

Minutes

Meeting Attendees: Elizabeth Butler (EPA2), Haley Burns (PDE), Kathy Klein (PDE), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Megan Mackey (EPA3), Catherine Magliocchetti (EPA3), Rachael Phillos (DNREC), Chad Pindar (DRBC), Irene Purdy (EPA2), Sue Weaver (PADEP), Will Whalon (PWD)

Welcome

- Kathy Klein welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that today's agenda is short so the meeting may end early.
- Prior to discussing BIL year 3, Kathy shared that PDE did submit the work plan for BIL years 1&2 and got some comments back from EPA. PDE submitted a response to comment yesterday. Megan Mackey said that as long as they and the grant specialist are satisfied with the responses, EPA should be able to move forward to award quickly, potentially processing the commitment notice by next week.

BIL Year 3 Projects

- Haley shared a potential projects list for BIL year 3; the goal of this is to give a snapshot of what it would look like with just projects that we identified as ongoing in the years 1&2 work plan, or that were pushed fully or partially to year 3. Kathy noted that with these alone we are already at around \$700k. She said she has also received a few additional requests for funds from PDE's science team and they have not yet been added to this list.
- We still want to collect input from the Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) workgroup, and all DELEP partners, so we will likely need to make adjustments to things that are already on this potential project list. Also, remember that 40% of the funds need to be spent or otherwise benefit targeted disadvantaged communities.
- Kathy asked whether the group wants to look also at BIL years 4&5 at this time. We will not be asking for years 4&5 funding in the next work plan but it would give us an idea of where things stand, especially if some items on the current year 3 list need to move to year 4 or 5.
 - Chad Pindar said that if years 4 & 5 remain largely undefined, it could be good to add a tab to the spreadsheet for them and to get feedback from the Steering Committee (SC) early.
 - PDE will send out a spreadsheet that EIC members can share with their SC rep to gather information on specific priority projects. It was requested that this template contain the headings we have been using but be otherwise blank except for an example project to show the type of information we are looking for. Since we will want to know if proposed projects benefit disadvantaged communities, we will also include information on how to use EIScreen to identify those areas that meet the EPA criteria.
- Rachael Phillos asked for the dates that correspond with BIL funding years to be included on the spreadsheet, since organizations are working on different state and federal, fiscal and calendar year timelines.

Timelines (FY24 Base Funding Work Plan, BIL Year 3 Work Plan, Long Term BIL Strategic Plan, Equity Strategy)

- Haley has been working on putting together timelines for completion of the FY24 Base Funding Work Plan, BIL Year 3 Work Plan, Long Term BIL Strategic Plan, and Equity Strategy. She built these around an estimated (SC) meeting date of April 11, 2023 (the earliest option presented via Doodle poll).

- So far, April 12 from 2-4pm works for all SC members that have responded. We are waiting to hear from EPA2, NJDEP, and PADEP; if they are able to make the afternoon of 4/12 work that would be great.
- These timelines were shared on-screen and Haley walked through some key points on them. She will send copies to the EIC after the meeting after taking into account any edits/feedback. These timelines are all subject to change as needed.
- The goal with the Equity Strategy is to have that completed and submitted as soon as possible, as the content of some of these other plans depend on that being approved and match requirement waived. Once PDE shares the draft Equity Strategy we will need to have it reviewed by the SC and turned around quickly.
 - Kathy said that we have not yet seen the guidance for this Equity Strategy so we do not know for sure what EPA is expecting. PDE plans to use the definition that EPA has suggested to identify disadvantaged communities, so this may not line up completely with how partner agencies define them.
- We also do not have guidance for the BIL Long Term Plan at this time, so the timeline for that may also require adjustments depending on what is needed and whether the SC needs to approve it.
 - Megan said that the Long Term Plan is a requirement from EPA to accompany the BIL grant; it is not a programmatic piece so while it should be shared with the DELEP SC/Management Conference, it should not necessarily need to be presented for their approval. Megan also said that they have not heard anything about when the Long Term Plan guidance will be available, and she hopes the lacks of specificity will translate into latitude around the expectations.

Partner Updates

- Rachael shared that DNREC recently put out information specific to Delaware's climate impacts and the economics of climate impacts: <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/climate-plan/impacts/>. DNREC also engaged 302 Stories to create a "Wetlands of Wonder" video that was recently completed. Rachael shared a link to the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x7tozU9fM8>) and will send an infographic to Haley to distribute to the group as well. DNREC's posted Environmental Scientist position recently closed and they hope to have someone new in place by January or February.
- Chad shared a link to the agenda for next week's DRBC meeting (<https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/index.html>); he said that there is one resolution for consideration that is likely to garner a lot of attention, which relates to the importation and exportation of water in or out of the Basin.
- Kathy shared the following updates on behalf of PDE:
 - The preliminary program for the Summit is now on our website and registration is open but coming in slowly. We are grateful for the sponsorship we have received from partners and other organizations. Everything helps, as it will cost about \$300 per person just for meals. Kathy asked everyone to help spread the word about the Summit, and if planning to attend to register sooner rather than later if possible.
 - The TREB review period has ended and folks at PDE are incorporating the comments and feedback received.
 - PDE's Engagement Director position is posted and open through December 9. We've scheduled two interviews so far and are confident we will fill this position. We have not yet posted the Operations Director position.
 - As for the Hatchery, we have a final lease for the land and are waiting for the City of Philadelphia to send it to us for signature. Design work is expected to start up again in January. There is some hesitation around whether to design for the bigger or smaller building option; we would prefer to have room to grow but the bigger option costs about \$1.5M more. The goal is still to break ground next fall, though there remains a more than \$4M funding gap – in January we will hear about two big proposals submitted. Kathy said that PDE has also been talking with folks at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation since they are interested in supporting this project.

- There is soon to be a lot of transition on PDE's Board of Directors. Three longtime members' terms are ending, including Chairman Joe Tarsavage, and there were already other positions open. At the end of 2022, 7 seats will be open and we will be nominating 5 new members at the December board meeting. We are looking to have members spread across the estuary and are looking for folks that have fundraising and marketing experience.
- Kathy Magliocchetti shared that she just received approval to send 9 people from her section to the Summit. She also said that she has seen a draft of the Equity Strategy template and expects EPA to release the final version later this week.

Kathy wished everyone a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season and thanked them for all of their work supporting the Estuary Program.

Action Items

- Kathy will talk with PDE staff about new project ideas and Haley will edit the proposed project spreadsheet to include newly suggest projects as well as tabs for BIL years 4 & 5.
- PDE will send the EIC the spreadsheet with current proposed projects for BIL year 3, as well as a separate template to collect specific priority project information for BIL years 3-5. Information on using EJScreen to identify disadvantaged communities will be included.

Upcoming/Important Dates:

- PDE Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2022, 9am-12pm
- January Monthly EIC Meeting: Thursday, January 5, 10am-12pm
- EIC BIL/NEP Work Plan Meeting: Thursday, January 19, 10am-12pm
- [Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit](#): January 30-February 1, 2023