

GALVESTON BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM

FINAL – Galveston Bay Council (GBC) Meeting Minutes–January 31, 2018

Attendees:

Galveston Bay Council Chair: Helen Paige (Marinas)

Galveston Bay Council Vice-Chair: Glenn Clingenpeel

Estuary Program Staff Lead: Sarah Bernhardt, Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP)

The January 31, 2018 quarterly GBC meeting was held at Harris-Galveston Subsidence District, 1660 West Bay Area Blvd., Houston, Texas, from 9:32 AM to 12:22 PM.

Members Present: Scott Alford, Christine Bergren, Glenn Clingenpeel, Albert Gonzales, Rebecca Hensley, Kelly Holligan, John Huffman, Doug Jacobson, Brian Koch, Audrey Kuklenz, Kristin Lambrecht, Helen Paige, Nancy Parra, Ana Partin, Pamela Plotkin, Taylor Rieck, Kate Saul, Ronnie Schultz, Sharron Stewart, Lori Traweek, Kirk Wiles, Tracy Woody

Members Not Present/Delegates: Caryn Brooks, Andrea Catanzaro, Mark Fisher*, Phillip Goodwin, Jace Houston*, Mike Lee, Luz Locke, Garry McMahan, Will Nipper*, Russ Poppe*, Aaron Rice, Hanadi Rifai, Caimee Schoenbaechler*, Linda Shead, Mary Beth Stengler, Bob Stokes*, Rusty Swafford*, Jeff Taebel*, Chuck Wemple

(*=Member designated a proxy)

Proxies Present (council member absent/designated proxy):

Mark Fisher/Christine Bergren, Jace Houston/Kim Wright, Will Nipper/Maria Valdez, Russ Poppe/Glenn Laird, Kate Saul/Mollie Powell, Caimee Schoenbaechler/Dr. Nelun Fernando, Bob Stokes/Courtney Smith, Rusty Swafford/Aaron Chastain, Jeff Taebel/Todd Running

Current Vacancies: None

Other Attendees: Erin Kinney, Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC); Mollie Powell, General Land Office (GLO); Kathy Janhsen, Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)

Additional GBEP Staff present: Cynthia Clevenger, Cassidy Kempf, Lindsey Lippert, Lisa Marshall, Mary Stiles

Call to Order: Introduction of Members and Delegates

Chair Helen Paige called meeting to order and confirmed a quorum before moving to the first action item.

Action Item: Approval of October 18, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Helen Paige opened the meeting with approval of the October 31, 2017 meeting minutes and opened the floor for questions and comments. A motion was requested for approval of the minutes. Glenn Clingenpeel moved to approve the minutes

followed by Lori Traweek who seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

Report of the Chair:

Helen Paige gave thanks to Nancy Parra for her service to the Council during her tenure as Chair. Helen Paige highlighted Nancy's numerous roles on the GBC during her tenure as vice-chair and chair to the Council and previous service as chair of the Public Participation and Education Subcommittee, and presented her with an award from the Council recognizing her years of service.

Helen Paige acknowledged the departure of Bill Baker and John Jacob from the GBC and welcomed Glenn Clingenpeel as Vice Chair.

Helen Paige announced that the nominations committee would be meeting and is seeking volunteers to serve.

Helen Paige also gave an update on the status of the Hurricane Harvey donation from the Barnegat Bay Estuary Program in New Jersey, which was given to the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program (CBBEP) in Corpus Christi and GBEP to support the two national estuary programs following Harvey. The Budget and Priorities Subcommittee considered the need of the region hit directly by the landfall of the storm to be more pressing and stated that the funding would remain in total at the CBBEP. Sarah Bernhardt noted that a thank you letter will be sent to Barnegat Bay Estuary Program and will copy the director of CBBEP.

Report of the Program:

Dr. Sarah Bernhardt introduced the GBEP team's newest employee, Cassidy Kempf. Cassidy's start date with the program was December 18, 2017. She has undergraduate degrees from Rice University in Ecology and Policy Studies and completed an undergraduate research study on the effect of the Tawny Crazy Ant invasion in the Big Ticket National Preserve. Prior to her arrival at the GBEP she oversaw the implementation of a riparian buffer for Houston's Parks and Recreation Department. Cassidy will be leading implementation tracking and reporting for the Galveston Bay Plan, maintenance and updates of estuary program websites, supporting workshops and symposium, and project management.

Dr. Bernhardt announced that the GBEP team has been working with Subcommittees of the Council and partners to develop the fiscal (FY) 2019 work plan projects proposals and budget. She stated that GBEP staff would give a presentation later in the meeting.

Action Item: Annual Conflict of Interest Form Completions (*all Council members and proxies sign annually*).

Dr. Bernhardt reminded the Council that By-Laws acknowledgement forms must be signed annually, prior to our annual work plan approval. Council members were asked to submit their forms during break.

Action Item: Approval of nomination of Dr. Pamela Plotkin to represent Texas Sea Grant. Helen Paige summarized Dr. Plotkin's biography and requested a motion for approval. Brian Koch motioned for approval, seconded by Glenn Laird.

Presentation & Discussion: FY 2019 GBEP Work Plan. There were a series of short presentations by GBEP staff covering the projects and programmatic costs being proposed.

GBEP staff provided power point presentations and answered questions on specific projects.

(see attached presentation slides for project details)

Dr. Bernhardt - Presented an estimated budget and plan for the GBEP for one year from Sept. 1, 2018 - August 31, 2019.

Dr. Bernhardt - Presented proposed programmatic projects, then introduced GBEP staff to present subcommittee proposed FY 2019 budget and projects for council vote approval.

Lindsey Lippert - Presented the projects recommended by the Natural Resource Uses (NRU) Subcommittee of the Council. Please see presentation handout for additional information.

Lisa Marshall - Presented the projects recommended by the Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ) and Monitoring and Research (M&R) Subcommittees of the Council.

Cynthia Clevenger - Presented the projects recommended by the Public Participation and Education (PPE) Subcommittee of the Council. Please see presentation handout for additional information.

Dr. Bernhardt thanked the GBEP staff, subcommittee chairs, and subcommittee members for their work in developing the projects.

Discussion and Action Item: FY 2019 work plan and alternatives approval for the GBEP 2019 Budget

After an opportunity for questions, and a discussion of the procedure for approving projects, the Council voted on blocks of proposed projects. See table below for results.

Proposed Projects

Project Title(s)	Abstention(s)	1 st Motion	2 nd Motion	Objection(s)	Approval Status
Programmatic Costs and Projects					
Operations Budget	Doug Jacobson (EPA)	Glenn Clingenpeel	Brian Koch	None	Approved
Estuary Resilience Assessment	John Huffman (USFWS)				
Mickey Leland Environmental Intern	Kelly Holligan (TCEQ)				

NRU Projects					
Conservation Assistance Program (CAP)	Doug Jacobson (EPA)	Lori Traweek (GCA)	Nancy Parra	None	Approved
Dollar Bay-Moses Lake Wetlands Restoration & Protection	John Huffman (USFWS)				
GIFT-Anahuac Freshwater Wetland Restoration / Armand Bayou Invasive Species Control	Kelly Holligan (TCEQ)				
Clear Creek Riparian Restoration	Courtney Smith (GBF)				
	Kate Saul (GLO)				
	Audrey Kuklenz (RRC)				
WSQ Projects					
Bacterial Source Tracking (BST) on Tributaries of Trinity and Galveston Bays	Kate Saul (GLO)	Sharron Stewart	Glenn Clingenpeel	None	Approved
Green Infrastructure For Texas (GIFT) - Stormwater Treatment Wetlands:	Doug Jacobson (EPA)				
Nutrient and Sediment Monitoring of the Lower San Jacinto River	John Huffman (USFWS)				
Highland Bayou Watershed Protection Plan (WPP)	Kelly Holligan (TCEQ)				

Designing for Impact: Promoting Low Impact Development (LID) Implementation (Alternative Project)					
M&R Projects					
Seafood Evaluation in a Portion of Galveston Bay Characterization of the Influence of Freshwater Inflow on the Trinity River Delta Indicators Galveston Bay Intertidal Oyster Reef Mapping and Analysis Monitoring Zooplankton Dynamics for Ecosystem Assessment of Galveston Bay (Alternative Project)	Doug Jacobson (EPA) John Huffman (USFWS) Kelly Holligan (TCEQ) Kirk Wiles (TDSHS)	Nancy Parra	Todd Running	None	Approved
PPE Projects					
River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash Know Your Watershed Educators Summer Institute	Doug Jacobson (EPA) John Huffman (USFWS)	Ronnie Schultz	Brian Koch	None	Approved

Blackhawk Park Coastal Prairie Restoration & Education Project	Kelly Holligan (TCEQ) Lori Traweek (GCA)				
Seawall Recycling	Todd Running (H- GAC)				

Presentation & Discussions: Comprehensive draft (internal review for GBC and Subcommittees) of *Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition* (H-GAC and GBEP) by Kathy Janhsen (H-GAC).

Kathy Janhsen presented to the GBC members and Subcommittees a layout of the draft plan and explained what is needed from them by GBEP in this internal review, prior to releasing the plan for public comment.

Dr. Bernhardt discussed the requested level of review by the partners and members of the council and committees. She reminded the council that the deadline for the GBC and Subcommittees' pre-public review is COB February 2nd, and reminded them that additional comments could be submitted during the public comment period in March.

Dr. Bernhardt reminded the Council about a special meeting to approve the *Galveston Bay Plan* revision, tentatively set for August 22, 2018. She asked if the council would be amenable to a telephone/webinar option or had any preference for an in-person meeting.

Council Members Roundtable: News and Announcements

Ronnie Schultz – Reported that the Galveston County Health Department can provide meeting space at a community center with space for 50 - 100 people.

Todd Running – Reported that the Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Coordinated Monitoring meeting will be in April. Trash Bash will be taking place on March 24, 2018 with 15 sites this year. You can go to www.trashbash.org to get more information.

Brian Koch – Reported that the Cedar Bayou Watershed Stewards class is next Thursday, February 8th in Mont Beliveau.

Kate Saul – Reported that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) highlighted Exploration Green.

Mollie Powell – Beach cleanup in Matagorda. GLO is conducting debris removal in bays and rivers, but they are running out of funding. Due to this, the GLO is focusing on the southern coast of Texas.

Dr. Nelun Fernando (Proxy) - The Texas Water Development Board is in the process of developing requests for qualifications and scopes of work for environmental flow studies. These studies will support agency programs as well as work plans for adaptive management of the stakeholder-driven process for identifying and quantifying environmental flow regimes needed to maintain sound ecological environments in

Texas rivers and estuaries (established with the passage of Senate Bill 3 of the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007).

Glenn Clingenpeel - Reported that the Trinity River Authority received one of the Texas Water Development Board grants.

Nancy Parra - Thanked everyone for their support while she served as Chair to the Galveston Bay Council. Reported that voting for primary elections is March 6 and anyone can visit vote411.org to read candidate responses.

Helen Paige - Thanked Nancy for her service as the GBC Chair.

Doug Jacobs - The federal government will be funded via a continuing resolution through next week.

Courtney Smith - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Abandoned Crab Trap removal will be held on February 17th at Ft. Anahuac and Bolivar. March 24, 2018 Trash Bash site at Bay Area Park; April 21, 2018 Bay Day Festival location Kemah Boardwalk; and May 12, 2018 20th year anniversary of Marsh Mania.

Taylor Rieck - Coastal Conservation Association will have their crab trap removal station at Fat Boys in Tiki Island.

Glenn Laird - Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) is in recovery mode and has developed a path to moving forward post Harvey. The agency is almost finished with cleanup and is shifting resources to address Harvey damage and other existing issues. HCFCD is developing a wish list of major new projects to fund (federal, state and local).

Pamela Plotkin - Thanked everyone for the nomination to the Galveston Bay Council. Texas Sea Grant is a federally funded NOAA affiliate program for which they need to raise matching funds, maybe some from the State of Texas and some from Texas A&M University (TAMU). TAMU also receives funding from a special education allocation from the State of Texas Budget, which received a 30% cut.

Christine Bergren - Reported that she is honored to have been appointed to the Council to represent Texas Department of Transportation and is looking forward to serving on the Council.

Rebecca Hensley - TPWD Coastal Fisheries office will be relocating to La Marque, Texas. The office has a staff of 40. TPWD is participating in the abandoned crab trap removal. Anyone interested in participating can check the TPWD website for more information.

Albert Gonzalez - Thanked all Federal and State government employees for their efforts despite ongoing budget cuts to their programs.

Kelly Holligan - Reported that Water Quality Standards will be presented to the TCEQ Commission for adoption on February 7, 2018.

Kerry Niemann - *Regarding RESTORE*: The final Multi Year Implementation Plan for the first round of RESTORE Bucket 1 funding was approved by the U.S. Department of Treasury on December 19, 2017. The plan lists 26 projects totaling \$114 million. Not all 26 projects will receive funding, but as civil penalties continue to rise, the remaining projects can be considered for implementation. Due to ongoing payments into the RESTORE Trust Fund, the total funds available exceed \$86 million.

Regarding the Total Maximum Daily Load Program: The Tres Palacios TMDL and Implementation-Plan, and Jarbo Bayou TMDL were adopted and approved on January 24, 2018. The draft Lower San Antonio River Implementation Plan is scheduled to go to agenda for release for public comment on March 7, 2018.

Regarding the NPS Program: The 2017 NPS Management Program was submitted to EPA for approval by Governor Abbott on December 18, 2017. The 2017 Annual Report has been submitted to EPA for approval.

Aaron Chastain – NOAA Fisheries Ocean Science Day will be held on March 24th at Ft. Crockett facility from 9:00am – 3:00pm.

Public comments: Helen Paige invited comments or announcements from the public.

Erin Kinney – HARC is working on the next State of the Bay Report, 4th Edition, and will release a crosswalk document using the new 2nd edition of *The Galveston Bay Plan*.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 11.55am.

Upcoming Galveston Bay Council Meeting Dates: April 18, 2018; July 18, 2018; October 17, 2018. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the quarter from 9:30am – 12:30pm. If there are known conflicts, Council members are encouraged to propose alternate dates to the Council.