

Budget and Priorities (B&P) Subcommittee of the Galveston Bay Council (GBC)

Date: Wednesday, October 4, 2023, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), Virtual Teams

Minutes

Attendees

Members attended: Scott Alford, Glenn Clingenpeel, Kendall Guidroz, George Guillen, Albert Gonzales, Brian Koch, Michael LaMontagne, Mike Lee, Linda Shead, Philip Smith, Lori Traweek, Huy Vu, Cindy Wilems

Guests attended: Justin Bower, Kevin de Santiago, Stephanie Glenn, Anwar Jacinto Moreno, Steven Johnston, Hui Liu, Teresita Mendiola, Kelli Ondracek, Chris Serenari

GBEP Staff attended: Matthew Abernathy, Ellen Creecy, Kari Howard, Lindsey Lippert, Lisa Marshall, Christian Rines, Casey Taylor.

Welcome

Lisa Marshall welcomed the members and guests to the meeting and reminded them that this meeting is very important because fiscal 2024 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) proposals and fiscal 2025 work plan and budget would be presented, and projects selected. Recommendations would be made to submit to the GBC for approval.

Action: The members reviewed the minutes. A motion to approve the minutes from July 5, 2023 was made by Glenn Clingenpeel and a second was made by Brian Koch. The minutes were approved.

Conflict of Interest

Ms. Marshall asked everyone to sign the Conflict-of-Interest Statement and reminded members to disclose any connection to the projects as they are being discussed.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Proposal Presentations

Ms. Marshall provided the procedures for the BIL presentations. Each entity with a proposal will get to present their project to the subcommittee. They can have up to five slides and five minutes to present plus three minutes for Q&A. Proposals will be presented in the order the proposals are listed on the spreadsheet. Once all of the proposals have been presented, the subcommittee will discuss them.

When the presentations were completed, subcommittee members asked individual presenters to expand or clarify points from their proposals. The subcommittee members had an in-depth discussion about the projects.

Three projects were selected with budgets adjusted to balance to the overall amount of BIL funds - \$909,800. The three projects are:

1. Resiliency Education and Infrastructure – GBF, \$336,000
2. Evaluating Galveston Bay’s Resilience to Ocean and Coastal Acidification – HARC, \$278,8000
3. Herman Brown Park Riparian Restoration and Community Engagement Project- Phase I – HPARD, \$295,000

Action: A motion was made by Mr. Koch to approve funding the three projects and corresponding budgets. Philip Smith seconded the motion. The three BIL projects were approved.

Update on Fiscal 2024 Additional Funding

Ms. Marshall explained that GBEP received \$100,000 in additional funding from EPA and an additional \$700,000 in state funds from the legislature. The staff added funds to projects already approved by the GBC and therefore the changes in funding did not need to be approved by the GBC. When these projects were originally approved, the GBC approved any additional funds would be added to already approved projects.

Staff Presentation of Work Plan with Fiscal 2025 State and Section 320 Projects and Budget

Staff presented the subcommittee recommended fiscal 2025 projects. They also presented the budget with the recommended projects. In addition, three balanced budgets were presented to the subcommittee members. There were budgets for \$750,000, \$800,000, and \$850,000. Because GBEP does not know how much funding they will receive for fiscal 2025, they developed budgets for the same amount that they have received for the last three years. If the three options are approved, then GBEP will not have to go back to the GBC at a later time to approve a different budget. The members selected the three balanced budgets and corresponding projects to recommend to the GBC.

Action: A motion was made by Mr. Smith and a second made by George Guillen. The three balanced budgets and corresponding projects were approved.

Planning for October GBC Meeting

- a. Chair and Vice Chair Nominations – Mr. Clingenpeel will nominate Bob Stokes as Chair and will read his bio at the GBC meeting. Mr. Koch will nominate Vance Darr as Vice Chair and will read his bio at the GBC meeting.
- b. Ronnie Schulze is retiring. Katherine Wilson was appointed to represent the Galveston County Health District.
- c. Presentations at the GBC Meeting - Ms. Marshall provided the titles of the presentations for the GBC meeting:
 - o *City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department’s Habitat Restoration Projects* - Kelly Ondracek, Houston Parks and Recreation Department
 - o *The Status of the Oyster Fishery in Galveston Bay* - Christine Jensen, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - o *Presentation of Revised Fiscal 2024 Work Plan Budget* - Ellen Creecy
 - o *Presentations & Discussion of Fiscal 2025 GBEP Work Plan: A series of short presentations* by GBEP staff covering proposed projects and programmatic costs

Setting a Date for the B&P Subcommittee Meetings in 2024

Ms. Marshall suggested having meetings from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the following dates:

- January 10, 2024
- April 3, 2024
- July 10, 2024
- October 2, 2024

Announcements and Program Updates

No announcements were made.

Upcoming meetings:

- Galveston Bay Council Meeting: October 18, 2023

Meeting adjourned

(Proposal and budget packets will be included for reference when posted on the website)