



LGAC Members Present: Markus Batchelor, Richard Baugh, Ruby Brabo, Patty Bubar, Daniel Chao, Mark Dobbins, Sheila Finlayson, Jasmine Gore, Penny Gross, Leo Lutz, Andria McClellan, Brianne Nadeau, Don Phillips, Kelly Porter, Robin Rich-Coates, John Thomas, Ann Simonetti, James Wheeler, Emeritus Bruce Williams representing Jake Day and Phil Briddell representing Michael Helfrich and LGAC Staff: Ola-Imani Davis and Jennifer Starr

Speakers/Guests Present: Carin Bisland (EPA), Jessica Blackburn (Alliance), Patti Bohnsack (Alliance), Laura Cattell Noll (Alliance), Megan Cole (STAC), Rachel Felver (CBP), Kate Fritz (Alliance), Mary Gattis (Bay Journal), Annabelle Harvey (STAC), Mark Hoffman (CBC), Paula Jasinski (Green Fin), Danny Lapin (Otsego County), Lara Lutz (Bay Journal), Nancy Nunn (Harry Hughes Center), John Maleri (DC DOEE), Matthew Pennington (WV), Tuana Phillips (EPA), Phil Stafford (MD DNR), Kathy Stecker (MDE), Jim Sullivan (DE DNREC), Jessica Trimble (DCED), Ashley White (CCAP), Justin Williams (VA DEQ)

Thursday, June 4, 2020

Call to Order: Greetings and Introductions

Chair Ann Simonetti called the meeting webinar to order at 10:05am. Members acknowledged late Pennsylvania Vice-Chair, Ed Bustin, honoring his memory by donating a tree to American Forests to be planted within the nearest reforestation site to his burial. Also acknowledged was Maryland Vice-Chair Jake Day who was deployed to the National Guard for 10 months. Staff took roll call and introduced a few housekeeping and engagement rules.

COVID-19 Impacts on the Chesapeake Bay Program Efforts

Carin Bisland, CBP

Carin shared that the partnership is identifying the impact of COVID-19 on monitoring, field work and achieving the 2-year milestones; jurisdictions have reported that milestones will be on time. Carin updated Members on the Chesapeake Executive Council (EC) meeting which will take place virtually on August 18, 2020, and will likely focus on COVID-19, the CBP Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Statement and the forest restoration strategy.

COVID-19 impacts by jurisdiction were presented:

- *Jim Sullivan-Delaware* anticipates reaching their 2-year milestones on time.
- *John Maleri-District of Columbia* has an estimated \$1.5 billion loss in revenue due to COVID-19. Mayor Bowser presented a balanced budget for 2021 in response. DC will also re-evaluate milestones in the fall to determine feasibility but is on track to delivering their annual progress report on time.
- *Phil Stafford/Kathy Stecker-Maryland* is seeing a disruption leading to “massive short falls” in budget. MD will continue to work with the Office of Budget Management to assess loss in revenue. There is a recommendation in place for the state house to solicit feedback from local government and local stakeholders in order to identify needs.
- *Danny Lapin-New York, specifically Otsego County, NY* anticipates major losses such as county layoffs and budget cuts. As of April 2020, 2,292 unemployment claims have been made and there is a 53% decline in visits to restaurant and retail facilities.
- *Jessica Trimble-Pennsylvania* reports decreased local capacity to perform operations, increased strain on fiscally vulnerable communities and negative impacts to tax revenue, funding programs and staffing capacities.
- *Justin Williams-Virginia* entered into Phase 1 of reopening the state; however, localities largely remain working remotely with no public engagement. VA has also worked with the EPA to identify and allow grant extensions and will revisit fiscal impacts in the fall.

- *Matt Pennington-West Virginia* reported there have been delays in projects which may result in “falling short” of their 2 year milestones. WV is, however, on track of fulfilling their nutrient and sediment responsibilities long-term. WV also anticipates the awarding of fewer competitive grant dollars to local governments and estimated financial loss may not be known for 6-12 months.

Business Meeting

- Approval of March 2020 Minutes – John Thomas moved to approve March 2020 minutes, seconded by Ruby Brabo, all in favor.
- Pennsylvania Vice-Chair Elections – John Thomas moved to elect Leo Lutz as PA Vice-Chair all in favor
- Executive Committee Report (Chair) – Ann reported the three Advisory Committee Chairs and coordinators met to draft a joint statement to the EC regarding COVID-19. She also reported the draft CBP DEIJ statement, drafted by Skeo Solutions, has been approved by the Management Board, presented at the Principals’ Staff Committee (PSC) for support, and if support is received, will be endorsed to the EC.
- Coordinator’s Report (Coordinator) – Jennifer shared plans for the 2020 Local Government Forum on the capacity of local governments to build resilience on climate. This will occur during the September LGAC meeting and will be held in conjunction with the Climate Resiliency Workgroup. The December 2020 LGAC is planned to share some time with the Citizens Advisory Committee. Members approved holding the September meeting virtually.
- Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) Report (Coordinator) – Laura reported the LLWG has nominated Shannon Moore, Frederick County, MD, as its Vice Chair and in February 2021, Shannon will become Chair and Heidi Bonnafon, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), will be Vice-Chair. She shared plans for various panels at state conferences and efforts to find innovative ways to conduct peer-to-peer learning events virtually.

Elected Officials Watershed Education Efforts

Laura Cattell Noll

Laura informed Members that the Workgroup is advising Green Fin Studio to craft a cross-outcome watershed education handbook for local governments. The phases of this project include: identify the overlap between Bay Program outcomes and local priorities, based on that overlap, identify modules (infographics, PowerPoint presentations, graphs, etc) to help fill that need, flush out what content will be included per module, draft each module and finalize. Members voted on which module topic and materials they would prefer to see included.

Proposed Local Government Newsletter

Ola-Imani Davis

Ola presented the idea of a local government newsletter that will serve as a Watershed-wide curated resource of information local governments can use. The proposed audience is members of LGAC, LLWG and their interested parties with a focus on case studies, CBP/EPA updates, jurisdiction-specific updates and resources and other regional topics. Members shared feedback that the newsletter should include graphics, no more than 5-10 links, and occur quarterly in-between LGAC meetings, Members suggested staff to do a 6 month pilot to determine effectiveness.

Jurisdiction Lunch Meeting Report-Outs and Member Updates

Maryland discussed MS4 funding and working with MDE on a low interest rate loan. They question how to maintain small/minority businesses, return to educational facilities, and continue state and county services safely.

Virginia advocated to continue to mentor and increase the knowledge of local elected officials, especially newly elected officials, as they are finding many elected officials are not concerned about funding local projects. They stressed the need to develop change makers who can bring creative solutions.

District of Columbia were concerned about the impacts of COVID-19 especially in the sense of accessibility to the November presidential primary polls. They also shared research to detect COVID-19 in wastewater down to a one-block radius.

The *At-Large* delegation discussed budget and workforce development across their jurisdictions with an interest in enhancing conservation corps models to install restoration projects and employee residents.

Pennsylvania talked about the Department of Community and Economic Development's Watershed handbook in conjunction with efforts of the LLWG's Watershed Education modules. PA is also concerned about the loss in tax revenue and the impact on projects that are in the engineering phase.

LGAC Executive Council Recommendations

Jennifer Starr

Members discussed and supported an Advisory Committee joint statement between LGAC, CAC and STAC to the EC on working together in the wake of COVID-19. Members discussed the draft DEIJ endorsement, statement and strategy. John Thomas moved in favor to support the draft DEIJ Statement, however, stating that it is too wordy in its current form. This was seconded by Sheila Finlayson but was amended in agreeance by Ann, John and Sheila. The new motion was amended to support the concept of DEIJ. LGAC members then discussed recommending to the EC, a focus on workforce development, equity and innovative forest restoration efforts.

Action: Staff to draft the Annual EC letter for Member review.

New Business/ Future Agenda Items

- Follow-up to wastewater testing for COVID-19
- Status of local projects and roadblocks that have occurred
- Environmental justice efforts and the disproportionate impact of the health and economic impacts on communities of color

Meeting adjourned at 1:58 pm