



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

November 30, 2016

Hudson River Foundation

Participants

Policy Committee: Chris Daggett (HRF, Chair), Col. David Caldwell (ACE), Catherine McCabe (EPA-alt), Thomas Creamer (ACE-alt), Angela Licata (NYC DEP), Kerry Kirk-Pflugh (NJ DEP-alt), Bernice Malione (PANYNJ), Phyllis Reich (NJ Local Government- alt, phone)

Management Committee: Meredith Comi (CAC), Clay Sherman (NJ DEP), Shino Tanikawa (CAC), Judith Weis (STAC), Rob Pirani (HEP), Lisa Baron (ACE), Rick Balla (EPA), Jeff Myers (NYSDEC), Karen Greene (NOAA, phone), Bridget McKenna (NJHDG), Dennis Suszkowski (STAC)

Others in attendance: Peter Brandt (EPA, phone), Rick Winfield (EPA), Nesmarie Negron (EPA), Stan Stephansen (EPA), Jason Fagel (NYSDEC), Fran Dunwell (NYSDEC)

HRF/HEP Office Staff: Jim Lodge, Ariane Giudicelli, Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff, Chris Zeppie (consultant - HEP)

- 1. Introductions and agenda review:** Chris Daggett chaired the meeting. Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.
- 2. Approval of July 26 Meeting Minutes:** The committee reviewed the minutes from the July 26 Policy Committee Meeting.

Action: The Committee approved the minutes from the July 26 PC Meeting.

- 3. Program review:** Rob Pirani reviewed the program activities since the Committee's July meeting. Kate Boicourt left in September and a new restoration program manager will start in January. Candidates are being interviewed for the Bronx/Harlem River Urban Waters Ambassador position. HEP has received a couple of grants including the NEIWPCC Aquatic Trash Prevention grant for the Lower Passaic River watershed and the metrics and monitoring protocols for nature-based features grant from NYSERDA as part of a team led by the Science & Resiliency Institute @ Jamaica Bay. In addition, HEP will be providing a grant to develop a web application for public interaction with HRECOS data.
- 4. Action Agenda & CCMP revision**
 - a.** Rob reviewed progress on the CCMP revision over the past year, including the Action Agenda 2016-2021, Climate Vulnerability Assessment, Finance Plan, State of the Estuary

Report (SOE) and an Environmental Monitoring Plan. The State of the Estuary conference and release of the Action Agenda is slated for May or June 2017. The format of the SOE report is still being determined and this can be a key agenda item for the March PC meeting. The Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Finance Plan are currently in draft form and will be finalized in March (see presentation materials for additional details). HEP is in need of communications assistance and may hire someone to help with graphics development and production of the SOE report and Action Agenda.

Action: Rob will circulate the draft Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Funding Report for review prior to the March Meeting.

- b. Rob reviewed the content of the Action Agenda, beginning with long-term goals and objectives for each. The actual details of what we will be accomplishing under each goal will be laid out in our yearly Workplan. The committee had a number of comments and suggestions on the content :
 - i. There are a large number of items to focus on and the likelihood of success is higher with fewer actions. The committee can help to narrow these down.
 - ii. A timeline is lacking as are ways to evaluate the goals and objectives.
 - iii. Recreation has significant potential and should be explicitly stated in our Public Access goal.
 - iv. EPA strongly supports the following objective under water quality: *“Improve coordination and begin to establish consensus amongst regulatory agencies on science, standards and design conditions in shared waters”* and suggests that 5 or fewer waterbodies are selected as a focus to begin to address the standards issue.
 - v. The *“Accelerate creation, adoption and implementation of Long Term Control Plans and MS4 Permits”* objective should really focus on improving communication about LTCPs, infrastructure upgrades and benefits to the public. Any work undertaken by HEP should be coordinated with Jersey Water Works and the SWIM Coalition (NY) who are involved in this issue.
 - vi. Regarding the D-3 Action *“Develop and distribute factsheets for contaminants in fish, crabs, and other shellfish”*, these factsheets already exist but HEP could help communicate this information to the public.
 - vii. The *“Address monitoring gaps”* objective under water quality will focus on pathogen and nearshore monitoring.
 - viii. There is some overlap between different action items within the Public Access goal. There is currently insufficient communication about what is safe in terms of water quality and other considerations when it comes to public access.
 - ix. HEP is still defining objectives and action items for the Public Education and Outreach goal. It is possible that this goal will reference other action items as there is significant overlap with the other long-term goals.

Action: Rob will email the committee with a revised set of actions based today's conversation.

Action: HEP requests detailed comments on goal/objective/action re-wording; in particular narrowing down the number of action items and objectives and prioritizing the actions by December 7th.

Action: HEP will consolidate and start re-wording objectives and action items based on today's conversation. A finalized draft Action Agenda will be distributed to the committee after the incorporation of all comments and suggestions following the December 13th Management Committee meeting.

Action: HEP will develop a Gantt chart/timeline for our objectives to be used internally by our partners in order to keep track of progress over time.

5. **State of the Estuary Conference:** the spring 2017 conference will convene partners to release the Action Agenda and get input on the SOE report, as well as celebrate 30 years for HEP and HREP.

6. **Updates**

- a. Kerry Kirk-Pflugh will no longer be directly involved with HEP but will be the NJDEP liaison with all NJ mayors. She will be available to assist with conversations to help advance action items in the Estuary region.

Action: the committee should think about ways to engage the NJ Urban Mayors Association and contact Kerry with ideas.

7. **Future meetings:** the PC will meet in March, July and November 2017 with exact dates TBD.