

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Attendees: Kathy Klein (PDE), Haley Burns (PDE), Elizabeth Butler (EPA2), Irene Purdy (EPA2), Megan Mackey (EPA3), Rachael Phillos (DNREC), Catherine Magliocchetti (EPA3), Jay Springer (NJDEP), Diana Maher (NJDEP), Kristina Peacock-Jones (PADEP)

Welcome

- Attendees were welcomed to the meeting, which began at 10am.

DELEP Agreement – Next Steps (Kathy Klein)

- Kathy advised that she emailed everyone the final draft of the DELEP Agreement that included the final edits discussed during the last EIC meeting.
- The question at hand was how to move the Agreement forward with the agencies' legal departments and Steering Committee members, and whether EIC members preferred:
 - a. Sending the latest draft to their respective legal departments and engaging their Steering Committee member themselves, or
 - b. Having PDE send the agreement to the Steering Committee members for them to pass along for legal review
 - Rachael said that DE would like to handle it internally, they would send to legal.
 - Megan agreed that it seems cleaner for each EIC member to take the draft to their legal team.
- Decision: EIC members will send the agreement for review. Kathy said that we will send out an email to members including another copy of the final draft, instructions regarding when the review needs to be completed (within 1 month), and that feedback should be sent to Haley.
 - Rachael asked that she be included on the email since she will be forwarding the draft to legal while Kim Cole is on vacation.

CCMP Tracking (Megan Mackey and Irene Purdy)

- Kathy explained that for the past two years, Emily Baumbach had a system for reaching out to partners to find out what CCMP strategies they were implementing. The initial plan was to do this for three years and to evaluate whether this was the best approach - to collect the information needed to assess where there was progress being made and gaps in CCMP implementation. After two years, the feeling is that this is not working very well- through the limited information being submitted, we are not getting an accurate sense of what all is being done.
- Kathy and Haley had a conversation with Irene and Megan about this, and passed the baton to Megan to provide more detail about what was discussed and proposed for moving forward.
- Megan began by reminding everyone that when CCMP tracking was originally discussed, as part of the CCMP revision, we were trying to figure out what metrics and process would be most valuable to the program.

- We talked about the fact that at some point we would need to take pause and look at this information we are getting to see if it was telling a story of implementation and giving us valuable information as a program.
- Megan said she believed we had previously talked about doing one more year collecting information prior to doing that evaluation, but in light of Emily leaving and with appreciation of work required to collect the information, she and Irene reached out to Kathy to suggest we take a pause now.
- EPA is very interested in CCMP tracking, but the intent is to reduce the burden at the 5 and 10 year check-ins. Funding guidance from fiscal year 2015/2016 requires that every NEP fully revise their CCMP every 10 years, and update it every 5 years.
- Megan said that she and Irene, at least in terms of what EPA is reporting on, don't know if the way we are currently tracking CCMP implementation is telling us a story - it is telling us about certain actions, but is not necessarily providing a true picture of what is being done.
- CCMP tracking shouldn't be something that we are all doing just because we have to, we want this to be something that works for us and is valuable to the Estuary Program.
- Megan and Irene proposed the idea of creating a subcommittee under the EIC to take a step back and look at what has been collected so far, what we are asking, and how we could move forward in a way that adds value to our program.
- Irene agreed with Megan's remarks and said she thinks it will take a few conversations to review everything and see where we are so that we can come up with a better plan.
- Jay thinks it's a great idea but that it would be difficult for him to carve out time to be on the team.
- Kathy said this is a complex problem because to see where we are, we need to collect information, and in order to gather information, people need to be willing to take the time to provide that to us.
 - Our region is so large and has so many partners, and we do not have the type of relationship with many of these partners where they are willing to take the time to participate in the tracking process. There is nothing in it for them other than being helpful.
 - Part of the question is what do we do with this information: how does it benefit not just the Estuary Program but the partners as well?
 - The Delaware River Basin Restoration Program's new Conservation Collaborative is creating a blueprint that will prioritize what needs to happen in the watershed, and the funding that they give out through the DWCF will be based on those priorities. They have a built-in reporting system – we don't have that.
 - Things are more complex now because there are so many players and their attention goes to where the funding is coming from – in large part from the William Penn Foundation.
 - Kathy thinks it would be helpful for the Estuary Program to establish a smaller set of priorities over a defined period of time so we could really focus on messaging out those priorities and collecting information to assess what is being done. Trying to do it all likely will not get us where we want to be.
- Irene stressed the importance of having a refined system for approaching folks and knowing clearly what we are asking. She also mentioned that once we can identify the progress we are making, feel confident in that and back it up, that will help all our agencies and make a stronger case for funding.
- Cathy Magliocchetti said that folks may need some time to process all of this, plus not all members are here today to consider this. She thinks that time required to work on this would be modest and the payback high. If everyone can think it over and see what time they might have available to give, that would be helpful.
- Megan suggested that she and Irene work on a message with information about how much time they expect to need for these discussions so everyone could see what the time commitment would

be for participating in this effort. Kathy could then send this out and hopefully some will be willing to participate.

- Kathy thought that was a good idea and said she also hopes to talk about how the TREB, State of the Estuary, and the Monitoring Plan all fits in together since it is all interrelated.
- Also, since 2024 will be the fifth year since the revision, Kathy would like a better understanding of what the CCMP 5-year update will involve.
 - Megan said that on another EIC call she'd be happy to go over what the obligations are from the EPA perspective.

Last Meeting's Minutes (Kathy Klein)

- This was not on the agenda that was sent out, but we wanted to make sure everyone is okay with the draft minutes – if anyone has any changes, please send those to us. Kathy thanked and recognized Haley for doing such a great job on her first time taking the meeting minutes.

PDE Strategic Planning Update (Kathy Klein)

- Kathy said that she sent everyone an email yesterday that provided an update on where we are with getting PDE's new strategic plan completed by the end of the year. PDE's internal DEIJ workgroup created language for the framework that more accurately reflects our values. Once that was completed, Kathy took the draft plan to the A-Team (Action Team: Kathy Klein, Angela Padeletti, Danielle Kreeger, Kate Hutelmyer, Elizabeth Horsey, and Jonetta Lucas). They liked the framework and one-page overview, but didn't like building our strategic plan solely around the CCMP's three themes of Clean Waters, Healthy Habitats, and Strong Communities.
- Kate Hutelmyer offered to rethink how better organize the plan's structure, came up with the format that outlined in the email to the EIC.
 - This allows the staff to think more freely about where we are and want to be moving forward without being constrained by specific items in the CCMP.
 - Kate will meet with supervisors to flesh out the different elements in the major departments in our organization: Science, Education, Outreach, and Admin/Business.
 - After that, we will do facilitated sessions with the larger staff in each department to see if anything is missing or if there is anything that they feel shouldn't be included.
 - This will then be shared with the Strategic Planning Committee, then the Board and EIC. While there may be slight revisions, the goal is to have the Strategic Plan adopted at the December Board meeting.
- Kathy is very grateful for Kate's help with this. She said we all want to get this done and we are trying to be more strategic and think further out in terms of fundraising. This plan will be helpful and provide us more guidance - it doesn't seem like the last strategic plan was ever really looked at or used as a guiding document.
- Kathy included the EIC review so everyone here would know what we are doing and can be on the lookout for opportunities as well.
- On a related note, PDE is doing an organizational structure and salary overview, as that is another area that was not working well for us. This is happening parallel to work on our strategic plan. Kathy noted that there are a lot of big things being worked on and a lot to get done by the end of the year.
 - We are wrapping up our audit and are rethinking the budget process, looking track things more carefully than in the past.

- This will all put us in a better position for moving forward. The organization has grown so much programmatically but the business side didn't grow at the same pace, so we have been working hard to get that to same level of proficiency as programmatic work.
- The current DELEP Agreement (effective through Dec 31st) says that the Steering Committee has to approve the Strategic Plan, but in the current draft agreement this was taken out. Kathy asked if a Steering Committee review should be built into the timeline?
 - Kristina asked why the Steering Committee piece was removed from the agreement.
 - Kathy said it was removed because the PDE's Strategic Plan is not for DELEP, and it seems like PDE's Board should approve the organization's plan.
 - Cathy thinks that since we are working under the current agreement, the Strategic Plan should be given to the Steering Committee along with notice that this would be the last time their approval is required. There was consensus that this is the best way to handle it.
 - Kathy will send the plan to the EIC to share with their Steering Committee members.
 - There will need to be an official Steering Committee vote on it, although this will not be able to take place at the October SC meeting, so it will need to be approved otherwise. It can, however, be discussed as an agenda item at the Oct. meeting.
 - Jay added that he thinks the Strategic Plan should still be shared with the Steering Committee going forward, even if their approval is not needed. Kathy agreed with this as it is important for the Steering Committee to understand strategic thinking on both the programmatic and business sides of the organization.

Urban Waters Update (Kathy Klein)

- Erica Rossetti will be taking over as Ambassador for the Delaware River location. Currently the SAN Coordinator position is being advertised, so Erica will need to juggle both roles for a little while.
 - Kathy asked if everyone here receives announcements when PDE has job openings; from the feedback it seems like this information has been shared inconsistently. PDE will work on this so that everyone is included in announcements of open positions.
- We will be participating in an Urban Waters session at the CDRW Forum on September 30th from 10-11:30 am. The Forum will be virtual except for an in-person dinner reception in Philadelphia on September 30th, and some field trips on Friday October 1st. PDE will be leading an oyster shell recycling 'field trip.' Registration is now open.
- We are working on the fall webinar series that will focus on transportation and housing. Speakers are lined up but we haven't yet picked dates. We are also working on 2022 Work Plan that lays out what we want to accomplish next year for Urban Waters.
- We are still trying to get more representation on the planning group from the cities that aren't represented (Chester and Wilmington).
 - Alison Quimby from Wilmington has been invited to the meetings but unable to attend. Kathy has a meeting with Alison next week and will ask her if Matt Harris, another City of Wilmington contact, might be able to participate representing the city.
 - We have been developing a good relationship with some of the community leaders in Chester. They told us that a priority of theirs is to get more people to the waterfront, so we are getting them involved in the Delaware River Festival. They will have an event at the Chester Waterfront on Sat. Oct. 2nd; we will have a presence there for UWFP and hope to continue to involve them in the Urban Waters effort.
- Kathy shared that there is a bill that has been drafted to fund the Urban Waters locations, around \$1M/year, which would be very helpful to support on-the-ground programming and to leverage other funding. We will keep a close eye on this and see what we can do to encourage our region's congressional delegation representatives to support that legislation.

Funding (Kathy Klein)

- EIC members have been included on some emails regarding the bipartisan infrastructure bill.
 - The National Estuary Program has been written into the bill and the information that we are getting so far suggests that each estuary program could get about \$900,000 (in addition to base funding) for each of 5 years.
 - The bill also includes \$26M for the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund, plus other money for water infrastructure related items.
- In regards to raising dollars to support the hatchery project and larger the Mussels for Clean Water Initiative: we hired a consultant, Fairmount Ventures (FV), to assist with the capital campaign. They are also being used by Bartram's Garden for their capital campaign.
 - A kickoff meeting was held with FV, and there will be a 4-month feasibility study done that will position us to go out and raise the funds that we need. Right now, that amount is about \$4M.
 - We just received the revised lease terms from the city and there are some red flags but we will work it out because we can't move forward and break ground until we have a lease. PENNVEST will not release the funds for the next phase until there is a 29-year lease in place.
 - We think we need \$2M for the building and the rest can be raised over a longer period of time, but the plan is to break ground by next Summer/Fall, so we would need to raise \$2M by then.
 - Bartram's put in a proposal to Congresswoman Scanlon's office for funding and that seems to be moving along well. We are written into that for \$75,000. (That was all the match that we could provide.)

Experience the Estuary Celebration (Kathy Klein)

- The dinner is scheduled for October 7th at Vie in Philadelphia.
- Kathy said that the appetite for sponsorship was unknown, but that in 2019 we had \$80K and as of today we have \$70K in sponsorship, so we are happy with the response so far.
- If all sponsors used all of their tickets, and we included the full PDE staff, that would be about 180 people. As of now, we are planning on limiting attendance to 300.
- When we send out the postcards with information about how to buy individual tickets, we will include language saying that tickets are limited. If there are more people we will put them on a waiting list.
- There are still questions about what to do if we must cancel the dinner, how we would handle that with sponsors - it would be complicated.
- We are still planning the silent auction and other usual things, as well as a video for the 25th Anniversary.
- Kathy said that we are still trying to figure out if there should be a keynote speaker. She said she invited Lisa Jackson via email but has not heard back; she thought Lisa would be great for this because of her connection to the estuary, her work with Apple, and her DEI involvement.
 - Liz Butler said that she has not spoken with Lisa in a while but has some mutual contacts and can try to help put Kathy in touch with her.

NEPORT (Kathy Klein)

- Kathy offered thanks to everyone that has submitted information.
- The next step is for us to start uploading that information. Ellie and Haley will be working on this.

Partner Updates

- Kristina (PADEP) shared that their Coastal Zone Management Program's grant round opens on August 30th. They will have a virtual grant applicant workshop on August 16th.
 - Kathy asked if funding would be about the same; Kristina said they won't know until later.
- Jay (NJDEP) said that it is election year in NJ, and the governor and whole legislature is up so it is unclear what will happen in November. One bill currently going through legislature would make \$10M in state funds available for lake management and lake restoration activities in NJ. Jay said his upper management is negotiating some of the requirements but it looks like the governor will likely sign it before the election.
- Kathy shared that there is a press conference today in Lewes, DE that Shawn Garvin is speaking at about National Water Quality Month. The backdrop will be a living shoreline project that PDE was involved with. Josh Moody will be there representing PDE.
- Irene said that the Urban Waters Program and Headquarters are having a federal summit today, hosted by Radhika Fox. The objective is to reestablish relationships, show support for the program, ask how we can best fund this program going forward, and see if some less involved federal agencies can reestablish some relationships at the local level.
- Megan said that Kelly Somers sat in on a presentation by someone from the National Renewable Energy Lab who is working on a new program for assessing rivers for plastic pollution. They have five proposed locations, one being the Delaware River. Kelly made a connection with the National Renewable Energy Lab/Dept. of Energy and there have been some initial conversations about connections between the work EPA and partners are doing and the Delaware River and how we might be able to partner with them in the future. Megan said it is very preliminary but seems like it will engage stakeholders and connect to the Estuary Program, Urban Waters, etc. The hope is to someday bring the presentation to STAC and MACC and be able to include data in monitoring reporting.
- Kathy said that there is also a press conference at 11am on August 20th at the Delaware Environmental Education Center in Wilmington. Senator Carper and others will be in attendance.
 - The press conference is essentially to thank Sen. Carper for his support of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act (DRBCA). The project highlighted will be the CBR4 which is being funded through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF) established through the DRBCA.
 - Kathy initially thought this was going to also be an opportunity to announce the next round of DWCF grants, but that will not happen until mid-September.
 - In the FY23 budget there is \$15M for the DWCF.
 - The governor may attend the press conference, and Secretary Garvin is also interested in participating.
 - Some kids working as interns at the Center will be out on the boardwalk with the Senator to talk about their work. Kathy said she is trying to find a way for us to talk about wetlands and the need for more funding for monitoring, since we have done monitoring in that area.
 - Sarah Bouboulis suggested we could have the kids there do some testing that day as part of the activity. Regardless, PDE will have a presence there.
 - Rachael questioned who was leading this press conference and who DNREC should reach out to if they have questions. Kathy will follow up with the correct contact.

- Kathy said that we will follow up on the items addressed today and that on the next call we will need to start discussing agenda items for the Steering Committee meeting. She thanked everyone for their support and concluded the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

DELEP Agreement Review

- Kathy will send an email with the latest draft and instructions for review (emailed on 8/9)
- EIC members will share the latest draft with their legal team and DELEP Steering Committee representative. Any edits should be sent to Haley (hburns@delawareestuary.org) by September 8th.

CCMP Tracking Subcommittee

- Megan and Irene will work on determining how many meetings may be needed/what kind of time this subcommittee would require so folks have a better idea of what their commitment would be.
- In the meantime, EIC members should think about the discussion surrounding CCMP tracking, and what time they might have available to give.

Review July Meeting Minutes

- Please review the July meeting minutes (sent out via email on 7/30) and email Haley with any comments or changes.

Misc.

- Kathy will follow up with Rachael to provide the correct contact for the Sen. Carper press conference.