

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

Speakers/Guests Present: Mark Bennett, Ola Davis, Rachel Felter, Kate Fritz, Dave Jasinski, Amy Handen, Bill Jenkins, James Martin, Jennifer Starr, Kathy Stecker, Ann Swanson.

Meeting presentations and materials are located at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/citizens_advisory_committee_quarterly_meeting_february_2021

Thursday, Feb 25, 2021

The CAC Chair, Julie Lawson, called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. She gave an overview of the agenda and highlighted the meeting's goal: to identify the CAC's preliminary priorities in order to inform future meeting themes and subcommittees. Members introduced themselves and welcomed CAC's 7 newest members: Xavier Brown (DC), Brenna Goggin (DE), Donna Harris-Aikens (VA), Esi Langston (VA), Daphne Pee (MD), BeKura Shabazz (VA), and Dana Wiggins (VA).

CAC Business Meeting

CAC voted to adopt the draft Dec 2020 meeting minutes as submitted.

Jess provided an update on the Subcommittee Action Team. The team is considering a hybrid model that would maintain topic-based subcommittees while also creating opportunities for jurisdictionally-based delegations to meet. The Team will circulate a short survey with hopes to finalize subcommittee structure prior to the May meeting. The next Learning Session will be in April and will demonstrate the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Justice and Equity Dashboard. Members who serve on Bay Program workgroups provided updates. Chuck shared that the education workgroup has a resource portal called baybackpack.com and encouraged feedback from members. BeKura shared that the Diversity workgroup is currently seeking a co-chair and is continuing to work on strategies to engage more organizations of color into the work of the Bay Program. She also shared that the Wetlands workgroup is working on classification and mapping efforts, and stream restoration protocols, and updated CAC on the workgroups and action teams created by the Habitat Goal Implementation Team. Anna shared info from the Waterkeeper's

Chesapeake PFAs (Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) Webinar. She explained that PFAs are not currently regulated at the federal level or listed as a harmful substance but leach into the soil and water and have been connected to major health impacts. States conduct ongoing sampling but there should be federal drinking water standards, fish consumption advisories if appropriate, and research into Wastewater Treatment Plants and biosolid applications. The CAC decided to learn more about PFAs at a future meeting or learning session. Julie updated CAC on the Plastic Pollution Action Team. They have received the completed phase 3 draft conceptual model and hope to have a final report by May with recommendations. The Stewardship Workgroup and Goal Team is currently testing a website for the public to access stewardship data. Julie also shared that the DEI Action Team is presenting to the PSC on March 2nd on the Community Advisory Board to get initial feedback and mentioned CAC will have more time to discuss on the following day and at 3:30 on Monday, March 1.

State of the Chesapeake Bay

Ann Swanson, Executive Director, Chesapeake Bay Commission

Ann gave an overview of the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC), progress the partnership has made towards meeting the pollution reductions in the TMDL, the Commission's Congressional outreach efforts and how climate change contributes to additional pollution loads. She explained that 84M pounds have been reduced since 1985 and 54M pounds remain to reach 2025 goals. Almost the entire remaining load comes from agricultural sources and will require an 11-fold increase in implementation. 60% of future nitrogen reductions will come from only 8 Best Management Practices (BMPs).

To meet the 2025 Bay TMDL water quality goal, an additional 11 million pounds of nitrogen reductions will be needed because of increased rainfall due to climate change and the sediment no longer trapped by Conowingo Dam.

The Commission's Congressional request is for full funding for Bay Program appropriations, funding for long-term agricultural practices and technical assistance for both agriculture and green infrastructure. They also support additional investments by the Department of Defense to help implement and maintain BMPs on military installations in the watershed. Because of a renewed focus on infrastructure and climate policy at the federal level, Ann said that CAC has an opportunity to make an impact advocating for funding and practices that will help meet reduction goals and are also good for climate change. Ann also provided legislative updates from MD, VA and PA.

Discussion: CAC discussed the prognosis for being able to meet the 2025 goals and the need to significantly accelerate the pace to be successful. Members discussed the need to determine which BMPs are climate resilient and whether their efficacy is over-valued in the Bay Model. Members commented on engaging the private sector to incentivize implementation work with plan sect communities (Amish) and inquired about the status of Maryland legislation around the Conowingo Dam.

2019-2020 Bay Barometer

Rachel Felver, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program Communications Office

Rachel shared highlights of the latest Bay Barometer, the Chesapeake Bay Program's annual report on watershed health. The target audience is legislators and the more informed public like academics and NGOs, but they also create jurisdiction-specific fact sheets and highlight cards for the general public. The website ChesapeakeProgress.com shows the status of indicators in real time. She walked through each indicator featured in the Barometer to highlight progress and shortfalls.

Discussion: CAC discussed the impact of climate trends and increased rainfall on various indicators. Members expressed confusion related to how the percent reduction of pollution loads is communicated. Members brought up the need for outreach efforts to educate the public and discussed the funding challenges for large outreach campaigns and complexities to enacting and measuring effective behavior change targeted to specific areas and groups.

Chesapeake Bay Program Updates

Bill Jenkins, Acting Deputy Director, EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Bill provided an overview of the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) workplan, upcoming PSC meetings, plans for the Executive Council meetings and relevant executive orders and priorities of the Biden Administration. The PSC's work plan includes a focus on climate change, DEIJ, and the Conowingo WIP and its finance strategy. For their March meeting, the agenda will include conversations about the DEIJ Implementation Plan and Community Action Board, the Bay Program budget, Biden's Executive Order on climate change, an update on the Conowingo WIP public outreach, and an overview of the Conowingo WIP financing.

In the later Spring meeting, the PSC agenda will include planning for the Summer Executive Council meeting, the Draft Final Conowingo WIP, final decision on DEIJ actions and approach to CAB, and an update on forest buffers and the federal budget.

Bill described the two upcoming Executive Council meetings. The first one in late September will be a field experience for the EC members near Norfolk, VA to highlight accomplishments. The December meeting will be more traditional and will focus on DEIJ actions, climate change and plastic pollution. Bill also highlighted the federal executive orders relevant to the Bay Program that focus on climate change, advancing racial equity and environmental justice, the proper use of science.

CAC Member Discussion

Members discussed Ann Swanson's presentation and ways to push for more action to reach the 2025 goals. They suggested hearing from jurisdictions about their updated financing plans for Phase III WIP implementation, any additional strategies to meet their goals, and what they plan to do post-2025 to prevent backsliding on progress. CAC also wanted to hear how states are incorporating the most cost-effective BMPs into their plans. Members expressed a desire to learn more about some of the topics and ideas raised during presentations including PFA's, engaging

the private sector with carbon trading, impacts of climate change on BMPs, forest buffers, and the social science approach to this work.

Friday, Dec 4, 2020

Member Reflections

CAC reconvened at 1:00pm and briefly reflected on the previous day's presentations and discussions. Members were most struck by the likelihood that 2025 reduction goals would not be met without an unprecedented amount of funding and work. Members discussed the challenges of pushing for accelerated action to reach the goal while communicating the reality that the end result will likely fall short.

Community Engagement on the CBP DEIJ Implementation Strategy

Julie Lawson, Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee

Julie briefed CAC on the history leading up to the DEIJ strategy and how it was developed. The DEIJ Action Team has three subgroups focusing on 1) the Strategy Implementation Plan, 2) Outreach and Communications, and 3) a new Community Advisory Board (CAB). The preferred structure for the CAB is a hybrid model that would be a freestanding board with cross-pollination with CAC. The CAB subgroup is exploring options related to compensation for CAB members, whether the board will be ongoing or sunset after a period of time, as well as how the board should be staffed and funded. They are hoping to receive feedback on these options and then refine recommendations for approval by the PSC's May meeting. Interested CAC members will meet Monday, March 1st for further conversation.

Discussion: CAC members expressed concerns with the current process. Members stressed the importance of listening to, including, and engaging with community members for local insight to advance DEIJ work and felt that this process seemed too "top down." Meeting communities where they are and learning about their needs, will help connect environmental issues to everyday economic, health, family and community concerns. Members stated the need for CBP leadership to have honest conversations about how input from the CAB will be received prior to it starting and to be clear how the Board's recommendations will be acted on.

Climate Change Impacts and Challenges

Dave Jasinski, Green Fin Studio

Dave briefly overviewed the history and causes of climate change, what the science is saying and how it is affecting the watershed. By looking at data going back to the early 1900's, Dave was able to show how the climate of the Chesapeake Bay watershed is changing and affecting plants, animals, human health and water quality. He also showed the disparities facing residents of the watershed and how lower-income communities are being affected the most.

Discussion: CAC members discussed how a changing climate is affecting plants native to the area and how plants and animals that are native to southern areas will become more commonplace in

the watershed. Members discussed the economic costs associated with climate change in the watershed and the actions we can take to become more resilient.

Climate Change Challenges to the Bay TMDL

Mark Bennett, Co-Chair, CBP Climate Resiliency Workgroup

James Martin, Co-Chair, CBP Water Quality GIT

Mark shared the CBP's Climate Resiliency Workgroup's previous work has focused on the Monitoring and Assessment Outcome. The group has developed climate indicators, incorporated climate into the model, and began assessing how BMP efficiencies are being affected by climate. Ongoing research will help determine which BMPs are most important and potentially most impacted by climate. During the next two years, the Workgroup will focus more on building adaptation into the Program.

They plan to build local outreach for green infrastructure in vulnerable areas, consult with finance experts on funding strategies and increase local engagement with a climate resiliency scorecard for communities to use when evaluating their programs. Mark described the Climate Change Action Team and how it is charged to help focus the Program's efforts and work on a new PSC directive.

Mark and James briefed members on climate change and the TMDL. Mark explained how the model has to account for multiple synergistic effects that impact the Bay in different ways - increased air temperature, sea-level rise, and flow increase overall oxygen levels while increased precipitation, water temperature and nutrients lower levels.

James briefed CAC on the 2020 updates to the TMDL's climate change load reduction estimate and how jurisdictions will be expected to account for additional loads. He shared that the 2022-2023 milestones update will include a narrative about 2035 climate effects. James also briefed CAC on Virginia's approach of explicitly accounting for climate change loads in their planning process and that they remain sufficient for the 2020 updated allocation. When selecting BMPs, VA targeted practices that would maximize cost effectiveness and co-benefits to climate resilience.

Discussion: CAC discussed the timeline for having climate efficiency information on existing BMPs and whether future BMPs are prioritized with public health co-benefits. Members discussed ways to increase public engagement and education around climate change and tax credit programs that could incentivize companies to implement climate-related BMPs with plain sect communities.

CAC Small Group Sessions, Action Items and Wrap-Up

Members had small group discussions on ideas for CAC priorities over the next few years. Small groups reported back and the results centered around two topics – community engagement and the 2025 goals.

Action Items:

Before the next meeting, staff will look for common themes in the small group notes and work with the Subcommittee Action Team to create 3 or 4 proposed subcommittees for members to join. Members will receive a survey for feedback and an opportunity to choose a committee. Staff will convene the new subcommittees to discuss priorities and strategies and hold elections for new subcommittee chairs.

Send a letter to the Executive Council to express concern that the 2025 goals will not be met without significant additional funding. The letter will advise states to update their 2-year milestones to make as much progress as possible including updating their finance plans and prioritizing the four Ag BMPs that deliver the most Nitrogen reduction. The letter will be forwarded to the new EPA Administrator (once confirmed) and include a copy of the CAC's previous letter to the then incoming Biden Administration.

Send a letter to the Chesapeake Bay Commission thanking them for their work to secure funding and support legislation and appropriations on the state and federal level.

If appropriate, Julie will say to the PSC at their March meeting that the CAC appreciates the VA leadership and the PSC workplan, and express concerns about the feasibility of the Conowingo WIP and financing strategy.

CAC will continue to follow the federal agency appointments and look for updates regarding the EPA lawsuit on the Bay TMDL.

CAC discussed ideas for future briefings on the following topics: climate change (including engagement and communication strategies for marginalized communities, PFAs (forever chemicals), funding the Chesapeake WILD grant program for habitat restoration, and social science and behavior change in the Bay Program.

