

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

Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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

Minutes

Attendees

Members attended: Scott Alford, Glenn Clingenpeel (v), Kendall Guidroz, George Guillen, Brian Koch, Vance Darr, Linda Shead (v), Philip Smith (v), Bob Stokes, Lori Traweek (v), Huy Vu (v), Cindy Wilems (v)

(v=Member present online; not counted in the quorum)

Guests attended:

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

Welcome

Lisa Marshall welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced a new GBEP staff member, Hope Cole, to the subcommittee.

Action: The members reviewed the minutes. A motion to approve the minutes as amended from April 2, 2025, was made by Bob Stokes and a second was made by Brian Koch. The minutes were approved.

Nominations for GBC Chair and Vice Chair

Ms. Marshall opened the discussion for the selection of GBC Chair and Vice Chair as the current chairs will reach the end of their terms in October 2025. The subcommittee discussed Elizabeth Fazio Hale of the Gulf Coast Authority as a leading nominee for chair. Linda Shead brought forth discussion on encouraging involvement of more junior and diverse members within the council for consideration to future nominees. Mr. Stokes advised building relationships with council members within the broader category expected to be considered for chair and vice chair positions in the succession cycle following the forthcoming transition.

Ms. Marshall explained that she was addressing council member involvement by inviting informational presentations from council members at GBC meetings. Maria Valdez of Dow (Greater Houston Partnership) was selected to present at the July 2025 GBC meeting. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair will take place at the October 2025 GBC meeting.

Bylaws Update

Following reviews from the Natural Resource Uses (NRU), Public Participation and Education (PPE), Monitoring and Research (M&R), and Water and Sediment Quality (WSQ) Subcommittees, Ms. Marshall introduced the decision to review bylaws to this subcommittee. Mr. Stokes, Mr. Darr, and Ms. Marshall reviewed and edited the bylaws in track changes before the meeting. Changes included making the bylaws more

succinct and consistent with GBEP wording. Ms. Marshall brought Article III, *Section 2* (participation), Article V, *Section 6* (Conduct), and Article V *Section 7* (Quorum) of the bylaws to the subcommittee for discussion. Minor changes were agreed upon to the sections mentioned above. Ms. Marshall will send the revised bylaws to the members for review, then the subcommittee will vote on the bylaws at the October meeting.

Fiscal 2027 Subcommittee Section 320 Priorities Discussion

The coordinators presented the priorities identified by their respective subcommittees as recommendations for consideration by the B&P Subcommittee. Ms. Marshall then detailed the priorities from the past year, past project selections, and the timeline for submitting proposals for Section 320 and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding this year.

The subcommittee priorities developed for Fiscal 2027:

Fiscal 2027 Subcommittee Priorities	
NRU	• Habitat acquisition. • Enhancement of existing or ongoing restoration/conservation efforts with special emphasis on: ◦ Adaptive management for previously completed projects; ◦ Projects that have lost funding from other federal sources; and ◦ Nonnative species management. • Benefit to native fish and wildlife, including federal and state listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, or nongame wildlife. • Brings funding, work leverage, or multiple Priority Area/Subcommittee benefits to the program. • Project urgency: Project must be completed in next 24 months or opportunity is lost.
PPE	• Empowers K-12 students and/or adults to positively impact their local environment through increased scientific literacy and community projects. • Connects new audiences to existing/completed projects or the natural habitat. • Opportunities for GBEP and partners to host workshops/networking events for education and outreach practitioners on key topics. • Conservation and environmental workforce development.
M&R	• Meaningful and effective monitoring of existing, past, and new projects (NRU: especially species of concern, WSQ, PPE). • Baseline assessments for large-scale, man-made changes to Galveston Bay. • Assessment, exposure, and response to stressors, including but not limited to: • Species of Greatest Conservation Need;

- Contact recreation standards;
- Environmental parameters;
- Emerging contaminants; and
- Legacy contaminants.
- Investigate ecosystem services and economic valuation of bay resources.

WSQ

- Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans.
- Implementation and/or evaluation of best management practices that address point and nonpoint source pollution.
- Public health risk awareness outreach campaigns related to contact recreation and/or seafood consumption.

Planning for July GBC Meeting

There will be three presentations:

Presentation: *Getting to Know Council Member Maria Valdez* – Maria Valdez, DOW (Greater Houston Partnership)

Presentation: *One Health, a New Vision for Conservation?* – Jaime Gonzales, Executive Director, University of Houston Institute for Ecological Resilience

Presentation: *The Distribution and Fate of Tire Rubber-Derived Chemicals in Galveston Bay* – Michael Shields, Ph.D., Texas A&M University

Subcommittee Updates

- Monitoring and Research – Jenelle Estrada
- Public Participation and Education – Zoe Gapayao
- Natural Resource Uses – Lindsey Lippert
- Water and Sediment Quality – Christian Rines

Announcements and Program Updates

- The GBEP office will be relocating to 1002 Gemini Street, Houston, Texas. The move will commence in late August or September 2025. In-person attendees for the next B&P Subcommittee meeting will (likely) convene at this location.
- Brian Koch announced that the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution funding request for proposals will open in August.

Meeting adjourned