

# **GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL QUARTERLY MEETING**

**Location:** Harris-Galveston Subsidence District, 1660 West Bay Area Blvd, Friendswood, TX 77546-2640

**AGENDA: Wednesday, January 16, 2019**

- 9:30 A.M.:**        **Call to Order:** Introduction of Members and Delegates
- Action Item:** Approval of October 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes
- Report of the Program** (Lisa Marshall)
- Report of the Chair** (Helen Paige)
- 9:45 A.M.:**        Howard Slobodin, General Council, Trinity River Authority - "A Look at the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session"
- 10:30 A.M.:**        **Break**
- 10:45 A.M.:**        Tony Williams, General Land Office and Kelly Burkes-Copes, United States Army Corps of Engineers - "Coastal Texas Study Update - Presentation and Discussion on Draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement"
- 12:00 P.M.:**        **Council Member Roundtable:** News, Announcements and Discussion
- 12:15 P.M.:**        **Public comments**
- 12:30 P.M.:**        **Adjourn**

**Upcoming Galveston Bay Council Meeting Dates:** April 17, 2019, July 17, 2019; October 16, 2019. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the quarter from 9:30 am-12:30 pm. If there are known conflicts, Council members are welcome to propose alternate dates to the Council.

## **GALVESTON BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM**

### **Galveston Bay Council (GBC) Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2018**

#### **Attendees:**

**Galveston Bay Council Chair:** Helen Paige (Marinas)

**Galveston Bay Council Vice-Chair:** Glenn Clingenpeel (Trinity River Authority)

**Estuary Program Staff Lead:** Lisa Marshall, Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP)

The October 17, 2018 quarterly GBC meeting was held at Harris-Galveston Subsidence District, 1660 West Bay Area Blvd., Houston, Texas, from 9:30 AM to 11:35 AM.

**Members Present:** Christine Bergren, Caryn Brooks, Andrea Catanzaro, Patrick Cuty, Rebecca Hensley, Doug Jacobson, Brian Koch, Audrey Kuklenz, Kristin Lambrecht, Mike Lee, Garry McMahan, Kerry Niemann, Helen Paige, Nancy Parra, Ana Partin, Taylor Rieck, Hanadi Rifai, Caimee Schoenbaechler, Ronnie Schultz, Rusty Senac, Linda Shead, Sharron Stewart, Rusty Swafford, Tracy Woody

**Members Not Present/Delegates:** Scott Alford, Glenn Clingenpeel, Jeff DallaRosa, Albert Gonzales, Phillip Goodwin, Jace Houston\*, John Huffman, Will Nipper\*, Pamela Plotkin, Russ Poppe\*, Kate Saul\*, Mary Beth Stengler, Bob Stokes, Jeff Taebel\*, Lori Traweek\*, Kirk Wiles

(\*=Member designated a proxy)

**Proxies Present (Council member absent/designated proxy):** Jace Houston/Kim Wright, Will Nipper/Mariz Valdez, Russ Poppe/Glenn Laird, Kate Saul/Mollie Powell, Jeff Taebel/Todd Running, Lori Traweek/Gordon Peterson

**Current Vacancies:** None

**Other Attendees:** Christopher Marshall, Cruz Hinojosa, Bryan Eastham, Joanie Steinhaus, Theresa Morris, Evan Turner, Kathy Janhsen

**Additional GBEP Staff present:** Cynthia Clevenger, Cassidy Kempf, Lindsey Lippert, Kristen McGovern, Mary Stiles

#### **Call to Order: Introduction of Members and Delegates**

Helen Paige called the meeting to order and requested introductions and confirmed a quorum with Lisa Marshall.

#### **Action Item: Approval of July 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Helen Paige opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. A motion was requested for approval. Rusty Senac moved to approve the minutes, and Glenn Laird seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with one correction.

### **Report of the Program:**

Lisa Marshall announced the Galveston Bay Estuary Program will be posting an opening for the Water and Sediment Quality/Monitoring and Research Coordinator position. GBEP is hoping to have the position posted by October 26, 2018 and have someone hired by December 1, 2018. Lisa thanked all the Council members for their support with the Galveston Bay Plan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

### **Report of the Chair:**

Helen Paige announced that GBEP staff has been working closely with committees of the Council and partners to develop the FY 2020 work plan project proposals and the budget. The project proposals and budget were presented to the B&P subcommittee on June 27, 2018. The subcommittee members voted to recommend the proposed projects and budget to the Council for approval on October 17, 2018. As part of the process to approve the work plan, the acknowledgement of the bylaws form must be signed and dated by all Council members or member proxies. Forms are provided at the sign-in table and can be submitted to Mary Stiles. This will be a formal reminder and to ensure that everyone acknowledges the bylaw rules. The form is signed annually before the work plan is approved. For those that have not signed or arrived late, you may sign and date the acknowledgment form during the meeting break.

**Action Item:** Annual acknowledgement of bylaws form completions - all Council members and proxies sign annually

Helen Paige announced the Council is preparing to go to the Commissioner's Agenda to renew the bylaws, approve the new Council member's terms, and approve the Galveston Bay Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. A date has not been submitted, but the date will be sometime in February. GBEP's staff will be sending out renewal forms to those members whose term will expire in 2019. Please look for the email. Sign, date, and return via email as confirmation that you will continue to represent your stakeholder group or nominate someone else. When an Agenda date is submitted, Council members can discuss which members will travel to Austin to show support for the Galveston Bay Council.

**Action Item:** Approval of nomination of Cruz Hinojosa, citizen, to represent Underrepresented Communities

Helen presented the action item to Nancy Parra.

Nancy read Cruz's biography and requested a motion to nominate him to represent Underrepresented Communities. Motion was made by Sharron Stewart and seconded by Linda Shead.

**Presentations & Discussion: Fiscal Year 2020 Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) Work Plan. A series of short presentations by GBEP staff covering the projects and programmatic costs being proposed**

The GBEP staff presented the projects and answered specific questions.

Helen asked for comments or discussions on the proposed work plan before moving forward for approval on each item.

**Action Item: Approval of each item in the proposed work plan**

Helen reminded the Council members that there is a practice to approve the budget line by line or category by category. Motions for each category will be made. Approval of each project by program area, a motion and second for each, and abstentions for each item were noted.

Projects were approved by program area:

Program Area	Motion	Second	Abstain
Programmatic	Nancy Parra	Brian Koch	Doug Jacobson, Mike Lee
NRU	Rusty Senac	Sharron Stewart	Doug Jacobson, Mike Lee
PPE	Linda Shead	Nancy Parra	Doug Jacobson, Mike Lee, Todd Running, Gordon Peterson
WSQ	Nancy Parra	Rusty Senac	Doug Jacobson, Mike Lee, Todd Running
M&R	Nancy Parra	Glenn Laird	Doug Jacobson, Mike Lee, Hanadi Rifai

**Presentation & Discussion: “Microplastics in Galveston Bay and the Gulf”, Theresa Morris – Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN)**

TIRN is a national organization that works to conserve endangered species. The TIRN Gulf of Mexico Program helps protect sea turtles, and in Galveston the TIRN team mainly focus on Kemp’s Ridley sea turtles. They partner with Texas A&M Galveston. During their rescue and protection efforts, TIRN and volunteers have encountered large amounts of trash and plastic pollution. Sea turtles are impacted by ingestion and entanglements from plastics, and the TIRN organization in Galveston is conducting research on microplastics on the beaches and bay side of Galveston Island.

Microplastic is defined as any piece of plastic smaller than 5 millimeters. They are further categorized into primary and secondary microplastics. Primary microplastics are created to be added to products such as microbeads found in facewash and toothpaste. Nurdles are also a primary microplastic found in small toys and packing materials and are also melted down to create larger plastic items. Secondary microplastics are any large pieces of plastic that has broken down to the 5-millimeter size.

Microplastics breakdown through photodegradation as they are exposed to sunlight and physical force, and as plastics get smaller they effect every level of the food web. Microfibers are also showing up in 100% of the water samples collected. Microfibers are fibers made from synthetic materials such as polyester and polyamide.

TIRN has been working with a group of organizations in a partner network in the Gulf states to create a snapshot of microplastics throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Dr. Maia McGuire, with the Sea Grant program at the University of Florida, created a citizen science protocol that any organization can do with a group of volunteers. The goal is to use the consistent protocol to obtain consistent data for comparison throughout the Gulf. Mississippi State University is also a partner. The university purchased the equipment used by TIRN for sampling and data analysis. Samples collected by TIRN and volunteers show that microplastics and microfibers are in 100 percent of their samples.

The TIRN is working with Moody Gardens and multiple schools in Galveston to expand their project sites. Ball High School and Galveston College want their own sites to oversee monitoring every month for two years. Expanding the sites with consistent monitoring will help assess trends such as looking at the amount of microfiber found during the high tourist season when more people are in the water. Also, during the flounder season, is there a higher amount of fishing line present? Expansion of sites will also allow monitoring primary microplastics to see if it can be traced back to a source. Monitoring will also expand to the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in November 2018.

TIRN also participates in community engagement and advocacy. TIRN teaches the three R's: reuse, recycle, and refuse. Refuse means to avoid using straws and single-use plastic shopping bags.

### **Presentation & Discussion: The Galveston Bay Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition-Final Draft Overview, Kathy Janhsen - Houston-Galveston Area Council**

Kathy Janhsen gave an overview of what changes were made to the draft document after the public comment period. The draft was presented to the public at an open house on Monday, March 5, 2018 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Galveston building in La Marque. Attendees learned about the four Plan Priorities identified in the draft and provided feedback to the GBEP. Stakeholders were also encouraged to review the draft document in greater detail and provide feedback during a 30-day comment period, from March 5, 2018 to April 4, 2018. The GBEP received 427 comments on the draft.

The changes made after the public comment period included greater tie-in between Actions and Plan Priorities. In their review of the draft in March, stakeholders identified several areas where Actions supported additional Plan Priorities. The Plan Priorities Matrix found on pages 36 and 37 of Galveston Bay Plan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition demonstrate just how integrated the 38 Actions and four Plan Priorities really are.

In addition, terminology was simplified and consistent throughout the document. A comment received consistently was that the terminology associated with the document was confusing. What's the difference between the CCMP and The Galveston Bay Plan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition? Are these terms interchangeable? So, it was simplified. Whenever you see the acronym CCMP in the document, that's referring to all versions of The Galveston Bay Plan. *GBP'95* refers to the document published in 1995, and *GBP'18* refers to this document - the second edition.

Multiple stakeholders expressed a desire for metrics to help easily reconcile whether an Action had been successfully completed. To address this, the GBEP developed specific Performance Measures for each of the 38 Actions that simplify what needs to be completed.

Ms. Janhsen reminded the Council that once members approved the final draft, it would then need final approval from the TCEQ and the EPA.

### **Action Item: Council approval of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

Helen asked Council members for comments or discussion on the Galveston Bay Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition before moving forward for approval. Helen read the resolution. Rusty Senac motioned to adopt and it was seconded by Linda Shead.

### **Council Members Roundtable: News and Announcements**

**Todd Running:** BIG Fall Meeting on October 23, 2018 at 1:00pm; Supplemental Environmental Project for OSSFs has had several systems installed and several more being planned.

**Brian Koch:** The RFP for 319 grants ended on September 24<sup>th</sup>. TSSWCB is planning on giving a million dollars out this year. Double Bayou is starting implementation with a public meeting in January or February.

**Rusty Senac:** Stated his support for the microplastics presentation. Exxon has pledged money to improve the speed of degradation of plastics.

**Nancy Parra:** Early voting will be October 22<sup>nd</sup> - November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Texas had the least number of voters at the last midterm election and typically sees normal registration rates but low voting rates.

**Linda Shead:** Bayou Preservation Association is working with the Houston History Alliance to create four events on Houston women in the environment. Events will include the Edith L Moore sanctuary, a Buffalo Bayou Preservation boat tour, a Memorial Park Conservancy guided walk, and a panel with environmental leaders.

**Helen Paige:** Encouraged Council members to participate in subcommittees and welcomed Lisa Marshall as the GBEP program manager.

**Caimee Schoenbaechler:** The Trinity San Jacinto Basin Bay Stakeholder meeting is October 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00pm in Conroe. The State Flood Assessment is currently incorporating public comments.

**Rebecca Hensley:** The Coastal Fisheries office is still in its temporary location in La Marque. They are best contacted via email. Their re-build may be done before January.

**Mollie Powell:** Coast-wide Coastal Resiliency Master Plan - a forum will be provided on October 21 in Port Isabel and on October 25 in Corpus Christi.

**Kerry Niemann:** On behalf of the Water Quality Planning Division of the TCEQ I have the following updates to provide.

- On August 20<sup>th</sup>, former Chairman Bryan Shaw announced the appointment of Toby Baker as Executive Director to the TCEQ.

- Also, on August 20<sup>th</sup>, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Emily Lindley as the next commissioner to the TCEQ.
- On August 31<sup>st</sup>, Chairman Bryan Shaw retired, concluding more than ten years of service to the TCEQ.
- Also, on August 31<sup>st</sup>, Governor Gregg Abbott designated Commissioner Jon Niermann as Chairman to the TCEQ.
- Kelly Holligan retired as Water Quality Planning Division Director on September 28<sup>th</sup>. As of this moment no replacement has been selected.

### **Regarding RESTORE**

#### **Bucket 1**

- TCEQ will submit seven federal applications consisting of 23 of the 26 projects in the accepted Multi-Year Implementation Plan (MIP) based on the following primary eligible activities:
  - Restoration & Protection;
  - Mitigation;
  - Promotion of Consumption of Seafood;
  - Planning Assistance;
  - Tourism; Flood Protection; and
  - Workforce Development
- Approximately \$97 million is currently available to Texas through Bucket 1.

#### **Bucket 2**

- TCEQ was awarded grant funds that will be used to coordinate with Texas coastal experts, elected officials, representatives for NRDA and NFWF, the four RESTORE Gulf states, federal entities and the public, in identifying priorities and project proposals for the next Bucket 2 Funded Priority List (FPL).
- Approximately \$350 million is expected to be available to fund projects in the next FPL, which will be referred to as FPL 3.
- Public meetings will be held beginning in December. Details on those meetings, as well as updates on related activities, will be posted on the Texas RESTORE web site (see below).

#### **Bucket 3**

- The initial State Expenditure Plan (SEP) is focusing on Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts and is a programmatic plan that addresses the distribution of approximately \$31 million in Bucket 3 funds.
- The public provided comments on the draft initial SEP and TCEQ staff, under the direction of Toby Baker, the Governor's appointee to the RESTORE Council, is currently drafting the final initial SEP for submission to the Council for approval.
- The programmatic areas to be included in the final SEP:

- Nature-Based Tourism
- Removal of debris and/or associated sediment from creeks, bayous and other waterways to improve water
- Restoration: Water Quality and Quantity
- Shoreline and Beach Restoration
- Other SEPs will be developed in later years as additional Bucket 3 funds become available. Texas is expected to receive a total of \$121 million by the end of 2031.

For updates on RESTORE-related activities visit: <https://www.restorethetexascoast.org/>

**Regarding the Texas Coastal Nonpoint Source Management Program:**

The GLO and TCEQ continue to work with NOAA and EPA on approval of six (6) remaining conditions. The deadline to submit an approvable program is June 2019.

**Regarding the TMDL Program:**

- The Oso Creek TMDL is scheduled to go to agenda to release for public comment on December 12.
- The Sycamore Creek TMDL is scheduled to go to agenda for adoption on January 16.
- The Lavaca River TMDL and Implementation Plan are also scheduled to go to agenda to release for public comment on January 16.

**Regarding the 2016 Integrated Report:**

- It is going to Commissioner's Agenda today for approval to be submitted to EPA.

**Regarding Water Quality Standards:**

- They are still with EPA pending approval.

**Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM

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