



## **Policy Board Meeting Minutes**

December 1, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. CT

Orange Beach Council Chambers

4099 Orange Beach Blvd, Orange Beach, AL 36561

[Virtual Meeting Recording](#)

### **Members Present**

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Dave Piech, Chair         | Santa Rosa County    |
| Robert Bender, Vice Chair | Escambia County      |
| Bob Cole                  | Santa Rosa County    |
| Mike Norberg              | Okaloosa County      |
| Shannon Rice              | City of Milton       |
| Woody Speed               | City of Orange Beach |
| Ben Boutwell              | Town of Century      |
| Doug Underhill            | Escambia County      |
| Ann Hill, ph              | City of Pensacola    |
| Dan Dealy, rep, ph        | Baldwin County       |

### **Member Absent**

|             |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| JB Schluter | City of Gulf Breeze |
|-------------|---------------------|

### **Interested Parties Present**

|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Matt Posner       | PPBEP               |
| Whitney Scheffel  | PPBEP               |
| Logan McDonald    | PPBEP               |
| Emerson Cheney    | PPBEP               |
| Haley Gancel      | PPBEP               |
| Madi Ross         | PPBEP               |
| Amanda Croteau    | UWF                 |
| Amy Hunter        | ADCNR               |
| Amy Newbold       | EPA                 |
| Barbara Albrecht  | BFA/ UWF            |
| Beth Fugate       | FDEP                |
| Chasidy Hobbs     | UWF                 |
| Chips Kirchenfeld | Escambia County     |
| Chris Verlinde    | UF/ IFAS, Sea Grant |
| Darryl Boudreau   | NFWFMD              |
| Eric Schnedier    | ESA                 |
| Jessica Bibza     | NWF                 |
| Kent Smith        | FWC                 |
| Samantha Bolduc   | Escambia County     |
| Wade Lehmann      | EPA                 |

### **1. Call to Order**

### **2. Roll Call**



### 3. Approval of October 19, 2021 Policy Board Minutes

Commissioner Underhill made a motion to approve the October 19, 2021 meeting minutes. Commissioner Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### 4. Staff Updates

#### a. New Staff Introductions- *Matt Posner*

- Dr. Haley Gancel, Environmental Scientist
- Madi Ross, Community Outreach Assistant

#### b. Technical Update- *Whitney Scheffel*

- CCMP Development Status, Schedule, and Process Moving Forward  
An overview of the CCMP development timeline can be found in the Policy Board powerpoint presentation. Staff will finalize the draft and supporting narrative, with the inclusion of any additional comments, between December 2021 and February 2022. A Management Conference meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 13, 2022 to receive final comments from participating board and committee members. Staff plans to roll out the CCMP for public review in May 2022. The State of the Bays Report will be revealed at a Gala fundraiser event in August 2022.
- NOAA Actionable Science Seagrass Restoration & Resiliency Project  
The Estuary Program is partnering with Dr. Erin Cox and the University of New Orleans and Mississippi State University to develop a strategic plan for seagrass restoration considering seagrass resiliency to climate stress through genetic diversity. The project team has formed an advisory panel of seagrass experts/practitioners and is developing surveys to gather input from seagrass researchers and practitioners, and the public. A workshop for community stakeholder engagement will be held in Spring 2022.
- NOAA Community of Practice – Climate Resilience  
The Estuary Program was awarded a grant to support resilience readiness in Pensacola. This project will add qualitative information to the City's existing vulnerability assessment to support future resilience planning efforts in Pensacola, FL.
- NOAA Environmental Literacy – Sea Level Rise Education  
In partnership with Renee Collini and PLACE: SLR and the City of Pensacola, staff will collaborate on sea-level rise education, outreach, and engagements through virtual reality, community dialogues, pop-in events, and other immersive activities. The project team is meeting in December to prepare for the project's kick off at the beginning of 2022.
- State of the Bay Report Card  
Staff will utilize an interactive web-based format like the Potomac Conservancy's Report Card for the State of the Bays Report Card.



c. Outreach Update- *Logan McDonald*

- Community Grant Update  
The 2021-2022 funded Community Grant projects began on October 1, 2021. Save the Date for a volunteer workday at the Perdido Key Coastal Demonstration Garden (Escambia County Natural Resources) on January 29, 2022.
- Auburn Land Use Workshop  
The project, funded by the Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, will develop a framework that includes 30-year land use and land cover scenarios to predict future coastal ecosystem conditions. The Estuary Program helped organized a Perdido-Wolf Bay Workshop, held on October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Perdido Key Community Center, that introduced the project and offered participants the opportunity to provide input on different land use change scenarios that could be used in their modelling of water quality. Researchers are requesting [survey input](#) to inform their research.
- OAR Fest  
The first inaugural OAR Fest was successfully held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Bayview Center. OAR Fest's main purpose is to promote water recreation and educate community members on the importance of protecting our local waterways. Save-the-Date for next year's OAR Fest scheduled for October 15, 2022!
- Tides of Change Event  
PPBEP tabled at the Tides of Change event hosted by PLACE: SLR, UF/IFAS, and the City of Pensacola, held at Maritime Park. The Tides of Change documentary highlights the effects of sea level rise.
- Litter Rodeo  
Clean Horizons has postponed the Litter Rodeo. A new date for the event will be sent out once the event is rescheduled.
- Pensacola Magazine December Issue Feature  
PPBEP will featured in the December issue of Pensacola Magazine as a Charitable and Volunteer Organization.
- Trash Free Waters  
Litter booms have been installed at all three creeks: Pond Creek, Jones Creek, and Carpenter Creek. Litter cleanups and waterborne trash monitoring have commenced at each location and two community cleanups have been completed since the last meeting. The first cleanup was at Pond Creek, held at Mayo Park in Milton with partners from Bagdad Waterfront Florida Partnership, Santa Rosa County, the Blackwater Pyrates, and community members. A total of 31 volunteers collected over 540lbs. of debris, plus 18 tires! The second cleanup was at Carpenter Creek, located off Bayou Blvd. and 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Osprey installed the litter boom for Carpenter Creek in July 2021 and boom monitoring has been ongoing. A total of 50 volunteers collected over 500 lbs. of debris. A Trash Free Waters curriculum is currently being created and will be implemented in the new year.



## 5. Action Items

- a. Ratify approval and submittal of the FY22-23 Florida Legislative Appropriation Request  
Commissioner Cole asked if staff have approached other representatives to sign on to the request. M. Posner confirmed that staff are coordinating with Senator Broxson's office and will be reaching out to Representative Williamson and Salzman. Mike Norberg made a motion to approve the submittal of the FY22-23 Florida Legislative Appropriation Request. Commissioner Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Approve University of New Orleans Subaward for the NOAA Actionable Science Seagrass Project  
No discussion was held. Commissioner Cole made a motion to approve the NOAA Subaward. Commissioner Bender seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. Approve submittal of revised EPA grant budget amendment request  
M. Posner reviewed the budget changes in the grant budget amendment. Commissioners Bender and Underhill expressed concern over the senior advisor stipend. Discussion was held on the senior advisor stipend budget item origin, responsibility, and resolution. Commissioner Piech and Councilwoman Rice expressed concern that M. Posner had not been processed by Escambia County HR for the Director position. Amy Newbold (EPA) recommended revisiting the creation of a finance committee and stated that the ongoing budget revision process will be finalized by the EPA once the budget is approved by the Policy Board. Commissioner Cole made a motion to approve the budget amendment request as presented. Councilwoman Rice seconded the motion. The motion passed with eight in favor, with Commissioners Underhill and Bender opposed.

## 6. Discussion Items

- a. Interlocal Agreement Renewal  
PPBEPP staff proposed no changes to the Interlocal Agreement Renewal. Discussion was held on coordinating efforts with Mobile Bay Estuary Program and Baldwin County is supportive of both programs. Staff plan to discuss the MOU and project coordination with the Mobile Bay Estuary Program in January 2022. Baldwin County representatives will work with staff to coordinate the partnership. The board did not request any changes and the Interlocal Agreement Renewal will be sent to Commissioner Piech for his signature.
- b. PPBEPP Organizational Structure  
Commissioner Underhill excused himself from the meeting for an urgent matter. Discussion was held on three organizational structure options: Independent Special District, 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization, Host Agency (Local Government or Educational Institution). The Policy Board directed staff to move forward with exploring the Independent Special District option.
- c. 2022 Policy Board Meeting Dates  
Discussion was held and the board approved the projected 2022 Policy Board Meeting Schedule with no changes.

## 7. Committee Updates

- a. Technical Committee Update  
Jessica Bibza (NWF) provided an update on the high attendance at the Technical Committees' last meeting. Committee members heard partner presentations from Casey Fulford (AACD) on district



projects ongoing in Alabama and Jeanette Kelson (Wood) and M. Posner on the Carpenter Creek/Bayou Texar Watershed Management Plan update and on CCMP Progress from W. Scheffel. Nominations are open for the Committee Chair and Vice Chair.

**b. Education Committee Update**

Chasidy Hobbs (UWF) updated the Policy Board on the Education and Outreach Committee's previous meeting and shared that her Spring CEES course will be collaborating with Estuary Program staff to develop a project. The committee's planned guest speaker at the November meeting has been rescheduled to January. Nominations are open for the Committee Chair and Vice Chair.

**c. Business Partnership Committee Update**

PPBEP staff are planning a business social in February to bring together business partners. Chair Piech requested that staff meet with the local chambers of commerce.

**8. Policy Board/Agency Updates**

No updates were given by board members.

**9. Public Comment**

Mike Norberg asked about the status of the Finance Subcommittee. M. Posner shared that, to his knowledge, the Finance Subcommittee had not convened but the subcommittee is allowed in the new bylaws. Commissioner Bender and Commissioner Piech offered to serve on the Finance Committee. Councilwoman Rice asked when the deductions from M. Posner's pay would stop, when the reimbursement would be paid, and when the hiring paperwork would be processed by HR. Commissioner Bender indicated he would follow up with HR about the hiring paperwork. Commissioner Piech requested an update on the repayment be shared with the Board.

**10. Meeting Adjourned**