restore Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed.

Look into starting to report annual numbers in addition to monthly.

Annual Sponsorship & Events Update

M. Carter

Mark shared our Dev plans for the year and a new event reporting system. Proceeds, raffle, merch sales, and general notes for each event, plus sponsors and expenses too. Annual sponsors, starting to come in for our major events. Mark reaches out personally to gather sponsors. 2025 is the third year for annual sponsorship. Question: Have we looked at the trend of sponsorship before the annual sponsorship model? Mark answered that yes and we are satisfied with the return and it's a positive response from the community. Ex. Native Plant Sale used to bring in about \$300, but now it brings in a couple thousand. Also to note - in the past, the only "sponsored" events were Decked Out and a small amount for Native Plant Sale.

DoMore24 is coming up - We were a recipient of an early bird match - \$1,000. Kickoff at Crooked Hammock at 6 pm on 3/6 (from 4-9 we'll get a proceeds donation), our Education team will close DoMore24 on 3/7 at 4:30-6pm with a Sunset Stroll with a heavily suggested donation. Reduced costs from spring appeal (no costs really, no mailing, no postage), and increased donations also. Flyer for the public programs is in the "Dev Committee" folder.

After DoMore, Dar Williams show at the Listening Booth - 3/21. Had to add tickets. Sold out - \$100 a ticket. Dar is donating all proceeds from the show.

New Business

Current Funding/Fundraising Challenges & Brainstorm

J. Esposito / C. Tulou / All

Christophe gave an update on the state of things federal funding-wise - shared a snapshot of our funding breakdown - federal funding is about 59% (~\$1.5 million FY24). A large portion of staff support comes from federal sources. We are assessing what is going on in DC - federal funding freeze affected us, freeze has been undone, and there's still a lot of uncertainty. Federal agencies are now reporting to OMB (are funds being used for DEI, climate purposes (green energy)), it is fair to expect, the federal government will deem that much of what we do is not consistent with the administration's priorities. Would apply to historical BIL funds that haven't been spent (22-23, FY24, and also FY25). BIL funds all on hold. \$850,000/year in appropriations (core funding) also in question. A looming government shutdown in March is also possible. Will need to prioritize programs, projects to continue (or drop) if we do lose the federal funding. Will need to get our partners, supporters, and community together to rally support. One major priority for CIB is building resilience to climate change. Protecting and restoring our habitats is another priority.

Question: What is the EPA saying? Is money able to be accessed? Our BIL money was not able to be accessed for a while.

Course of action: What are our organizational priorities and how do we message our priorities?

Point brought up by Patti: Individually, people are struggling personally too. So how do we get to the top of their priority list? Pat said our top focus should definitely be on our top heavy hitters. Jerry reinforced the Dev. Committee will be a huge component of this

effort and we'll need to pull out all stops. Pick out 3-4 critical projects to focus on. What do individuals value the most from the Center? Also need to find new people to support. What about the Bays moves you? Maybe plan for the next 2 years/long-term (don't be short-sighted). Short term is emergency situation, but also engage folks to become sustaining supporters. Make sure there's not overlap (that we're not stepping on toes, asking the same people). We are unique in that we are a non-profit in addition to an NEP. Another question brought up by Aimee- are federal workers who just recently moved to the area going to be able to stay?

[Better Impact](#) Accounts for Dev. Committee Members M. Feeser

Please sign up for an account on Better Impact using the link so we can track your hours for Development Committee meetings. It helps us apply with grants and get funding.

NEXT MEETING:

Proposed for Thursday, April 10, 2025 / 4:00 PM

Should we meet again sooner? Next week we can reconnect to set something up.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 5:13 pm.