



**Peconic Estuary Partnership**  
**Management Committee Meeting Summary**  
October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm  
Zoom Conference Call

Attendees: Joyce Novak (PEP), Elizabeth Hornstein (PEP), Lauren Scheer (PEP/CCE), Sarah Schaefer (PEP), Dawn McReynolds (NYSDEC MC Rep), Kevin McDonald (TNC/CAC Chair and MC Rep), Matt Sclafani (CCE/ TAC Chair and MC Rep), Richard Friesner (NEIWPC MC Rep), Emma Gildesgame (NEIWPC), Rick Balla (USEPA Acting MC Chair), Aimee Boucher (USEPA), Scott Russel (Town of Southold/ Local Government PC Rep) , Peter Brandt (USEPA), Robert Nyman (USEPA), Holly Sanford (PLT), Al Krupski (SC Legislator District 1), Gwynn Schroeder (SC Legislator Al Krupski’s office), Theresa Masin (Town of Southampton), Michael Jensen (SCDHS - proxy for SC MC Rep Ken Zegel), Patricia Aitken (PE Protection Committee), Rob Carpenter (LI Farm Bureau), John Bouvier (Southampton Town Councilmember/Local Government MC Rep), Irene Donohue (SC Legislator Bridget Fleming’s office), Brian Frank (Town of East Hampton), Diana Lynch (SC Parks), Peter Topping (Peconic Baykeeper), Rebecca Shuford (NY Sea Grant).

1. Welcome and Introduction- **Rick Balla** (USEPA)

- Rick Balla is filling in for Aisha Sexton-Sims (MC Chair) today as Aisha is working on a 90-day developmental detail in the EPA’s State Revolving Fund section. She is expected to return back in early 2021. In the interim there will be a person acting in her place but at this time that person is not yet in place.
- Management Committee Voting Member Role Call was conducted.

1. Discussion and Approval of [Meeting Minutes from July 8th 2020 MC meeting](#) – **Rick Balla**

- The meeting summary from July 8<sup>th</sup> was approved by the MC.

2. USEPA Update on the Call for Requests for Statement of Interest- **Rick Balla**

- As a follow-up to the July 8<sup>th</sup> MC meeting, the USEPA did get nine host entity nominations submitted from the Management Committee members- The Research Foundation of SUNY Stony Brook University, SUNY Stony Brook School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SoMAS), Hofstra University, NEIWPC, Peconic Baykeeper, Group for the East End, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Seatuck Environmental Association, and the Long Island Aquarium. On September 23rd, 2020 USEPA sent a Request for Statement of Interest to the nine potential hosts. The due date for providing a response is November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Robert Nyman is the contact at the USEPA for any questions from host applicants and regarding process.

- The USEPA is hoping to complete the review process and recommend a host entity by the end of the calendar year. There will be a transition process that will follow to put that successor entity in place.
  - A continuing resolution was put in place through December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 that continues to fund the federal government. We expect the same level of funding that was made available in Federal Fiscal year 2020 to carry over through December, but the full Federal Fiscal year 2021 (FFY21) budget is not yet known and neither is the budget available for the National Estuary Programs in FFY21.
3. Discussion of Draft Agenda for April 2021 Conference- **Joyce Novak** (PEP Director)
- The draft agenda for the April 2021 Conference was distributed with the MC meeting agenda (attached).
  - Due to COVID-19 the September 25<sup>th</sup> PEP Conference at the Long Island Aquarium was postponed to the new date of April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021. PEP staff has started bi-weekly planning calls for the conference. A draft conference agenda had been developed for an in-person conference but in further discussions with PEP staff the group decided there is a distinct possibility that the conference in April could need to be virtual due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Conference will start off with a Peconic Estuary Partnership Pledge signing event, which ideally will be in-person but may need to be virtual.
  - Joyce reviewed the draft agenda with the group and requested feedback on the draft agenda either at this meeting or through email.
  - Kevin McDonald suggested focusing on the future of the PEP at the conference and welcomes feedback from the group on how to best do that.
  - Theresa Masin suggested a workgroup discussion at the conference to develop model legislation.
  - Rick Balla suggested incorporating underrepresented groups in the conference agenda.
  - Emma Gildesgame supported the idea of having the conference serve as a forum for cross-pollination.
  - Dawn McReynolds suggested the focus of the conference should be on meeting new CCMP goals and providing various entities with actions.
  - John Bouvier suggested including Town planning boards and committees in the planning process.
  - Kevin McDonald suggested identifying people who would be interested in participating from various entities in conference planning.
  - Joyce Novak asked the group to email her if they or someone from their organization/ entity are interested in being involved in the conference planning process.
4. PEP Updates –**Sarah Schaefer** (PEP Program Coordinator)
- PEP distributed the [PEP September Program Update](#) with the meeting materials. Sarah presented a review of status updates for all of our ongoing projects and new projects.
  - The CCMP has formal concurrence from USEPA Region 2 and USEPA Headquarters. PEP is working on printing the document and finalizing a CCMP press release to officially release the CCMP online.
  - The Long Island Regional Planning Council and PEP developed a Reduce Nitrogen Pledge which encourages citizens to take action and complete 10 things to reduce personal nitrogen pollution. Feedback from the group was discussed.

- The Peconic Estuary Protection Committee is working with each Town to develop stormwater project signs. This will be discussed at the next PEPC call.

5. Meetinghouse Creek Updates- **Joyce Novak**

- The Meetinghouse Creek Wetland Restoration project was delayed due to COVID-19 a few months ago. The PEP is now ready to put the RFP out through NEIWPC. One thing to keep in mind is that there is the potential for some changes related to contracting and funding if an alternative host entity is selected.
- In consultation with the Riverhead Town Engineer, \$150,000 of the total available funds (\$209,000) has been set aside for the Meetinghouse Creek Wetland Restoration Engineering and Design project. In addition contract management costs for the project are being segregated in the USEPA grant awarded to NEIWPC for the project. Joyce asked if the committee had any comments on putting out the RFP for the Meetinghouse Creek project in light of potential changes related to contracting and funding if an alternative host entity is selected.
- The Education and Outreach contract is another contract with NEIWPC that may be impacted if an alternative host entity is selected.
- The group agreed that the Meetinghouse Creek project and the Education and Outreach Contract should go forward as planned with NEIWPC.

6. Update on Diversity and Inclusion Workgroup- **Joyce Novak**

- Joyce stated the PEP Environmental Justice Statement was released and PEP has gotten interest from members of the public on being involved in the Diversity and Inclusion Workgroup.
- Joyce met with representatives from the Shinnecock Indian Nation, Bryan Polite and Bianca Collins, to discuss the development of the workgroup. Representatives from the Suffolk County Office of Minority Health and the NYS will be involved. The workgroup is planned to be held by the end of the year.
- Joyce noted that she, Adelle Molina (PEP Education and Outreach Assistant) and Aimee Boucher (PEP USEPA Program Coordinator) attended national virtual forums held by the National Estuary Programs on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The forums are assisting NEPs in completing a DEI spectrum and assessment review to develop a strategy forward and will be the basis on how the PEP Diversity and Inclusion Workgroup evolves.
- Theresa Masin suggested PEP move the Google Translate button to the top of the page on the PEP website.

7. New Business, Next Steps and Next Meeting Dates – **Rick Balla**

- Rick Balla stated the USEPA is working on final comments on the Organizational Assessment and expects to get comments back in the next few weeks.
- Theresa Masin stated the Endangered Species List has an open comment period that ends on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- John Bouvier stated the Town of Southampton has been working with the NYS Assembly and Senate to produce a transparency bill to allow oversight of the Public Service Commission (PSC) of LIPA, LIPA is currently not under the oversight of PSC. The bills are currently going to Albany for signature.
- John Bouvier stated October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 is the start of the NY State Plastic Bag Ban.
- Next Meetings: The next MC meeting will be January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

8. No public comments

9. Adjourn



## Peconic Estuary Partnership DRAFT Conference Agenda for April 14, 2021

### State of Our Estuary Conference

**Where: Atlantis Banquet & Events**

**When: April 14, 2021**

**Attendees: 100-150**

**Includes Lunch & One PEP Promotional Item**

#### Draft Schedule of Events:

- 9:00 - 9:30am Arrival and Networking
  - **We needs funds for coffee and tea – cannot use federal funds for this**
- 9:30 - 10:00am – Welcome and Video
  - Director – Brief Welcome and Intro of PC Chair
  - PC Chair – Opening Remarks (10 minutes) and Introduction of EPA Region 2 Administrator
  - Director (or RA?) introduce and play video
- 10:00 - 10:45am Signing & Recommitment to PEP
  - MC Chair Call to Re-affirm Commitment to PEP
  - List of People for Signing – **TBD – All Fed, NYS, SC, EE Town, Lead Partners**
  - **Purchase Large Board for Signings**
- *10 MINUTE BREAK (Art Display or Interactive Activity)*
- 11:00 - 12:00pm Round Table Discussion
  - **Round Table of Town Supervisors and SC Legislators and NYS Assemblyman and Senator etc.** to discuss their personal recommitment to partnership, projects, needs etc.
    - Moderated by CAC Chair
  - **No Financial Needs**
- *12:00-12:45pm LUNCH – Funds secured – awaiting new formal approval from EPA*
- 12:45-1:30pm CLEAN WATERS:
  - Chris Gobler Presents – the State of the Water Quality in the Peconic Estuary
  - Panel: **DEC, SC, USGS, Protection Committee etc.** – discuss efforts to achieve water quality goal
    - Moderated by SC MC Rep
- 1:30-2:15pm WILDLIFE/HABITATS:
  - **Panel & Presentations: Steve Schott, Brad Peterson, Steve Tettlebach, Matt Sclafani, Alexa, John Turner, Mike Bottini, GROUP Rep** to discuss efforts



- Moderated by TAC Chair
- 15 MINUTE BREAK (PENGUINS? – *require funding*)
- 2:30-3:15pm CLIMATE CHANGE – Solution Focused
  - Colombia Earth Institute (?), CCE, TNC, Shinnecock Indian Nation, NYS Response, Town Planners, Climate Smart Communities etc. discuss efforts
    - Moderated by MC Member (?)
- 3:15- 3:30pm Final AWARD
  - The Program Office has some ideas about awards but we are still compiling a list. Please reach out to us with any local stewards whose work you feel is outstanding, groundbreaking, shows longevity of commitment, and/or is noteworthy. We anticipate three awards – one to be given before the Wildlife session, one before the Climate Change Session and one here.
    - PEP Staff to give out awards
- 3:30pm CLOSING – Director Conclusion and thanks