

**CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 2018 MEETING MINUTES**

The Chesapeake Bay Commission held its fourth quarterly meeting of 2018 on Thursday and Friday, November 8-9, 2018 at the National Harbor in Maryland.

Commission members in attendance:

Senator Richard Alloway
Secretary Mark Belton
Delegate Robert Bloxom
Delegate David Bulova
Representative Garth Everett
Delegate Barbara Frush
Delegate Tawanna Gaines
Representative Keith Gillespie
Senator Guy Guzzone
Senator Emmett Hanger
Tim Schaeffer representing Secretary Patrick McDonnell
Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton
Sarah Diebel representing RDML Charles W. Rock, USNA
Secretary Matt Strickler
VA Citizen Member, Dennis Treacy
Senator Frank Wagner
Delegate Tony Wilt
Senator Gene Yaw

Members not in attendance:

PA Citizen Member, Warren Elliott
MD Citizen Member, Bernie Fowler
Delegate Maggie McIntosh
Representative Michael Sturla

Staff:

MD - David Goshorn
PA - Veronica (Nicki) Kasi
VA - Ann Jennings

CBC Staff:

Ann Swanson
Jen Dieux
Mark Hoffman
Marel King
Adrienne Kotula

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2018

Call to Order

Chairman Wagner called the meeting to order at 12:38 pm.

Executive Director Swanson called the roll and a quorum was established. By unanimous consent the Commission approved the minutes from the September meeting and the agenda for the November meeting without change.

Chairman Wagner recognized Delegate Frush, who decided not to seek reelection and hence will be rotating off the Commission. He noted her years of dedication to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. She noted what an honor it was to serve on the Commission, and how proud she was of the Commission's work, its accomplishments and its members.

By unanimous consent the Commission approved the proposed change to the Commission's By-Laws, to create a Member Emeritus category (attached).

Sustaining Federal Support

Jason Gleason & Hunter Moorhead, Crossroads Strategies

Chairman Wagner introduced this session by noting the great work the Commission's staff has done over the years on federal legislation and priorities. He added that given the importance of federal action related to the Bay Watershed, the Commission has hired a lobbying firm (Crossroads Strategies) to help advance our goals. Executive Director Swanson also noted the prior work of the Commission on federal issues and how it has become increasingly challenging to influence federal action due to the more complex landscape.

Mr. Gleason thanked the Commission and introduced Mr. Moorhead. Both he and Mr. Moorhead provided background on their experience and expertise working on Capitol Hill. He reviewed the areas on which Crossroads has focused for the Commission – the Farm Bill, stormwater infrastructure and the federal budget. Updates were given on the status of each issue. Messrs. Gleason and Moorhead then spent some time reviewing the political landscape from a national perspective, given the elections that had happened two days before.

CBC FY20 Federal Appropriation Request

Mark Hoffman, CBC Maryland Director and Crossroads Strategies

Mr. Hoffman went through a PowerPoint presentation reviewing plans for the Commission's FY 2020 Federal Agency Budget Request. He highlighted significant changes in the planned approach from last year: 1) an accelerated timeline to provide input to the Administration; 2) a greater focus on a small subset of "priority" items; 3) requests for more than baseline amounts, if fully justified; and 4) leveraging Crossroads' expertise to increase the Commission's impact.

The goal for this discussion was to review the proposed approach and priority items and seek the Commission's approval for the same. Mr. Hoffman reviewed the list of key Bay-related federal programs in the presentation, with the items in red being proposed for special emphasis. Brief background information was presented on each item, and it was the consensus of the Commission to pursue the approach and priorities as proposed.

Especially regarding Conservation Technical Assistance, Senator Guzzone suggested that staff investigate whether our region is effectively competing for available funds. Tim Schaeffer also suggested that organizations such as the National Association of Conservation Districts could be helpful allies.

Monitoring and Models – *The Latest Tools Used to Define Clean Water*

Scott Phillips, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, USGS

Gary Shenk, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model Team Leader, USGS

Emily Trentacoste, Chesapeake Bay Program, EPA

Mr. Phillips started this session with a presentation on water quality monitoring and how it informs the Chesapeake Bay watershed model. He noted the importance of monitoring to assess progress, explain change, and inform the Watershed Restoration Plans and two-year milestones. Outside of the main stem of the Bay, there are 125 permanent stations, and within the Bay there are another 161 sites.

Mr. Shenk reviewed the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model, particularly the changes incorporated into the Phase 6 version. The overall goals were to have: 1) an understandable model; 2) an inclusive process; 3) better and more local input data; and 4) more monitoring data. He reviewed the organizational structure of the modeling team, and the levels of scientific review applied to ensure a quality product. He then described the simplified structure of the Phase 6 model, examples of how data is gathered from multiple sources and the collaborative stakeholder process used to develop the model. The result is a model that is substantially improved from the prior version in simulating observed nutrient and sediments loads. In summary, he noted how extensive partnership involvement lead to collaborative thinking, which resulted in a more robust model of the watershed.

Dr. Trentacoste focused on the integration of monitoring and modeling to tell local stories. She gave examples using monitoring and modeling results from Pennsylvania to contrast differences between locations and hence identify opportunities for additional agricultural conservation practices.

Rivers in Focus – *The Potomac*

Hedrick Belin, President, Potomac Conservancy

Phillip Musegaas, Legal Counsel, Potomac Riverkeepers Network

Martin Gary, Executive Secretary, Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC)

Mr. Belin started the session reviewing the goals and mission of the Potomac Conservancy, a 23,000-member non-profit that focuses on land conservation, citizen advocacy and movement building on Potomac River issues. The Conservancy issues an annual report card on the health of the Potomac, and the grade has most recently improved from a D- to a B. Significant challenges remain for the river, particularly with forest buffers and forest loss generally.

Mr. Musegaas presented on behalf of the Potomac Riverkeeper Network, an organization dedicated to protecting the public's right to clean water in our rivers and streams. He noted progress in areas such as addressing Alexandria's combined sewage-overflows, the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, and livestock stream exclusion in the Shenandoah Valley. He also noted the challenges of funding in each state, Shenandoah algae blooms, micro-pollutants, and sea level rise, among others. He suggested the Commission could assist by prioritizing increased funding for cost-share and technical assistance programs for Virginia farmers, support equitable solutions for poultry litter in the Shenandoah Valley, support increased funding for State agencies for monitoring, inspections and enforcement, and support for research on Bay and River-specific problems.

Mr. Gary reviewed the history and legal origins of the PRFC. The PRFC regulates all recreational and commercial fishing, crabbing, oyster harvesting and clamming in the main stem of the tidal Potomac River, and issues licenses for those activities and monitors harvest. He noted the PRFC functions as a "laboratory" of fisheries management for innovation due to its small size and flexibility. He noted that a PRFC priority is maintaining or increasing their funding levels in both Maryland and Virginia. Current funding is well below the levels need to run the PRFC and is lower than historical levels. He also noted that oyster aquaculture is not currently licensed in the tidal Potomac, but there is interest in expanding it to the area regulated by the PRFC.

Delegate Bulova asked Mr. Musegaas about the role of litigation in helping to further the goals of the Riverkeepers Network. Mr. Musegaas noted it is something they constantly must rethink, in terms of the time, costs and potential positive outcomes of each situation. There needs to be a clear legal path. Also, a consideration is if a case would have impact beyond the specific item being litigated.

Senator Alloway suggested that the PRFC consider a Potomac stamp for Maryland and Virginia licenses. Currently, there is full reciprocity for Maryland and Virginia license-holders to fish in the Potomac, limiting the revenue opportunity for Potomac license sales. A stamp requirement for the state licenses would increase potential revenue, similar to Pennsylvania's stamp requirement for Lake Erie.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2018

Call to Order

Senator Frank Wagner called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. He asked Executive Director Swanson to call the roll.

Chairman's Lightning Round Updates

- **PA Crab Feast**

Senator Alloway reported that the Pennsylvania Delegation had again hosted a successful crab feast for members of the Pennsylvania legislature. It provided a good opportunity for rural legislators to see the linkage between local water quality and the Chesapeake Bay and to highlight local water quality issues statewide.

- **End of Session Updates**

Each State briefly reviewed issues they have been working on legislatively. Pennsylvania noted the fertilizer and clean water procurement bill, Maryland highlighted forest conservation, and Virginia focused on funding for the local stormwater assistance fund. Secretary Strickler noted the goal to marry coastal resiliency and water quality goals.

- **Conowingo RFP & WIP**

Executive Director Swanson reviewed progress on the Conowingo RFP and WIP, as detailed in a one-page handout provided to the Commission members. There has been considerable activity on this front. In particular, the Commission staff worked to develop a funding plan to implement the Conowingo RFP (and hence development of the WIP) with minimal impacts to the grant funding received by our member states. Although this proposal had the support of several states, it did not reach critical mass with the Principals' Staff Committee, and EPA. We will continue to follow this issue closely and are fully engaged on the various workgroups and action teams. It was the consensus of the Commission to include Exelon in the January meeting.

Environmental Literacy

Shannon Sprague, Manager, Environmental Literacy & Partnerships, NOAA, Chesapeake Bay Office & Co-Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup

Tom Ackerman, CBF, Vice President for Education & Co-Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup

Ian Buter, Content Specialist for Science, Charles County Public Schools

Mr. Ackerman started this session with a review of the importance of environmental literacy. It helps to protect natural resources, engage students in rich learning experiences and prepares students for the new economy and citizenship. He explained the term "MWEE," a "Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience" and reviewed the Environmental Literacy Goal contained in the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

Ms. Sprague got into the details of how successful environmental literacy programs are built at a local level. It takes planning, commitment, and dedicated staff within each Department of

Education, and at the local school district level. She noted the Bay-region is considered a national leader in environmental education and that a full 80% of schools in the watershed believe the environmental literacy goal is achievable. Funding is important also, and through the NOAA B-WET program \$2.7 million is provided annually in the Chesapeake Bay region to support these efforts.

Mr. Ackerman then reviewed a series of recommendations to help further these efforts: 1) continued funding for NOAA's B-WET program, state funding sources, etc.; 2) promote participation in the Leadership Summit; and 3) support State Working Groups. More detail recommendations were given for each Commission state. The Commissioners asked several questions related to these programs.

To finish the session, Mr. Buter presented the view from a local school district, Charles County Maryland. He presented background information on the system, and their efforts related to environmental literacy. The County has partnered with the Alice Ferguson Foundation to help develop and implement the MWEES that empower middle and high school students in terms of stewardship and greater scientific understanding. He reviewed the approach and success of their program, and current challenges. For example, they are very dependent on B-WET funding at present (95%) and teacher turnover is very high, increasing the need for training and professional development. Questions were asked about the security of the B-WET funding in the federal budget and the support for it on Capitol Hill, as well as what the ongoing costs were for operating a program.

Fostering Scientific Collaboration

Dr. Donald Boesch, Professor, University of Maryland, President Emeritus, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)

Dr. Boesch started with a review of scientific research focused on the Chesapeake Bay. UMCES started a journal "Chesapeake Science" singularly devoted to the watershed, which was ultimately transferred to the journal Estuaries and Coasts. Bay scientists also publish in many national journals. In the past, most research funding came from the state, but today it is down to 40%. Therefore, local academics are competing for grant dollars with priorities that are more varied and global.

He spoke about the different types of scientific activities, and how "assessment" is the term for bringing monitoring, research and modeling together to help develop policy options. He reviewed the role of science in the Chesapeake Bay Program, including the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, the Chesapeake Research Consortium and the Scientific and Technical Assessment and Reporting group. He also noted the synthesis assessments published in 2018 that document the progress of the restoration effort. He noted how research was driven by the interest and funding of academics, and there is not "strategic research".

Dr. Boesch is also a consultant on long-term efforts to restore the Baltic Sea. Despite the many differences between the Baltic and the Chesapeake, it provides some lessons that might help improve our efforts such as including the involvement of interdisciplinary stakeholders. For the

last ten years there has been a strategic research program, to help drive restoration efforts, called “BONUS.” He noted such an effort could be beneficial for Bay restoration efforts.

New Business and Meeting Feedback

Chairman Wanger asked if there was any new business, and none was brought forward.

He reminded everyone that the Commission’s next Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for January 3-4, 2019 in Annapolis, MD.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn and unanimously agreed to at 12:25 p.m.