



**Citizens Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 19-20, 2021  
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)**

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**CAC Members Present:** Xavier Brown, John Dawes, Andrew Der, Matt Ehrhart, Brenna Goggin, Donna Harris-Aikens, Verna Harrison, Charles Herrick, Ann Jurczyk, Esi Langston, Julie Lawson (Chair), Anna Killius, David Lillard, Mike Lovegreen, Bill Matuszeski, Daphne Pee, BeKura Shabazz, Charlie Stek, Dana Wiggins, and CAC Staff Jessica Blackburn and Adam Bray

**Speakers/Guests Present:** Karl Blakenship, Tom Damm, Ola-Imani Davis, Diana Esher, Rachel Felver, Kate Fritz, Jasmine Gore, Amy Handen, Paula Jasinski, Bill Jenkins, Ann Jennings, Caitlyn Johnstone, Adrienne Kotula, Dan Nees, Laura Cattell Noll, Abel Olivo, Michele Price-Fay, Kristen Saunders, Martha Shimkin, Britt Slattery, Jennifer Starr, Kathy Stecker.

**Meeting presentations and materials are located at:**

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/citizens\\_advisory\\_committee\\_quarterly\\_meeting\\_may\\_2021](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/citizens_advisory_committee_quarterly_meeting_may_2021)

**Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

The CAC Chair, Julie Lawson, called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. She gave an overview of the agenda and highlighted the meeting's goal: (1) To explore how the CAC can be most effective in advising the Chesapeake Bay Program on outreach and engagement, and (2) to inform CAC members about policy issues where CAC may want to advise the Principals' Staff Committee and Executive Council.

**CAC Business Meeting**

CAC voted to approve the draft February 2021 meeting minutes as corrected.

Julie updated the group on the Bay Program's draft Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Action Plan. Since the last meeting, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Diversity Workgroup has initiated a contract with the Chesapeake Conservancy to hold focus groups to better understand how organizations led by, and primarily serving, underrepresented communities view the CBP and if and how they envision participating in successful, long-term partnerships. The Principal's Staff Committee (PSC) has also requested that the DEIJ Action Team come up with alternatives to the stand alone Community Advisory Board concept and to revisit the governing documents and bylaws of the advisory committees to see how they can broaden their missions to better support the Program's DEIJ principles. Julie also updated CAC

on the recent [CBP 2021 Biennial Strategy Review System](#) meeting hosted by the Management Board.

### **Briefing and Background for the Afternoon's Session on Outreach and Engagement**

*Daphne Pee, CAC Member*

*Kristin Saunders, Cross Program Coordinator, CBP*

CAC Member, Daphne Pee, presented on the differences between communication, outreach, engagement and stewardship in order to create a shared understanding of the terminology and definitions. Kristin Saunders provided a brief overview of how the Bay Program partnership is organized and the unique roles of each part.

### **Stewardship and Social Science at CBP**

*Britt Slattery, Coordinator, Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship, National Park Service*

*Amy Handen, Local Implementation Programs Coordinator, CBP EPA*

Britt gave an overview of the Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5), the five stewardship workgroups and their associated outcomes. The goals of GIT 5 include Stewardship (including Diversity), Environmental Literacy, Land Conservation, and Public Access. She described the GIT 5 vision to create an advisory body for the five workgroups and the GIT itself. Britt suggested this may be an opportunity for CAC to get involved.

Amy Handen briefed CAC on the Stewardship Index and how social science is being used in the partnership. She described the Stewardship Framework and illustrated how individuals can progress to more engaged stewards as they increase their awareness and committed behaviors. She explained the behaviors the CBP tracks to measure stewardship, the survey methodology used to gather the data, and how the data instructs the behavior campaigns to engage in. The data will soon be accessible on a new website called Chesapeake Behavior Change.

### **Chesapeake Bay Program Local Engagement Strategy**

*Laura Cattell Noll, Coordinator, CBP Local Leadership Workgroup*

*Jennifer Starr, Coordinator, Local Government Advisory Committee*

Laura briefed CAC on the CBP's Local Engagement Strategy. The strategy specifically provides a roadmap for local government leaders but can also be applied to all local audiences. It recognizes that subject matter experts are rarely the best messengers for delivering information and seeks to work collaboratively with trusted sources to reach diverse audiences. Jennifer outlined the concepts and approaches of the strategy, and described how the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and the Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) work together to facilitate peer-to-peer discussion and experiential learning for local elected officials.

## **A Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay**

*Paula Jasinski, President and Founder, GreenFin Studio*

Paula presented the [Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay](#), a series of seven educational modules designed to inform and empower decisions at the local level. The four themes of the modules are economic development, public health & safety, infrastructure maintenance & finance, and education. Each module includes sections that outline the learning objectives, actionable items to engage communities, and links to additional resources. Themes related to DEIJ and climate change are weaved throughout.

Discussion: CAC members asked how local officials are responding to disinformation in their communities. Paula said that putting information into everyday terms and concerns helps with disinformation. Members also wanted to know what encouraged people to participate in the survey? Paula shared that most survey respondents were already connected to workgroups and saw the project as helpful and wanted to support it.

## **Chesapeake Bay Program Communications Office**

*Rachel Felver, Communications Director, Chesapeake Bay Program*

*Caitlyn Johnstone, Outreach and Communications Specialist, Chesapeake Bay Program*

Rachel and Caitlyn briefed CAC on the CBP's Communications Office and shared examples and lessons learned from two successful outreach efforts - a project to educate the public on safe fish consumption and a free series of virtual webinars created to connect with audiences during the pandemic. Rachel shared how the Communications Office can assist CAC members with media relations, expertise and promotions. CAC can also help the Communications Office by providing feedback, message testing and networking to recommend people who should be highlighted for their work.

Discussion: CAC members discussed the various ways the Communications Office provides support to the other advisory committees, primarily by reviewing resources they create. Members further discussed details of the fish consumption advisory, how it was funded, the trusted messengers, and how the project strategically placed signs to reach women of child-bearing age.

## **CAC Members' 'Lightning Round' Case Studies**

Julie, Mike and Ann shared 'lightning round' case studies of outreach and engagement campaigns. Julie shared a story of diversifying and broadening the Trash Free Maryland coalition through a "bag free Lent" campaign that partnered with religious organizations. She also shared the details of using community-based social marketing during a campaign to change public behavior for picking up pet waste. Mike spoke about his work with conservation districts acting as trusted sources that could successfully interface between the community and government agencies on environmental issues. Ann described lessons learned from a tree planting project in

Hopewell and demonstrated how she has incorporated trusted messengers into subsequent projects to improve community engagement. Members discussed success rates of community engagement campaigns and the importance of involving community members for ongoing maintenance after projects are completed.

### **Small Group Discussion and Highlights**

CAC members broke into small groups to discuss the day's presentations and then reconvened to share highlights of their conversations. An overarching theme from the case studies was the importance of understanding audiences and tailoring communications accordingly. Members also raised the importance of building authentic relationships and how doing so often takes considerable time that can outlast traditional grant cycles. CAC discussed how the case studies they heard could scale up and/or "scale out" to broaden and be replicated while adapting to fit each unique community, and the importance of finding the right partners and trusted messengers for successful engagement. Members spoke about the need to ensure project sustainability by creating job training and employment opportunities for people in the community, as well as the need to incorporate restorative justice processes into DEIJ work to ensure there are ways to address racial harms in the environmental field. Lastly, members considered various ways for how CAC can be most effective in advising the partnership on stewardship and engagement issues including testing messages.

### **Thursday, May 20, 2021**

#### **Member Reflections & Updates**

CAC reconvened at 1:00pm and briefly reflected on the previous day's presentations and discussions. Members discussed how best the committee can best be utilized for communication and outreach. One idea is CAC serving as a sounding board for partnership groups as they develop their messaging. Jess updated members about two recent letters. The [Billion for the Bay letter](#) which was sent to Congressional leaders by the watershed governors, the DC Mayor and the CBC Chair. This letter requests 1 billion in funding to meet the 2025 Bay cleanup deadline while creating jobs in clean water for economic recovery. The Chesapeake Resilient Farm Initiative letter was sent to USDA from the CBC calling for a dedicated program for financial and technical assistance. Julie shared that the Plastic Pollutions Action Team released their final science strategy and the NOAA Marine Debris Program published their action plan for the Mid-Atlantic. John updated members on Mine Reclamation legislation in Congress and members discussed potential allocations of the American Rescue Plan funding to Bay jurisdictions.

#### **Conversation with EPA**

*Diana Esher, Acting Region 3 Administrator, EPA*

Diana discussed EPA's continued role in supporting Bay restoration. She said the EPA remains committed to meet the 2025 water quality goals but recognizes the need to pick up the

pace on practices like forest buffers and wetlands that benefit both water quality and habitat. She updated CAC on the EPA's response to the draft Conowingo WIP and the issues the EPA raised around financing, timing and distinguishing Conowingo BMPs from Phase III WIP actions. She expressed EPA's interest in building on the momentum from Climate Change and Environmental Justice issues. The open CBP Director position will be advertised late summer and a new Regional Administrator is expected to start sometime between September 2021 and January 2022. Diana said she has not heard any updates regarding a potential Bay Czar. Regarding EPA's support for the Bay TMDL, Diana said that the EPA will continue to provide financial and technical resources to help partners reach goals. They are working with USDA to support agricultural policies, implementation and technical assistance and working to make it easier for agricultural partners to leverage Farm Bill funding.

Discussion: CAC discussed the upcoming revised PA WIP and the challenges of financing the work that needs to be done. Members asked if the EPA has considered setting up a program that could allow industries to trade nutrient discharges needed to meet climate goals in exchange for funding projects with plain sect communities who do not want to accept funding from the federal government. Members discussed the pros and cons of having a separate Community Advisory Board focus on DEIJ issues at the Bay Program versus ensuring DEIJ is integrated into all parts of the program.

### **Conversation with Virginia**

*Ann Jennings, Virginia Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources*

Ann provided an overview of the draft Executive Council (EC) directive on climate change. The PSC has requested that the EC communicate a position that confirms and reinforces the science showing that climate change is causing detrimental impacts on the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed, and to update the EC position with a new Executive Council Directive. The [Draft EC Directive](#) commits to addressing the threats of climate change, prioritizing communities, working lands and habitats most vulnerable to increasing risks. It applies the best scientific, modeling, monitoring and planning capabilities, and connects the Chesapeake Bay restoration outcomes with emerging opportunities in climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience. The PSC meets on June 2nd to approve the draft and the EC members will have to sign it by September 1st.

Discussion: CAC members discussed what will happen if not all the members of the EC sign the directive. Ann emphasized that the intention is to have everyone sign it. Members discussed specific planning and prioritizing BMPs related to climate reduction in States' 2022-2023 milestones. CAC discussed urban canopy and using fruit/nut trees as a way to also provide communities access to food and concerns about ensuring biodiversity in forestry projects. Members brought up conservation financing strategies and wanted to learn more about how

timber investment management organizations are harvesting and selling at a profit while maintaining environmental protections. CAC discussed the upcoming EC meeting on October 1, 2021. Advisory Committee Chairs will have their traditional role of reporting their recommendations at a second meeting later in the year.

### **Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan Financing Strategy**

*Dan Nees, Center for Global Sustainability, University of MD*

Dan provided a brief background on the Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (CWIP) and described key elements of financing strategy. He outlined the project summary and its objective to develop a WIP financing authority. Dan believes the CWIP presents an opportunity for real innovation in linking water quality restoration to other infrastructure priorities that relate to climate change. The procurement process will be a pay-for-performance system in order to fund plans that are identified as providing the most efficient and effective results.

Discussion: CAC discussed the procurement process and the flexibility to fund projects based on whether they are working. Members discussed the implications of the financing strategy not being connected to the 2025 reduction goals and how the competition with the state WIPs. Dan shared that Phase 1 of the strategy will be public in July and that all of the comments from the EPA review will be addressed.

### **Member Discussion and Action Items:**

Members discussed the desire to learn more about dredging at a future meeting and to write a letter to express concerns about the CWIP. The letter will be addressed to the Chair of the PSC with the full PSC copied, and will include concerns about tax payers having to pay the costs and the CWIP being disconnected from the 2025 goals, the need to have EPA's comments addressed, and the missed opportunity of not focusing on co-benefits related to equity. John, Verna, Charlie, Chuck, Anna, Andrew and Ann volunteered to help draft the letter. Jess reminded members to fill out the CAC Subcommittee Form and to be on the lookout for an email in the coming weeks related to answering the questions Diana Esher had for CAC.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.