

CAC Members Present: John Dawes, Andrew Der, Matt Ehrhart, Bill Fink, Brenna Goggin, Verna Harrison, Charles Herrick, Ann Jurczyk (Vice-Chair), Anna Killius, Julie Lawson (Chair), David Lillard, Mike Lovegreen, Bill Matuszeski, Abel Olivo, Daphne Pee, BeKura Shabazz, Charlie Stek, and CAC Staff Jessica Blackburn and Alexa Maione

Speakers/Guests Present: Dr. Kandis Boyd, Dr. Daniel Doctor, Rachel Felter, Amy Handen, Mark Frondorf, Kjetil Naess, Adrienne Kotula, Adam Ortiz, Dan Read, Matt Robinson, Maryanne Ruiz, Jake Solyst, Jennifer Starr, Kathy Stecker, Joe Toolan, Dr. Lisa Wainger, Bo Williams, Briana Yancy

Meeting presentations and materials are located at:

[Citizens Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting \(Dec 2022\) | Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

A recording of the meeting is located at <https://youtu.be/i1tzKJEb10E>

Minute marks for topics are referenced in the meeting minutes below.

Wednesday, December 7th, 2022

The CAC Chair, Julie Lawson, called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. CAC members and online guests introduced themselves. Julie gave an overview of the agenda and highlighted the meeting's goals: to prioritize topics for next year.

2021-2022 Bay Barometer (minute mark 00:04:58)

Jake Solyst, CBP Web Content Specialist

Rachel Felter, CBP Communications Director

Jake Solyst shared highlights from the Bay Barometer, an annual report on the state of the Bay Program and health of the Chesapeake Bay. The presentation focused on five outcomes that were updated in 2022. Submerged Aquatic Vegetation, Water Quality Standards Attainment & Monitoring, and Forest Buffers are currently "off-course" for 2025 achievement. Public Access Sites and Oysters are "on course" to be achieved by 2025. A standout partnership achievement was the project *Targeted Outreach for Green Infrastructure*. The project worked with four communities to create land development blueprints. Another standout partnership achievement from the year was the USGS study *Nitrogen in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed - A Century of Change*. This study quantified how various sources of nitrogen pollution have changed since 1950 and extrapolated the data to estimate pollution levels up to the year 2050.

Discussion: Verna Harrison questioned how the public will understand the document due to what appears to be contradictory data, for example, the Blue Crab Abundance outcome is currently listed as "on course" although the 2022 population is hardly above the sustainability threshold; and while overall pollution loads are decreasing into the bay, the overall water quality of the bay is "off course." Andrew Der asked why the wetlands outcome is "off-course" and if it has ever been on course. Rachel Felter offered that the outcome mostly focuses on restoring agricultural land back to wetlands and because most agricultural land is on private property, not much progress has been made. BeKura Shabazz questioned why most of the outcomes related to

people are labeled as “uncertain.” In response the presenters said that the metrics to measure local leadership, stewardship, etc., are often difficult to assess and Covid-19 has complicated self-reported information related to people and schools.

Member Spotlights

Two MD CAC members, Daphne Pee (PhD student at George Washington University on Human and Organizational Learning), and Charlie Stek (previous project director and policy adviser to the US Congress and founder of Environmental Stewardship Strategies), gave 10-minute presentations on their work and interests. The purpose of this session is to help the Committee better learn and understand their CAC colleagues’ expertise and perspectives.

CAC Business Meeting (minute mark 01:04:45)

CAC members approved the draft September 2022 meeting minutes.

Julie Lawson shared that she attended the Executive Council (EC) meeting in October at the EPA headquarters. At the meeting she termed the “crisis of credibility” in the Bay Program and advocated for stipends as wage replacement. The 2022 EC action charged the Principals Staff Committee (PSC) for getting to 2025 and Beyond. In 2023 the PSC will report how to best address and integrate new science and restoration strategies leading up to 2025 and in 2024 provide recommendations that continue to address new advances in science and restoration. The EC agreed to remove the word “citizen” from the Watershed Agreement, including the Stewardship Outcome. The CAC will discuss “citizen” in their name later in the meeting.

Julie updated CAC that the CBP DEIJ team awarded the coordinator position (contracted to Resolve Conservation) to fulfill the DEIJ implementation plan. The Stewardship outcome survey will circulate in the spring of 2023 and she asked for CAC volunteers to provide feedback. Since the September meeting, two blogs about the CAC panel on equitable access to grants have been published. Julie Lawson and Chuck Herrick have presented the findings to LGAC, DWG, and STAC. The Chesapeake Bay Trust, a major funder, has reached out to CAC to let members know that they are including the panel findings report in their action plan.

Discussion: Mike Lovegreen shared that capacity building for municipalities should first identify the needs of the community then build a project around those needs, rather than focusing on writing a grant. David Lillard added that outreach grants are to support a project that’s already been designed but they should also be for helping the community design their own projects. Ann Jurczyk commented that one-year planning grants should be extended to two years.

Member Announcements: Bill Matuszeski suggested that the CAC send a letter to newly appointed governors stating the CAC’s purpose, priorities, and inviting the leaderships’ involvement. BeKura Shabazz shared she’s been inducted into the EPA Environmental Justice Academy and has been elected as the president of the Alumni Academy.

Charting a Course to 2025 and Beyond (minute mark 01:47:06)

Adam Ortiz, EPA Region Three Administrator and Chair, CBP Principals’ Staff Committee

Adam Ortiz shared his expectations leading up to 2025: folks need to get to work, understand how much progress has been made, identify where weaknesses are, and be steadfast in using all available resources. He shared that the EPA has worked a lot with small farms in Pennsylvania and that the state is getting on track. The EPA is also using their full authority and powers under the Clean Water Act to enhance the enforcement of goals. He is optimistic for the Bay’s restoration due to increased technical assistance, media coverage, buy-in from farmers, financial resources, and funding matches.

The CAC Chair and Subcommittee Chairs offered insights for CBP consideration about getting to 2025 and beyond.

CAC Chair Remarks: in support of grant administration by NFWF as opposed to that funding going straight to the states. The CAC also would like for the partnership to have better defined roles for the advisory committees and that these committees should have more involvement in MB, PSC and EC meetings. Adam Ortiz agreed that NFWF provides a unique value. The environment and pollution is the result of interdisciplinary forces which means solutions must too be intersectional. He would like to find better ways for advisory committees to weigh-in and is open to them having more structured time in the CBP meetings.

Subcommittee Remarks:

Matt Ehrhart, CAC Water Quality Subcommittee Chair, spoke to the challenge of accountability and credibility. He wants to make sure that after 2025 the partnership doesn't enter into another planning mode and reset the TMDL without any ramifications for jurisdictions who haven't met their goals. He urges the EPA to use backstops. The subcommittee feels strongly that the Conowingo Dam license holder be more accountable towards the clean up and they recommend that the partnership consider reallocating the loads to the jurisdictions since there is minimal funding for the Conowingo WIP. Additionally, the subcommittee suggests a discussion about co-benefits applied to local watersheds on other water quality parameters than just nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment.

Ann Jurczyk, spoke on behalf of the Emerging Issues Subcommittee recommending the partnership provide guidance on forest and prime agricultural land decline in relation to large-scale solar development. They don't think it's sufficient to just report forest loss without providing guidance on how to mitigate that loss. She added that the energy sector has an overlay with the bay program goals.

Chuck Herrick, Stewardship and Engagement Subcommittee Chair, recommended the partnership provide stipends to selected volunteers, emphasizing that some members cannot effectively participate without compensation. The subcommittee also recommends expanded grant funding to explicitly support capacity building for frontline organizations. The partnership should consider developing an evaluation metric that measures community uplift in support of frontline community priorities.

In response, Adam Ortiz said that the EPA is doing the most they can with backstops and holding all sectors across the state accountable. EPA wants a Conowingo WIP that is implementable and accountable. They have been holding a high standard for WIPs by not approving the Conowingo WIP and revised the Pennsylvania WIP. Verna Harrison asked if there is enough staff to get the work done. Adam Ortiz responded that short staffing is an issue in all the states and at EPA but added that he's hopeful because the current presidential administration is making sure that more people are getting hired.

Social Science in the Chesapeake Bay Program (02:30:40)

Dr. Lisa Wainger, Research Professor, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)

Dan Read, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)

UMCES was contracted for a Chesapeake Bay Program Goal Implementation Team (GIT) funded project to assess the social science capacity of the partnership by interviewing individuals within the CBP. Findings suggested the bay program build social science literacy and capacity, enhance the practice of behavioral social science, use social science in adaptive management, and support strategic social science application.

Discussion: Matt Ehrhart questioned how to access social science expertise to make improvements in the program. Dan Read replied that it's worth investigating assumptions made about people and sectors. Often,

these assumptions are unnecessarily prohibiting opportunities. Dr. Lisa Wainger suggested that investing in human capital will decrease staff turnover and maintain the relationships that have been built with hard to reach communities.

Local Watershed Context (minute mark 03:07:00)

Mark Frondorf, Shenandoah Riverkeeper

Mark Frondorf gave an overview of the Shenandoah Valley's history of being home to Native Americans for 15,000 years and the limestone geographic features of the region. He shared current and past land usage of the valley and its demographic and economic makeup. In terms of water quality challenges, the region faces generational water quality impacts leftover from chemical industry pollution. These legacy effects are the cause of many fish advisory warnings. Harmful algal bloom advisories also are common in parts of the Shenandoah River, influenced by the heavy farming and livestock that are prevalent in the region. The Shenandoah Valley produces 160 million chickens, 16 million turkeys, and 500 thousand cattle.

Watershed successes and opportunities are the Front Royal Fish Hatchery, cattle herd legislation, the creation of Chlorophyll A Standards, and the Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program.

Tour of Luray Caverns

Dr. Daniel Doctor, Research Geologist, Florence Geoscience Center, U.S. Geological Survey led CAC members through Luray Caverns to discuss karst topography and the effect on water quality.



Photo Credit: Jessica Blackburn, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. CAC Members tour Luray Caverns led by Dr. Daniel Doctor of the USGS.

Thursday, December 8th, 2022

Meeting Reconvenes (minute mark 03:20:50)

Julie Lawson, CAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Reflections on the first day include: . Verna Harrison questioned how CAC can influence the readability of the Bay Barometer. A follow-up item is to invite someone from the Bay Program to explain why certain outcomes were the categorizations of “on-course,” “off-course,” and “uncertain.” Ann Jurczyk, Chuck Herrick, and Verna Harrison will identify specific parts of the Bay Barometer that require more clear communication. CAC members were interested in hearing more from Dr. Daniel Doctor on karst topography.

Matt Ehrhart, CAC Nominations Chair, led the 2023 chair and vice-chair elections. Julie Lawson will continue as the CAC Chair and Anna Killius will serve as the CAC Vice-Chair.

Subcommittee Break-out Sessions (minute mark 03:37:45)

Subcommittees met to determine a 2023 priority topic for a quarterly meeting, elect a 2023 subcommittee chair, and provide a brief report-out.

BeKura Shabazz will serve as the 2023 CAC Stewardship and Engagement Chair. The February meeting theme will continue to focus on grant accessibility. The panel will bring funders together to enhance the Stewardship Goals with discussion focused on capacity building, project design and grant review.

Matt Ehrhart will serve as the 2023 CAC Water Quality Subcommittee Chair. The theme of the September meeting is successes and challenges in the watershed agreement that can be instructional and replicable for other jurisdictions and sectors, and to discuss bay goals that have been especially challenging with an objective to recognize opportunities for acceleration. Prior to the panel, the subcommittee would like to host a webinar by jurisdiction/sector, that identifies each jurisdiction’s progress towards meeting 2025 goals, what their successes have been, and where they are challenged. At the February and May meeting, the subcommittee will invite a guest speaker to answer these three questions for their geography.

The Emerging Issues Subcommittee did not yet elect a chair. The subcommittee is considering a name change. The theme for the May meeting will be land use change with a focus on forest and wetland conversion and how land use is incorporated into the Bay Agreement and jurisdictional planning.

Break-out Sessions (minute mark 04:06:05)

The break-out session objectives: to revisit “citizen” in the CAC name and discuss revisions for bylaws Section 2: Criteria for Membership. Members agreed to the following changes in the bylaws:

*A) **Preferable to have** ~~Has~~ knowledge or experience in the development of water quality, habitat and living resource, land conservation, or natural resource management policy, **community engagement**, and some knowledge of the Chesapeake Bay **watershed**; ~~program~~;*

B) Is potentially affected by the management programs of the Executive Council;

*C) Is willing and able to **participate in** ~~attend~~ regular quarterly meetings;*

D) Is not otherwise officially represented in the Chesapeake Bay Program, for example: other Advisory Committees or the Chesapeake Bay Commission.”

CAC agreed that Committee membership means they represent themselves - not an organization or specific community - by bringing their lived experience and perspectives to the collective discussion. The CAC came to consensus to change their name to stay consistent with the direction of the Bay Program and as a

dedication to inclusivity. The recommended new name is “Stakeholder Advisory Committee” and is tentative pending approval of the Executive Council.

Action Items and Next Steps (minute mark 04:50:36)

- Letter of introduction to the newly elected governors of the Executive Council introducing the Committee, advocating that the governors fully staff their departments to reach 2025 goals, and attaching the most recent CAC report to the EC. The CAC Executive Committee, Ann Jurcyk, and Charlie Stek will review the letter.
- Send a memo of comments to the CBP Communications Staff and leadership on the readability of the Bay Barometer based on closer examination by Verna, Chuck and Ann. Have a follow up presentation at the February quarterly meeting to better understand the bay outcome categorizations of on or off track to reach the 2025 goals.
- Research and execute a hotspot device so hybrid meetings can endure low internet connectivity issues, particularly for remote areas.
- Send Adam Ortiz and CBP leadership the Chair and Subcommittee Chair talking points from Dec 7th discussion.
- Track the release and receive a briefing on the STAC report on large-scale solar development in the watershed.
- Hold a CAC Learning Session in January or February with Dr. Daniel Doctor to gain a greater understanding of the role karst geology has on the watershed.
- Schedule CAC Learning Sessions prior to each quarterly meeting to brief members on the theme and background of the subcommittee priority topic.

With no further business, Julie Lawson, CAC Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:00 PM.