

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

Date: Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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

Minutes

Attendees

Members attended: Scott Alford, Ryan Bare (v), Glenn Clingenpeel (v), Kendall Guidroz (v), Brian Koch, Mike Lee, Linda Shead, Philip Smith, Huy Vu (v), Cindy Wilems

Guests attended: Michael Roberts

GBEP Staff attended: Matthew Abernathy, Jenelle Estrada, Zoe Gapayao, Lindsey Lippert, Lisa Marshall, Christian Rines

Welcome

Lisa Marshall welcomed the members to the meeting.

Action: The members reviewed the minutes. Linda Shead suggested adding a comma to the number of acres acquired – 1,100 – so that it does not refer to a time. A motion to approve the minutes as amended from January 8, 2025 was made by Cindy Wilems and a second was made by Brian Koch. The minutes were approved.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Funding Priorities Discussion

The subcommittee coordinators presented the IIJA priorities selected by each of their subcommittees to recommend to the B&P subcommittee. Ms. Marshall then detailed the priorities from the past year, past project selections, and the timeline for submitting proposals for IIJA funding this year.

The members began by reviewing the action priorities. After comparing the previous year's action priorities and this year's priorities, they combined and re-worded the action priorities. A similar process took place to develop the support priorities. It was important to the members that the action and support priorities did not overlap where entities could **select** an action priority and not have to **use** a support priority.

The priorities developed for Fiscal 2026 IIJA Funding:

Federal Fiscal Year 2026 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Funding Priorities
Action Priorities (Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses IIJA priorities. Proposals must address one or more of the following actions)
1. Habitat Conservation, Restoration, and Enhancement that incorporates water quality protection/improvement and benefit to wildlife.

2. Projects that evaluate water quality indicators or address sources of water and sediment quality degradation in support of watershed management.
3. Projects that are on the ground (place-based) within the lower Galveston Bay watershed.
Support Priorities (Grant recipient activities must implement the Plan. Additional recipient selection criteria includes whether a project addresses IJA priorities. Proposals must address at least one supporting action developed by the subcommittees, but preference will be given to projects that are able to incorporate multiple supporting actions)
1. Engaging K-12 students and/or adults in hands-on, place-based environmental education.
2. Includes region-wide initiatives that foster collaborations and/or build capacity with new communities and organizations while implementing the Engage Communities priority plan.
3. Monitoring and research that produces environmental data applicable to future implementation and management decisions and/or establishes new or updated environmental benchmarks.

Action Item: Approval of the IJA Priorities

Ms. Marshall asked for a motion to approve the priorities developed for the IJA project proposals. Mr. Koch made a motion to approve the priorities and a second was made by Philip Smith. The IJA priorities were approved.

Planning for January GBC Meeting

Ms. Marshall will provide updates from the TCEQ’s Commissioners’ Agenda, the workshop with EPA, and a possible dinner for the GBC members the night before the 2026 symposium starts. Bob Stokes will present the IJA priorities that were developed by the B&P Subcommittee.

There will be three presentations and an update by two of the subcommittee coordinators:

Presentation: *Creating a Legacy of Sustainability for Houston 2026* – Elizabeth Carlson, Tricon Energy and Chair, World Cup Sustainability Subcommittee

Presentation: *SPLASh Project Update* – Chloe Dannenfelser, American Bird Conservancy

Presentation: *Bay to Schools Project Update* – Cindy Wilems, Galveston Bay Foundation

Subcommittee Updates

- Monitoring and Research – Jenelle Estrada
- Public Participation and Education – Zoe Gapayao

Announcements and Program Updates

- Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium – will take place April 3 at the zoo.
- Digging Deeper Field Day – April 29th at Sylvia Rodriguez Park
- GBF Oyster Sea Fest – April 5 at Buffalo Bayou Park

Meeting adjourned