

Local Government Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting

September 24 - 25 2026

[Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.](#)

Purpose & Meeting Objectives:

- Explore the past, present, and possible future impacts of wastewater treatment on the Chesapeake Bay.
- Understand emerging challenges in wastewater treatment and costs to local governments.
- Discuss LGAC's annual recommendations to the Chesapeake Executive Council.

Actions & Decisions

Thursday September 24, 2026

I. Call to Order

Councilmember Hastings welcomed LGAC members and reviewed the meeting objectives.

Lead: Councilmember Josh Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: [Meeting Agenda](#)

II. Presentation: Overview of Wastewater Treatment

Lisa Ochsenhirt introduced herself and presented to the Committee a history of wastewater treatment in the watershed including reductions of nutrients and sediments, costs of upgrades and maintenance, financial resources to support wastewater treatment and emerging issues.

Lead: Lisa Ochsenhirt, AquaLaw (lisa@aqualaw.com)

Materials: [Presentation](#)

Discussion Notes:

- Members discussed how stormwater fees can help fund infrastructure projects that reduce flooding and improve water quality.
- Members stated their beliefs that better communication on the importance of wastewater treatment to the general public is greatly needed. [The Value of Water Campaign](#) was highlighted as one opportunity.

III. Plenary Discussion with LGAC Members

Facilitator: Councilmember Josh Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: None

Discussion Notes:

- Members stated that local governments need to be self-sufficient and not rely as heavily on federal partners.
- Members are concerned about the impending "gray wave" of workers that will be retiring from wastewater professional roles and the lack of incoming labor to replace them.
- LGAC Coordinator shared the 2025 CBWA's workforce development goal, information about [a recent report to congress on the water workforce](#) and highlighted [a grant targeting workforce development](#).
- Members discussed [proposed changes](#) to the formula for allocating the [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#) (CW SRF). According to the [Choose Clean Water Coalition](#), VA would receive significantly more funding and MD, PA and NY would receive significantly less.

IV. Break

V. Case Study #1: Wastewater Infrastructure: Out of Sight, Out of Mind, Until it's Not

Matt Ries presented a case study highlighting D.C.'s Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant. He discussed the challenges of aging infrastructure, ratepayer affordability and multi-jurisdictional collaboration.

Lead: Matt Ries, DC Water (lisa@aqualaw.com)

Materials: [Presentation](#)

VI. Case Study #2: Allegany County, Maryland

Adam Patterson presented a case study from Allegany County, Maryland, highlighting the challenges of changing environmental conditions and hazard mitigation in the wastewater sector, concluding with lessons learned and future opportunities.

Lead: Adam Patterson, Allegany County (adam.patterson@alleganygov.org) and Les Knapp, Maryland Department of the Environment (les.knapp@maryland.gov)

Materials: [Presentation](#)

VII. Case Study #3: Land Application of Biosolids

Jordan Combs presented a case study highlighting the unique challenges of smaller, rural wastewater authorities, including land application of biosolids, concluding with lessons learned and future opportunities.

Lead: L. Jordan Combs, Maury Service Authority (j.combs@msaplant.org)

Materials: [Presentation](#)

VIII. Plenary Discussion with LGAC members

Lead: Councilmember Josh Hastings, LGAC Chair

Materials: None

Discussion Notes:

- Several themes were identified from across the three case studies and morning discussion:
 - Funding: Finding the right balance among local, state, and federal funding sources.
 - Communication and storytelling: Addressing the “out of sight, out of mind” nature of water infrastructure and communicating its importance to the public.
 - Wastewater and water security: Exploring wastewater as a component of water security, including the validity of testing methods and the importance of building public trust in the testing process.
 - Climate: Considering the risks posed by a changing climate and its impacts on existing infrastructure and assets.
 - Workforce: Preparing for the “gray tsunami” and the impending wave of workforce retirements.
 - Emerging contaminants: Addressing emerging contaminants and their implications for water systems.
 - Cybersecurity: Strengthening cybersecurity considerations for water infrastructure and systems.
 - Organizational structure: Exploring regionalization and other approaches to organizational structure.
 - Rural vs. urban dynamics: Considering the differing needs and challenges of rural and urban communities.

IX. Adjourn

Friday September 25, 2026

X. Welcome

Councilmember Hastings welcomed LGAC members and reviewed the meeting objectives.

Lead: Councilmember Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: None

XI. Jurisdiction Meeting Report-Outs and Member Updates

Lead: LGAC Vice Chairs

Materials: None

Discussion Notes:

- **DC** - The DC delegation provided an update on the “Bottle Bill” which is currently awaiting markup before moving to the full Council. Members emphasized the importance of grassroots engagement and noted that early outreach to local Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners helped build support. They also highlighted the continued operation of DC’s Green Jobs program, despite federal funding cuts, which supports a range of environmental careers.
- **DE** - The Delaware delegation is in the process of selecting a new local government representative. Current work includes coordination on technical assistance and brownfields resources, while a planned wastewater dashboard project has been paused following a staff departure. The Engaged Communities Goal Team is also reviewing its management strategy, including the Local Government Leadership outcome.
- **MD** - The Maryland delegation discussed support for the Bay Restoration Fund, Conowingo-related funding and sediment/nutrient reduction concerns, and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund formula. Members participated on the Clean Water Goal Team, and shared that the group is focused on technical modeling decisions, land-use data, and draft management strategies, with an emphasis on collaboration with the Local Government Leadership Workgroup.
- **NY** - New York DEC highlighted new cybersecurity resources for wastewater treatment plants, including more than \$9 million in grants for 153 local government projects. An additional \$13.4 million was awarded to three municipalities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed for water-quality projects. DEC also reported that all 30 significant wastewater facilities in the state’s Chesapeake Bay watershed now meet their nitrogen and phosphorus targets.
- **PA** - The Pennsylvania delegation provided updates on an upcoming sustainability-focused peer-to-peer tour and stormwater panel hosted by the PA Municipal League. The members discussed potential impacts of the federal executive order on stormwater and Pennsylvania’s upcoming MS4 permit, as well as uncertainty surrounding municipalities’ ability to assess stormwater fees following a recent PA Supreme Court ruling. Members participated in the CBP Thriving Habitats, Fisheries, and Wildlife Goal Team, which is developing management strategies and identifying opportunities to engage local governments on fish passage, culverts and bridges, and stream restoration.
- **VA** - The Virginia delegation discussed Virginia DEQ’s watershed roundtables and continued availability of some funding sources despite broader funding disruptions. They also discussed coordinating with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary in the fall and aligning outreach with the upcoming legislative session. Wastewater treatment challenges and opportunities for local governments were identified as key areas of interest. Members also provided an update on the Healthy Landscapes Goal Team, which is developing management strategies across four outcomes, all of which identify opportunities to engage local governments and coordinate with the Local Government Leadership Workgroup.
- **WV** - The West Virginia LGAC seat remains vacant, but the WV jurisdiction representative provided a brief update, noting \$145 million in new state funding for water and wastewater infrastructure. The Eastern Panhandle is also utilizing Chesapeake Bay Trust programs, including watershed planning and BMP design grants, while local officials are exploring Chesapeake Gateway site designations to support education and outreach.

XII. Business Meeting

- Executive Committee Report (Chair and First Vice Chair)
- [LGAC Coordinator’s Report](#) (Coordinator)
- [Local Government Leadership Workgroup Report](#) (Chair)

Lead: Councilmember Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: Presentations linked above

Discussion Notes:

- LGAC Chair reported on recent updates including:

- PSC and Bay Program Updates: The new Policy Steering Committee (PSC) discussed ongoing partnership and Goal Team activities, implementation of the revised governance framework, and the development and timeline for the new strategic plan.
- Additional Program Topics: The discussion also covered the Chesapeake Bay Program Office budget, upcoming Executive Council meetings, the Conowingo WIP, and recent STAC activities.
- Executive Order: LGAC provided comments on the recent federal executive order, noting that some issues raised, such as stormwater fees, fall primarily under state and local government authority rather than the federal government.
- Transition to New Structure: The advisory committees are continuing to adjust to the revised Bay Program structure.
- The Coordinator's report covered important updates such as:
 - The LGAC will develop its recommendations, with staff drafting the letter for member feedback in October and the Executive Committee reviewing and approving the final version in early November, ahead of the December 8 Executive Council meeting.
 - Staff have updated Chair and Vice-Chair position descriptions to now reflect their liaison roles with the Bay Program's new Goal Teams.
 - Beginning October 1st, 2026, Jess Blackburn will also begin serving as LGAC coordinator and a new LGAC staffer is expected to start later in the fall.
 - LGAC is expected to receive an annual charge from the Executive Council identifying an area where the committee should provide advice.
- The Chair of the Local Leadership Workgroup updated the Committee on several topics:
 - The workgroup is supporting Bay Program strategic planning and developing management strategies, with recent discussions on land use and tree canopy resources.
 - Peer-to-Peer Tours: A Maryland tour was held in June, with the final tour of the year scheduled for October 7 in Pennsylvania.
 - Technical Assistance Study: The study identified 123 technical assistance providers across the watershed, with greater support available for early project stages than for maintenance, monitoring, and engineering. [Final report](#) and [one-page summary](#).
 - Key Gaps: Technical assistance is more limited for toxic contamination, fish passage, and public access; the study focused on available assistance rather than local government demand.
 - Recommendations: Priorities include sharing findings, connecting providers, addressing geographic and topic-specific gaps, assessing local government needs, and better aligning technical assistance with funding.

XIII. Chesapeake Bay Program Updates

Lead: Khesha Reed, Chesapeake Bay Program Deputy Director

Materials: Presentation

Discussion Notes:

- Deputy Director Khesha Reed updated on the LGAC on several key topics:
 - The CBP is developing draft management strategies, with opportunities for LGAC input in October, November, and following the January public comment period.
 - The CBP is accepting comments on the [Priority Setting framework](#) through October 9, with the completed framework scheduled for PSC discussion in November.
 - The December 8 Executive Council meeting will be held in Elizabethtown, PA, with a private session followed by a public meeting.
 - In response to the recent White House Executive Order 14428, EPA emphasized: stronger federal coordination, continued collaboration with watershed partners, and prioritizing cost-effective projects that deliver measurable water-quality improvements.
- LGAC members asked about upcoming federal coordination guidance. CBP clarified that it will focus on how federal agencies coordinate and is not intended to create additional requirements for local governments.
- LGAC members asked about the mention of stormwater fees in the White House Executive order. EPA shared that their lawyers are looking into that language and next steps.

- Members raised concerns about additional reporting burdens for local governments. CBP noted that grant guidance to states has been simplified, including streamlined reporting requirements.

XIV. Break

XV. Plenary Discussion with LGAC Members

Lead: Councilmember Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: None

Discussion Notes:

- The LGAC Coordinator reviewed the Committee's previous discussions and topics covered in 2026 to prepare for the breakout room discussions to begin formulating the annual recommendations.

XVI. Breakout Discussions on Annual Recommendations

Lead: Councilmember Hastings, Local Government Advisory Committee Chair

Materials: None

- Members entered breakout rooms to develop recommendations on one of three selected topics: (1) Governance and Structure, (2) Modeling and Monitoring, and (3) Wastewater.

XVII. Wrap-Up

LGAC members shared their report-outs from the breakout room discussions, reviewed any new business, future agenda items, and action items from this meeting.

Lead: Councilmember Josh Hastings, LGAC Chair

Materials: None

Discussion Notes:

- Governance and Structure group:
 - Members supported having an LGAC voice on the Governance and Operations Team (GO Team), with details to be determined.
 - Members emphasized maintaining the advisory committees' role in the new CBP structure and continuing finding additional opportunities for input.
 - Members supported following up on the Technical Assistance Inventory and Gap Analysis and its recommendations.
 - Members stressed the importance of maintaining capacity and resources for external engagement with local governments as the new structure is implemented.
- Modeling and Monitoring group:
 - The group discussed challenges and opportunities for involving local governments in monitoring and modeling efforts, including receiving and contributing information.
 - Members emphasized clearer communication about how models are developed and used, including translating technical changes into accessible information for local governments and broader audiences.
 - Members identified the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative and local water-quality monitoring programs as potential opportunities to strengthen connections with local governments and communities.
- Wastewater group:
 - The group discussed framing wastewater as an emerging crisis, highlighting aging infrastructure and workforce, AI-related operational and security risks, and limited independent research on emerging contaminants.
 - Members emphasized that reliable and affordable wastewater service is a shared local, state, and federal responsibility and is essential to protecting the Chesapeake Bay.
 - The group recommended bringing utilities, industry partners, scientists, regulators, and legislators together to develop a coordinated wastewater strategy for the Bay.

- Members emphasized the need to communicate these challenges in an accessible and attention-grabbing way to build awareness and support.

Actions:

- Staff will share all of the links/resources shared by presenters and in the chat
- Staff will share updates on possible changes to SRF funding formula
- Staff will follow-up with Matt Ries from DC Water re: Daniel's question: "Matt is the purple route construction what we see on Ohio Drive? there are some tank farms or tank farm looking structures that went up."
- Staff will work with LGAC leadership to draft annual recommendation letter
 - Draft will be shared with full membership in Oct for their feedback
 - Final will be review/approved by LGAC Executive Committee in early November

XVIII. Adjourn

- Next LGAC meeting will be held virtually on Friday, December 4th, 2026

Attendees:

LGAC Members: Amy Dubois, Andria McClellan, Brianne Nadeau, Bruce Williams, Cindy Dyballa, Daniel Chao, Don Phillips, Elizabeth Grant, Frederick Faylona, Jasmine Gore, Josh Hastings, Leo Lutz, Penny Gross, Richard Baugh, Sheila Noll

LGAC Staff: Laura Cattell Noll, Jess Blackburn and Alex LoCurto.

LGLW Staff: Rick Mittler.

Speakers/Guests: Patrick Madigam, Tammy Piper, Kathy Strecker, Cass Klingaman, Maura Christian, Olivia Shores, Jeff Lerner, Cassandra Davis, Kate Fritz, Meg Cole, Khesha Reed, Emily Heller, Julie Whitlock, Jordan Combs, Norah Carlos, Anna Killius, Samantha Cotten, Les Knapp, Michelle Edwards, Keith Bollt, Carrie Decker, Alex Gunnerson, Matt Ries, Caitlin Bolton, Adam Patterson, Jonathan Goad, Lisa Williams, Kelly Hitz, Tou Matthews

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay is honored to support the appointed volunteers of the Local Government Advisory Committee. We are committed to serving as an unbiased convener so the members can achieve their mission through learning and discussion. Views expressed by the members and their guest speakers are not those of the Alliance.