



New York - New Jersey
Harbor Estuary Program

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

of the New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program

To: HEP CAC members
From: Nina Haiman, NYC SWCD
Date: June 16, 2003
Subject: May 12, 2003 HEP CAC meeting minutes

Present at meeting: Steve Barnes (Poricity Park Citizens Committee), Nina Haiman (NYCSWCD), Laura Bartovics (NYSG), Debbie Mans (NY-NJ Baykeeper), Mary Leou (NYU), Morton Orentlicher, Steve Lang (CUNY), Carter Craft (MWA), Neal Kronley (MWA), David Burg (Wild Metro), Dan Mundy (JBEW), Bill Sheehan (Hackensack Riverkeeper), Bob Alpern (NYCDEP), E. J. McAdams (NYC Audubon), Clay Sherman (NJDEP), Bill Marinaccio (FNFA), Bernard Blum (Friends of Rockaway, Inc.), Manuel Russ (NYCDEP CAC), Bill Fink (BPCPC)

Announcements:

Steve Barnes announced that he is now working at Poricity Park in Monmouth, NJ and gave his new address and phone number:

PO Box 36
Middletown, NJ 07748
(732) 842-3966

Bill Sheehan passed out a new Hackensack Riverkeeper publication on reducing non-point source pollution. The publication, titled "Hackensack Riverscaping", was funded by a 2002 HEP Mini-Grant.

National Estuaries Day

Laura Bartovics (HEP) reported that HEP had received 19 full proposals for National Estuaries Day Mini-Grants. Since all the proposals had been of a high quality, and the program is still new, the grant review committee had decided to fund every applicant at \$1,300 each. The maximum any group could have received was \$1,500.

Steve Barnes (Poricity Park) inquired as to the geographic spread of the applicants. L. Bartovics responded that it was heavier on the NY side, but she didn't have the exact numbers. She reported that for the general Mini-Grant applications the committee had awarded 6 NY grants and 5 NJ grants. L. Bartovics said that she would like to see coordination between organizations planning Estuaries Day events.

B. Sheehan said that Hackensack Riverkeeper will partner with the Chamber of Commerce for their HEP-funded Estuaries Day event: Hackensack River Day.

David Burg (Wild Metro) expressed concern that every applicant received money, said that perhaps it would have been better to use the entire sum (\$25,000) for one or two large events, or a full-page

Citizens Advisory Committee Co-chairs

Steve Barnes, Poricity Park, PO Box 36, Middletown, NJ 07748 ✦ 732-842-3966

Eugenia Flatow, Coalition for the Bight, 121 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 501, NY, NY 10013 ✦ 212-431-9676

ad in the newspaper. Dan Mundy (Eco Watchers) said that he liked the way the grants had been awarded. Carter Craft (MWA) agreed, he said that having only one or two events leaves us susceptible to bad weather. C. Craft also said that since this is the first year, it makes sense to spread the wealth, and see which organizations are worth funding next year.

B. Sheehan suggested that since this is the first year of Estuaries Day Mini-Grants, there should be a CAC committee that attends and evaluates these events and can then report back to the CAC. S. Barnes asked if the CAC wants to review events on its own criteria or the criteria the HEP grant originally stated. Mary Leou (NYU Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education) said that groups should be allowed to send in reports on all that they did, rather than just being judged on their event. This would reward groups that had put together printed materials, for example. D. Mundy suggested that the committee send out a form with standardized questions, such as number of people who attended, so reviewers could judge events fairly.

???? suggested that the CAC be responsible for review process of both Estuaries Day and general Mini-Grants. D. Burg said he didn't think this would be possible. L. Bartovics responded that the CAC should not assume that the Management Committee (MC) would automatically reject the idea. She suggested that the idea might be viewed favorably if it was part of an overall CAC recommendation on HEP Public Participation and Education activities.

Manny Russ (NYCDEP CAC on Pollution Prevention) said the CAC should get elected officials, like Borough Presidents, involved in the process. D. Mundy did not think this was necessary. C. Craft commented that government agencies do have standardized grant review processes we could copy. He offered to share MWA's information on this topic.

D. Mundy said that the existing system works well, and that he doesn't see the need for additional coordination. As an example, he said that his and another group had both put in similar Mini-Grant proposals for Jamaica Bay and that L. Bartovics had contacted them to ask if they would work together, which they agreed to do.

L. Bartovics suggested that Estuaries Day 2003 Mini-Grant recipients start planning now, and that CAC form a group to review process. M. Leou would like to see coordination of all events early on, and for there to be good PR. S. Barnes asked if recipients present would work with L. Bartovics to get similar message on the estuary. L. Bartovics responded that this was already required.

S. Barnes asked recipients of the minutes from this meeting to please send their suggestions for review criteria to L. Bartovics, S. Barnes, and E. Flatow. S. Barnes also asked CAC members to start thinking about whether the CAC should have a role in the Mini-Grant review process next year. D. Mundy suggested that Estuaries Day planning meetings should happen soon.

L. Bartovics said that the CAC might want to consider whether grants are the best way to sponsor Estuaries Day events. Perhaps the CAC could decide as a group whether/how they would use HEP funds to celebrate Estuaries Day.

C. Craft suggested that grant recipients meet to start planning soon. B. Sheehan responded that his organization is very busy this time of year and it would be difficult even to make a night meeting. D. Mundy added that his organization was very busy as well. It was agreed that it would be viable to hold two planning meetings, in June and August.

S. Barnes said he was unsure if Estuaries Day review group could be formed this year. Debbie Mans (Baykeeper) said that the Mini-Grant review selection process isn't very clear to her and that she would like the review team to be formed soon.

L. Bartovics asked that people who had not applied for grants volunteer for the Estuaries Day review team. She thought that this might help to avoid conflict of interest. M. Leou, D. Mans and S. Barnes all volunteered. D. Mundy stated that he believed the written evaluation form presently being used is good. M. Leou and D. Mans will work on this together. They both hoped that D. Burg, out of the room at the time, would volunteer to work on it with them.

M. Leou said that it is important for the Estuaries Day events review team to set the criteria *before* the first Estuaries Day planning meeting in June. L. Bartovics said that she would send award notices and notify recipients that there would be a planning meeting the week of June 9-13.

Mort Orentlicher asked L. Bartovics if she knew of funding sources to supplement Estuaries Day events. L. Bartovics responded that HEP partner agencies (NJDEP, NYSDEC, NYCDEP, USEPA, PANYNJ, ACOE, etc.) will be invited to the planning meeting, and that they may have resources to contribute.

B. Sheehan said that he would like HEP representatives at his organization's Estuaries Day events. L. Bartovics responded that HEP has a three person staff (there will be 19 events), and that she would like the CAC to play this role.

Outreach Campaign

Nina Haiman (NYC SWCD) reported on an outreach effort she has been preparing for the HEP CAC. She circulated a 12 page "Stewards Guide to the Estuary" that will be mailed out shortly to regional stewards. She also circulated a draft questionnaire that will be sent with the guide. The purpose of the questionnaire is to assess stewardship in the region, and help organizations build partnerships. L. Bartovics suggested that this could be the start of a matchmaking effort.

N. Haiman asked for input from the group as to what they would like to do with organizations she will be reaching. D. Mundy said that he would like the HEP to make a video for distribution. The video would be of a helicopter fly-over of the estuary. N. Haiman said regardless of whether there was a video, the question is what the CAC would like to do with respondents.

M. Russ suggested it would be good to provide youth with information about careers in government. L. Bartovics said that she receives calls from people looking for work on a regular basis, and that this effort would help her. M. Orentlicher said that represents only a small group of people. He suggested that the target audience should be people who want waterfront access. He suggested outreach to residents of low-income neighborhoods, such as Washington Heights and Sunset Park, where there is very limited waterfront access. M. Orentlicher suggested the CAC could give information to residents of these areas, which would be ammunition in how to deal with elected officials. Bernie Blum (Friends of Rockaway) said that the HEP always talks about outreach, but doesn't come out to Rockaway.

B. Sheehan asked whether that the HEP Teachers' Guide doesn't already provide information that the questionnaire would be gathering. N. Haiman responded that the Teachers' Guide focuses on

education, whereas the questionnaire asks respondents about advocacy, hands-on activities and education. She explained that this information would be put on an online searchable database to allow groups to find one another and form partnerships.

D. Mundy suggested that universities should be included in the network since they want information, could do research for free. D. Mans said that the Watershed Institute has a GIS map of NJ Watershed organizations. The website is www.thewatershedinstitute.org. She suggested that a map would be useful to have on the website.

M. Leou said one use of the survey and database would be to help organizations expand their education programming to monitoring. She expressed concern that the questionnaire didn't ask respondents about resources/partnerships they would like. N. Haiman responded that the questionnaire is still draft, and that that would be incorporated.

S. Barnes and B. Sheehan said that they already knew everybody active in their geographic regions, and they didn't see the need for a questionnaire. N. Haiman responded that they represented large organizations, and that smaller groups might not be as aware. D. Mans said that she would like to see leadership from the agencies. She does not want to just be asked to get involved. L. Bartovics responded that funding might be a factor limiting how much government agencies are willing to do.

L. Bartovics asked the group if they thought there was a benefit to having a committee like the CAC, where citizens can speak with one voice to the agencies on the HEP Management Committee. The general consensus was "yes."

B. Sheehan said in the Hackensack Meadowlands preservation, Hackensack Riverkeeper and Baykeeper, each received a lot of credit. B. Sheehan said that when he tried to give credit to HEP, no one knew what it was.

D. Burg stated that the HEP CAC needs to create a long-term plan for itself. He gave as an example the recent May 8th meeting of environmentalists from the tri-state region with members of Chicago Wilderness. D. Burg said that HEP is the closest thing to a regional organization we have, and that we need to improve outreach. L. Bartovics said that it would be good for the HEP CAC to present its vision to the Management Committee. D. Burg responded that in the past, in controversial situations, for example, saving sites in Jamaica Bay, government agencies have not endorsed the opinions of the HEP CAC.

E.J. McAdams (NYC Audubon) said that Marc Matsil (NYC Parks-NRG) had given a lot of time to the Habitat map. He suggested that there is a financial incentive for government agencies to get involved in the HEP. S. Barnes said this is true for nonprofits as well. He said that having a site on the HEP Habitat map helps in trying to save it.

Neal Kronley (MWA) said that the website needs a place to post events, not just a database. N. Haiman agreed, but said she wanted it to be clear that the searchable database was not the final goal of this effort. Rather, the goal is to increase stewards' involvement in the HEP, and to create a network of estuary stewards.

M. Leou agreed that the searchable database is the tool, not the answer. It will gather all of the information in one place. She said that right now she has to make a lot of calls to get answers. M.

Leou said, however, that the database would have to be updated periodically. D. Mundy suggested that groups be able to update it themselves. M. Orentlicher agreed that a database would be a useful tool.

Bob Alpern (DEP) recommended that the Advocacy section of the questionnaire should ask respondents if they lobby or give candidate endorsements. He also suggested that instead of asking groups what materials they had to share with others, the questionnaire should instead ask respondents which materials they have available in both printed and online forms. B. Alpern also pointed out the map on the last page of the Steward's Guide doesn't include the Bight. He would like to look at the geographic scope of the HEP, which includes the Bight Restoration Plan.

M. Leou responded that if HEP included the Bight it would include other National Estuary Programs. B. Alpern asked how all the NEP CACs related to one another. S. Barnes warned this could lead to the downfall of the program. L. Bartovics asked if it made sense to do this. E.J. McAdams said he thought so. L. Bartovics said that the Long Island Sound Study CAC would hold its June meeting in NYC, and that she would pass along the announcement in case anyone would like to attend.

B. Sheehan said that his organization is already on the web, is easily reached via Google. He said he thinks the searchable database would help small organizations. M. Orentlicher said he thought the database would help groups network.

B. Blum expressed concern that the HEP core area map on the last page of the Steward's Guide makes Rockaway look as though it is part of Nassau County. He said he would like speakers to go to Rockaway to make presentations on the HEP.

D. Mans said she thought the questionnaire would help gather information on Targets and Goals indicators, and could be a good publicity tool as well. L. Bartovics and N. Haiman asked if the CAC should consider forming subcommittees to focus their efforts. D. Mans responded that it could be a good thing, and suggested having a subcommittee for PR.

S. Barnes said that nonprofits were charged with creation of CCMP. He asked if they were also charged with its implementation. He said he did not think this was part of the plan. D. Mundy said the CAC needs more money from the Policy Committee. L. Bartovics responded that CAC Co-Chairs asked the Policy and Management Committees to fund certain projects, which is how the Mini-Grants were brought back in 2002. She warned, however, that it would probably be difficult to get the full \$500,000 HEP budget for the CAC.

D. Mans suggested that the HEP do more press releases. She said that nonprofits cannot do this without lots of agency approval and red tape, and so the HEP should do it. L. Bartovics said she would like the CAC to make suggestions for press release topics.

Targets and Goals

S. Barnes asked those present to look at May 9th Status of the Targets and Goals memo from Bob Nyman, Director of the HEP Office, to the PC. S. Barnes said he would like a progress report on the September 2003 recommitment ceremony. S. Barnes said he is sure the CAC will be expected to participate in this event, and he would like to know what it will be expected to do. M. Leou wanted

to know if this could be linked to Estuaries Day events, S. Barnes said he thought it would be difficult.

S. Barnes said that the Targets and Goals documents distributed give no indication of *how* the targets and goals are to be met, have no information on financing. L. Bartovics responded that CAC and STAC representatives to the Management and Policy Committees have asked the MC and PC to set goals first, so that they (CAC and STAC) can go after and push for more funding. D. Mans said that the Targets and Goals had been a more comprehensive document, but that implementation information was put into the Work Plan.

B. Sheehan expressed concern that the Stewardship chapter of Targets and Goals set goals of bringing *x* number of people out on boats. He said expressed concern about proprietary information. He was concerned that the HEP would use Hackensack Riverkeeper's numbers to get additional funding for HEP. L. Bartovics responded that the HEP as a program does not have the ability to ask for more money.

B. Alpern, looking at the Stewardship chapter, asked how a "Friend of the Estuary" is to be defined. D. Mundy suggested that those who distribute literature on the estuary could be considered Friends. L. Bartovics said that at the last MC meeting, it was suggested that the CAC define criteria for being a "Friend of the Estuary."

D. Burg said that the Targets and Goals are not sufficient. He is concerned that setting the goals of reaching children is not enough; the question is if the education is working. D. Burg said many of these goals sound good, but do not do enough. This has been his experience in the last 10-12 years of HEP meetings.

S. Barnes responded that Targets and Goals should have 1-year goals for accountability. L. Bartovics wondered what accountability of the HEP would mean, since the agencies essentially participate in the program voluntarily. D. Mans said she would like to see an annual meeting where the HEP agencies report on progress. S. Barnes doubted it would happen. D. Mans responded that the CAC should demand it from the MC.

B. Alpern asked the process for setting the Targets and Goals. L. Bartovics said that the next MC meeting is planned for June 3, and that all are invited. She added that the CAC has four voting members on the MC, although Eugenia Flatow needs to appoint another NY representative.

B. Blum stated that Jamaica Bay and Rockaway need a special section in the Targets and Goals.

Bill Fink (Battery Park City Parks Conservancy) said that educating children should be the main goal, since they are the future stewards of the Estuary.

L. Bartovics said that the CAC needs to use its collective voice, and not simply speak as individuals at MC meetings. E.J. McAdams said that he is new to the CAC, but he is interested because his organization has education, stewardship, and advocacy aspects, and the Mini-Grants interest him. E.J. McAdams said he does not know how to police the HEP, which had been S. Barnes's proposal.

S. Barnes said he thought this related to what D. Burg had said earlier, that saving 5 acres isn't good if you lose 20 acres. D. Burg said that many very involved people were not at today's meeting, for

example, E. Flatow, Marc Matsil. D. Burg recommended that the HEP should set Targets and Goals that make sense, and that the CAC should be a strong independent voice, which would tell the HEP what to do.

S. Barnes asked if the CAC should do a self-evaluation on whether it should still exist, and if so, what its goals should be.

M. Leou thought it was problematic to have numerical targets for teachers and students. M. Leou explained that she thinks setting numerical targets, while a good idea for access, might not be a good measure of success for education. She suggested that perhaps we need a different criterion for education. M. Leou said she would like to use the questionnaire to assess who is out there, and to help these groups increase their active membership.

D. Burg said we should have a meeting on evaluation criteria on HEP and HEP CAC. B. Sheehan agreed it was time to assess this group, and that he originally thought the CAC was important. D. Burg said the CAC did accomplish some things in the past. Baykeeper, for example, did work with grants that came from HEP. D. Mans asked whether groups would still be doing the same work without the HEP.

S. Barnes said he was still optimistic enough to believe the HEP could matter. B. Blum commented that the HEP has not supported Rockaway enough. L. Bartovics said it was a good idea to think about how best to exercise the powerful voice of the CAC. S. Barnes suggested the CAC meet again on August 11th to discuss draft criteria for Estuaries Day events, CAC and the HEP. S. Barnes said that draft criteria would be sent in advance of the meeting.

L. Bartovics said that it might be too late to change the Targets and Goals, since the Policy Committee is meeting to approve it on June 30th, but that CAC members could still affect the Work Plan.

NOTE: After the meeting L. Bartovics and S. Barnes spoke, and asked that the minutes reflect their conversation. L. Bartovics mentioned that HEP Mini-grant Program and National Estuaries Day Event funding were included in recent HEP budgets because they were recommended by the CAC. She suggested that the CAC has the option of re-evaluating how useful these items are, and could recommend that future funds be allocated to other projects (perhaps with more CAC involvement in deciding how the moneys are spent). S. Barnes said that this could be something the CAC considers in the future.