



Policy Board Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. CT

Escambia County Board Chambers
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, FL 32502

[Meeting Recording](#)

Members Present

Robert Bender, Chair	Escambia County
Woody Speed, Vice Chair	City of Orange Beach
Mike Norberg, rep	Okaloosa County
David Piech	Santa Rosa County
Ann Hill	City of Pensacola
Ashley Campbell, rep, ph	Baldwin County
Cherry Fitch	City of Gulf Breeze

Members Absent

Bob Cole	Santa Rosa County
Shannon Rice	City of Milton
Jeff Bergosh	Escambia County
Benjamin Boutwell	Town of Century

Interested Parties Present

Matt Posner	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Emerson Cheney	PPBEP
Sarah Jacobs	PPBEP
Molly McDaniel	PPBEP
Caitlin Jennings	PPBEP
Jessica Bibza	NWF
Eric Schneider	ESA
Chris Verlinde	Santa Rosa County Sea Grant
Jeanette Kelson	Wood
Kristin Bennett	Tetra Tech
Amy Newbold	EPA
Beth Fugate	DEP
Carrie Stevenson	UF/IFAS
Casey Fulford	AACD
Chris Curb	Flood Defenders
Naisy Dolar	Santa Rosa County
Paul Looney	WRA
Mel Pino	Community Member
Kevin Wade	Community Member



1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

M. Posner called the roll. A quorum was present.

3. Approval of March 30, 2022, Policy Board Minutes

Commissioner Piech (Santa Rosa County) made a motion to approve the March 30, 2022 meeting minutes. Mayor Fitch (Gulf Breeze) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The internship update was moved to the top of the agenda so that interns could introduce themselves to the board. Summer of 2022 Interns Sarah Jacobs (Development), Caitlin Jennings (Community Resilience), Molly McDaniel (Community Resilience), and Tucker Reynolds (Manatee Outreach) introduced themselves to the board.

Following the internship update, Commissioner Bender (Escambia County) requested to move through the action items before the staff update.

4. Action Items

a. Approval of the Mississippi-Alabama SeaGrant Consortium Subrecipient Agreement, for \$28,496, for the Resilience Readiness Project

Mayor Fitch (City of Gulf Breeze) made a motion to approve the Subrecipient Agreement, for \$28,496, from the Mississippi-Alabama SeaGrant Consortium; request the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, as the host agency of PPBEP, accept the Agreement on behalf of PPBEP; and authorize the Executive Director to execute the Agreement and carry out the scope of work. Commissioner Piech (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Florida Department of Environmental Protection Grant Agreement No. 22PLN35, for \$687,500, for the Compound Flood Modeling and Adaptation Planning Project

Councilperson Ann Hill (City of Pensacola) made a motion to accept the award of \$687,500 from the Resilient Florida Grant Program; approve the draft scope of work (subject to minor modifications); request the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, as the host agency of PPBEP, accept the Agreement on behalf of PPBEP; and authorize the Executive Director to execute the Agreement and carry out the scope of work. Mayor Fitch (City of Gulf Breeze) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of a Letter of Support for PPBEP's Application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Regional Resilience Entity Grant Program

Councilperson Hill (City of Pensacola) made a motion to approve the Letter of Support for PPBEP's application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Regional Resilience Entity Grant Program and authorize the Chairman to sign the letter. Mike Norberg (Okaloosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Woody Speed (City of Orange Beach) asked M. Posner for a description of the DEP Regional Resilience Entity Grant Program. M. Posner informed the board that the Regional Resilience Entity Grant Program was established by the resilient Florida legislation to support multijurisdictional climate adaptation and resilience-building efforts. This letter of support will accompany PPBEP's application to the Resilience Entity Grant Program.



- d. **Approval of an Agreement with Impact Campaigns, for \$55,000, for PPBEP Marketing Services**
Woody Speed (City of Orange Beach) made a motion to approve the agreement with Impact Campaigns, for \$55,000, for PPBEP Marketing Services; and request the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, as the host agency of PPBEP, award the agreement. Mayor Fitch (City of Gulf Breeze) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Bender (Escambia County) clarified that the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners requested that the PPBEP Policy Board act on this item before the agreement is put forth to the Board of County Commissioners. Councilperson Ann Hill (City of Pensacola) asked what kind of marketing this contract will involve. M. Posner stated that the scope of work would include support for the expansion of outreach campaigns, which will help educate residents and visitors about the PPBEP and its watersheds.

- e. **Approval of an Extension to the Lease Agreement with Empire Partners for PPBEP's Administrative Office Lease**
Councilperson Ann Hill (City of Pensacola) made a motion to extend the PPBEP Office Space Lease Agreement with Empire Partners from July 31, 2022, to December 31, 2022; and request the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners, as the host agency of PPBEP, execute the lease agreement extension. Commissioner Piech (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
- f. **Approval of FY22-23 Local Government Contributions Request Letter**
Councilperson Ann Hill (City of Pensacola) made a motion to approve the request letter for each governing body within the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program to contribute for FY22-23. Mayor Fitch (City of Gulf Breeze) seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
- g. **Approval of the Amended and Restated PPBEP Interlocal Agreement**
PPBEP requested to drop action item g to allow for additional due diligence with Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). It will be added to the July Policy Board agenda for discussion.
- h. **Approval of the Amended PPBEP Board Bylaws**
Commissioner Bender (Chair, Escambia County) requested to drop action item h in relation to the clarification of adding the state of Alabama to the financial disclosure section 6.2. Approval of the PPBEP bylaws will be added to the July Policy Board agenda.

5. Staff Updates

- a. **Director's Update** (*Matt Posner, Executive Director*)
- i. **Finance Sub-Committee Report**
The Finance Sub-Committee did not have action items to discuss before the May Policy Board meeting. The committee will reconvene before the June Policy Board meeting. The Expenditure Report was included, and the grants are tracking on target.
 - ii. **EPA Budget Amendment Update**



Requested budget modifications to EPA RESTORE and the EPA Trash Free Waters grants have been approved by the EPA.

iii. NEP Designation Legislation

NEP designation is moving forward with support from Senator Rubio and Senator Scott's office and the City of Orange Beach. A trip to Washington D.C. was discussed to gain additional support for the NEP designation.

iv. Governance Structure Transition Update

PPBEP is continuing to work with DEO's Independent Special District Accountability Program to ensure administrative services (financial services, general counsel, and IT support) are accounted for in the transition.

v. Local Government Contributions

Local government contributions will serve as required match for several federal funding opportunities. Staff and partners are preparing for several funding opportunities that will be available through RESTORE, NRDA, and the Federal Infrastructure Bill.

vi. Management Conference Report Out

Over 100 people attended the first annual PPBEP Management Conference held on April 13th. Participant input will help staff to shape PPBEP's annual work plan priorities.

b. Technical Update (*Whitney Scheffel, Senior Scientist*)

i. CCMP Development Status, Schedule, and Next Steps

- PPBEP is working with Background Stories to design the CCMP. Draft documents have been submitted to the designers.
- A draft will be available for review by committees and the Policy Board in July. Additional public comment will be sought after the draft is finalized.
- Staff will present the final draft for Policy Board approval in September.

ii. NOAA Actionable Science Seagrass Workshop

- Staff and partners hosted a seagrass workshop at the Perdido Key Community Center with experts to collaborate on the execution of the program's actionable science grant. The workshop input will support the development of a strategic plan to build seagrass resilience through genetic strategies.
- The second phase of the funding cycle will open later this summer and support the implementation of selected projects over the next five years.

c. Outreach Update (*Logan McDonald, Community Outreach Coordinator*)

i. Community Grant Update

The Community Grant Program funding cycle concludes on May 31st, with final reports due in June. Staff will provide a comprehensive update on all the Community Grant Program funded projects in July.

- The Perdido Key Coastal Demonstration Garden (Escambia County) was planted



with the help of many volunteers. Educational signage will inform the public about the garden and how they can incorporate these practices into their own properties.

- The EscaRosa OysterCorps Program (Franklins Promise) has been working with Pace High School students to care for marsh plants and recently planted Saltmeadow Cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) along the shoreline at Floridatown Park.
 - The UWF Historical Ecology Project hosted two seminars to share information on their research findings. A seminar at the Perdido Methodist Church informed the public about the history of oysters in the Perdido Bay system. The second seminar was held at Odd Colony in Pensacola and highlighted the history and legacy of some of the waterways and tributaries in the Pensacola Bay system.
 - PPBEP tentatively plans to open applications for the 2022-2023 funding cycle on July 6th, pending final approval of the state budget by the Governor.
- ii. **Trash Free Waters** (*Emerson Cheney, TFW Volunteer Coordinator*)
- Staff are implementing Trash Free Waters curriculum and hosting field trips with students.
 - PPBEP celebrated National Travel and Tourism Week with a tourism gives back cleanup at Jones Creek with Visit Pensacola, Keep Pensacola Beautiful, and Clean Horizons.
 - Litter boom monitoring is approaching the one-year anniversary.
 - Staff are organizing a future workshop to share the litter data and gather community input on litter prevention solutions for each of the creek systems.
- iii. **UWF CETES Students**
- UWF CETES students completed their projects that supported PPBEP through video support for events, K-12 Trash Free Waters curriculum, stormwater mural projects, and the development of a local brewery proceeds competition.
- iv. **Events**
- April:**
- Volunteer Month Appreciation Paddle, Escribano Point
 - Santa Rosa County Bay Day, Russell Herber Landing
 - Pensacola Earth Day Fest & Paddle | City of Pensacola Parks & Rec
 - Gulf of Mexico Alliance Conference
- May:**
- Autism OdysSea | Navarre Beach Marine Science Station
 - Episcopal School Field Trip, Naval Live Oaks | UF-IFAS, SeaGrant
 - RISE (Resilience in Sea-Level Education) CCMP Public Engagement | PLACE: SLR
 - Navy Point Estuary Exploration CCMP Public Engagement | Escambia County
- Upcoming May Events:**
- 26th – Protecting our Rivers: Keeping Soil in its Place Documentary and Sedimentation Panel Discussion CCMP Public Engagement



June:

- 4th – Sea Turtle Baby Shower
- 8th – World Oceans Day
- 22nd – Oyster Vision Mapping Workshop
- June 19th – July 20th – Summer Library Programming in Baldwin, Escambia, and Santa Rosa counties

Save the Date:

CCMP Public Engagement

June 16th, Saving the Lost Bay CCMP Public Engagement

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Coastal Arts Center of Orange Beach

Water Quality Goal

Partners: City of Orange Beach Coastal Resources, Moffatt and Nichol

Business Partnership Event

June 23rd, Santa Rosa County Business Partnership Event

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce

6. Committee Updates

a. **Technical Committee Update** (*Paul Looney, WRA*)

The committee plans to incorporate the ideas that were formed at the Management Conference in the upcoming TC meetings.

i. **Oyster Sub-Committee** (*Whitney Scheffel, Senior Scientist*)

The committee will help plan the upcoming oyster vision mapping workshop, along with partners from FWC and TNC.

b. **Education and Outreach Committee Update** (*Carrie Stevenson, UF/IFAS*)

The board was updated on all the education and outreach events, highlighting the resurrection of Bay Day after a two-year hiatus. All the events were successful and more to come over the summer spanning into October.

c. **Business Partnership Committee Update** (*Matt Posner, Executive Director*)

The next Business Partnership event will be held in Santa Rosa County.

June 23rd, Santa Rosa County Business Partnership Event

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce

7. Policy Board/Agency Updates

- a. Commissioner Piech (Santa Rosa County) updated the committee on Santa Rosa County's RESTORE Pot



3 funding that will support a 5-year water quality monitoring program. Santa Rosa County is expecting a federal grant for a living shoreline project near the wastewater treatment plant.

- b. Commissioner Bender (Escambia County) recently visited the PPBEP Community Grant Program funded Estuary Exhibit at the Pensacola MESS Hall and was pleased to see the Community Grant Program funds supporting this educational opportunity.

8. Public Comment

- a. Mel Pino shared concerns about the oyster reefs and event at Navy Point.
- b. Kevin Wade shared concerns about the oyster reefs and event at Navy Point and shared site photos.

9. Adjourn