



CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION

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JANUARY 7-8, 2021 TELECONFERENCE QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chesapeake Bay Commission held its first quarterly meeting of 2021 on Thursday and Friday, January 7-8. The meeting was held via teleconference due to the States of Emergency in all three member states during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commission members in attendance:

Delegate Robert Bloxom
Delegate Tony Bridges
Delegate David Bulova
Senator Sarah Elfreth
PA Citizen Member, Warren Elliott
Representative Keith Gillespie
Senator Guy Guzzone
Delegate Nancy Guy (Day 1 Only)
Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio
Senator Emmett Hanger
Delegate Sara Love
Senator Lynwood Lewis
Senator Scott Martin
Secretary Patrick McDonnell
MD Citizen Member, Thomas "Mac" Middleton
RDML Charles Rock
Delegate Dana Stein
Representative Mike Sturla
Secretary Matt Strickler
VA Citizen Member, Dennis Treacy
Senator Gene Yaw

Members not in attendance: None.

Staff:

MD – David Goshorn
PA – Aneca Atkinson and Jill Whitcomb
VA – Ann Jennings (Day 1 Only)
Navy – Kevin Du Bois

CBC Staff:

Ann Swanson
Jen Dieux
Mark Hoffman
Marel King
Adrienne Kotula

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

WELCOME & ROLL CALL

Chairman Yaw called the meeting to order at 1:01 P.M. and reviewed the Commission's Virtual Meeting Protocol to comply with open meeting requirements. He then asked Executive Director Swanson to call the roll. A quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chairman Yaw explained that the duration of the pandemic was not anticipated and in the interest of transparency and maintaining an official record, the meeting minutes from November were presented for approval. Following a motion by Delegate Bulova, seconded by Senator Martin, the November meeting minutes were unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

ADOPTION/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Chairman Yaw asked for comments or questions on the agenda from the members. Hearing none, Delegate Bulova moved to adopt the agenda as presented and Mr. Elliott seconded the motion. The adoption of the agenda was moved unanimously by a roll call vote.

LIGHTNING ROUND UPDATES

Chairman Yaw requested that Executive Director Swanson provide updates on the Bay Partnership's progress in wetlands and forest restoration and the Commission's Presidential transition-related priorities.

Executive Director Swanson discussed how concerns have been raised regarding the lack of progress in meeting wetland and riparian buffer restoration outcomes and the implications this brings to bear on successfully meeting the Bay-wide 2025 TMDL goals given the reliance of the state WIPs on these practices.

Executive Director Swanson then discussed the priorities that the Commission has identified for the transition to the Biden Administration. These include fully funding the currently enacted authorization levels for all Bay restoration programs, enhancing agricultural conservation support for farms and forests, leveraging farm investment and water quality with climate change goals, investing in stormwater infrastructure and equitably distributing the new mandatory Land and Water Conservation Fund resources.

THE INTERSECTION OF POLICY WITH DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & JUSTICE IN THE CHESAPEAKE WATERSHED

Chairman Yaw introduced Delegates Tony Bridges and Sara Love as the moderators for this session.

Delegates Bridges and Love then discussed the importance of environmental justice to them personally and introduced Senator Troy Singleton from the 7th District in New Jersey and Dr. Ana Baptista, Assistant Professor of Professional Practice & Associate Director of the Tishman Environment and Design Center, The New School.

Senator Singleton then discussed the decade of work that went into the adoption of New Jersey's landmark environmental justice law. He also covered the dynamics that were at play leading up to the final passage, as well as discussing the important role that the national political scene played in the ultimate adoption.

Dr. Baptista then discussed the group of advocates that played a role in the adoption of the law, the negotiations that occurred leading to the final form of the bill, as well as the details of the law itself.

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY & THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

Chairman Yaw introduced Gary Shenk, Hydrologist from USGS Chesapeake Bay Program Office, who presented “Understanding the Loads,” which detailed the various impacts that climate change has on the Bay and the underlying TMDL and resulting reductions.

Rear Admiral Ann C. Phillips, U.S. Navy (Retired), Special Assistant to Governor Northam for Coastal Adaptation presented “Building a State Framework” and discussed the process that Virginia has undertaken to incorporate climate projections into programs, prioritize projects, involve stakeholders and develop financing mechanisms for climate adaptation.

Yaron Miller, Project Officer, Flood-Prepared Communities, The Pew Charitable Trusts, presented on the work that his organization does to reduce the impact of flood-related disasters on the U.S. taxpayer and environment by better preparing communities through federal and state policy reform. He specifically discussed recent work that has been done in South Carolina, Virginia and Texas on mitigation programs and their funding.

ADJOURN

The Commission recessed at 4:15 P.M.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021

WELCOME & ROLL CALL

Chairman Yaw called the meeting to order at 9:15 A.M., reviewed the Virtual Meeting Protocol and asked Executive Director Swanson to call the roll. A quorum was present.

INNOVATIVE CLIMATE FINANCE

Using the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) To Reduce Risk for Investors

Chairman Yaw introduced Christine Cadigan, the Family Forest Carbon Program Director at AFF, Nathan Truitt, Vice President for Strategic Partnerships at AFF, and Sean Penrith from Gordian Knot Strategies. They presented on the ability to use State Revolving Loan Funds as a part of the emerging carbon market in order to incentivize forest retention.

The SRF funds could be used to reduce risk to private investors by providing loan or bond guarantees, investing directly in project development, or co-investing in the production of carbon credits through landowner subsidies.

The opportunity is currently at the state level, as federal legislation would be required to provide a federal loan guarantee.

RESTORATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY:

How High-Resolution Data Is Changing the Game

Chairman Yaw introduced Carly Dean, Program Manager, Chesapeake Conservancy, Allyson Gibson, Coordinator, Lancaster Clean Water Partners, and Jake Reilly, Chesapeake Bay Program Director, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation.

Jake Reilly began the presentation by discussing the work that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation undertakes to implement projects throughout the watershed and briefly discussed how the newly emerging data tools can be used to better target those dollars. Carly Dean then provided an overview of the technology and how it functions to target restoration activities. Finally, Allyson Gibson discussed how this is being applied to their work in Lancaster County.

This work has the potential to significantly improve local engagement. The speakers had several recommendations for the Commission:

- Bay-wide funding for data development
- Sustained funding for local implementation
- Make funding programs more appealing to farmers
- More support for coordination of efforts
- Prioritize practice maintenance

FEDERAL PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD

Chairman Yaw introduced Jason Gleason, Executive Vice-President, and Hunter Moorhead Senior Partner, both from Crossroads Strategies, our Federal partners in advocacy for the Bay watershed. Jason and Hunter discussed the emerging federal landscape as a result of the November elections, noting that significant uncertainty remained given the outcome of the Georgia elections and the balance of the Senate remaining unknown. Executive agencies are also going through a transition.

Climate change is clearly a priority of the new administration and an opportunity to leverage carbon practices with water quality.

NEW BUSINESS AND MEMBER FEEDBACK

Chairman Yaw asked if there was any new business or member feedback. No members provided feedback.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Chairman Yaw asked if any members of the public would like to provide comment. No members of the public provided comment.

ELECTION OF 2021 OFFICERS

Chairman Yaw requested that Executive Director Swanson report out on the slate of officers recommended for 2021. Executive Director Swanson reported the following:

- Chair from VA: Delegate David Bulova;
- Vice Chair from MD: Senator Guy Guzzone, and
- Vice Chair from PA: Senator Gene Yaw.

- The other members of the Executive Committee will be:
 - [MD] Delegate Dana Stein
 - [VA] Senator Emmett Hanger
 - [PA] Representative Mike Sturla

Representative Gillespie moved to approve the slate of officers as presented. Senator Elfreth seconded the motion which was approved unanimously. The Commission unanimously approved the slate of officers as presented.

COMMENTS OF INCOMING AND OUTGOING CHAIRS

Senator Yaw then thanked the Commission for entrusting him to leadership through such a tumultuous year and handed over the Chair to Delegate Bulova.

Chairman Bulova thanked the Commission for their vote of confidence and stated that he would continue our focus on meeting water quality goals, while simultaneously keeping an eye on emerging concerns that could derail our efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission adjourned at 11:45 A.M.