



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes (approved July 26, 2016)

January 7, 2016

Hudson River Foundation

Participants

Policy Committee: David Caldwell (ACOE), Thomas Creamer (ACOE-alt), Chris Daggett (HRF), Judith Enck (EPA), Angela Licata (NYC DEP), Kerry Kirk-Pflugh (NJ DEP), Bernice Malione (PANYNJ), Jim Tierney (NYSDEC), Charles Warren (CAC/STAC)

Management Committee: Pinar Balci (NYC DEP), Rick Balla (EPA), Rob Buchanan (CAC), Meredith Comi (CAC), Karen Greene (by phone) (NOAA), Jeff Myers (NYSDEC), Evelyn Powers (IEC), Clay Sherman (NJ DEP), Shino Tanikawa (CAC), Nellie Tsipoura (by phone) (CAC), Judith Weis (STAC), Dennis Suszkowski (STAC), Rob Pirani (HEP)

Others in attendance: Lisa Baron (ACOE), Peter Brandt (EPA), Fran Dunwell (NYSDEC), Cliff Jones (ACOE), Venetia Lannon (NYSDEC), Jody MacDonald (ACOE), Joan Matthews (EPA), Lisa Plevin (EPA), Joe Seebode (ACOE), Ashley Slagle (NJHDG), Pete Weppler (ACOE), Rick Winfield (EPA)

HRF/HEP Office Staff: Clay Hiles, Helena Andreyko, Kate Boicourt, Ariane Giudicelli, Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff, Jim Lodge

1. Judith Enck chaired the meeting. Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.

Judith Enck reviewed a number of EPA priorities for HEP including water quality, climate change, environmental justice, citizen science, EPA's trash-free waters initiative, and harbor education and branding. In particular, water quality/CSO remediation, source reduction of plastics, and climate change/sea level rise are a major focus for EPA. She invited other Policy Committee members to identify their priorities. Col. Caldwell mentioned climate vulnerability including a possible role for HEP as a stakeholder and data source for the upcoming Harbor Feasibility Study. He also noted the need for advocacy for the Comprehensive Restoration Plan, including helping getting federal agencies on the same page in terms of the value of urban restoration. Jim Tierney mentioned the role of convening people and mobilizing citizens on behalf of the Estuary, citing the Great Lakes Foundation and Commission as a model. A joint conference between HEP and the NYS's Hudson River Estuary Program was discussed as a means of identifying opportunities to collaborate.

Action: HEP and HREP will discuss purpose, scope, and timetable for joint conference.

2. Rob Pirani reviewed HEP's transition timetable over the past two years and the program's ongoing projects and efforts associated with each of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Action Agenda goals (see the meeting Powerpoint for details).

3. Chuck Warren reviewed the proposed new operating procedures and governance structure. Key changes include having 10 voting members of the Policy Committee, including adding representation from the CAC and STAC (now one person) and adding a representative of HRF as the chair the Policy Committee. There will be two new representatives from NY and NJ from the environmental justice community on the Management Committee.

The group discussed the need to meet more regularly, at least semi-annually or preferably quarterly, for two hours. In order for the PC to be effective, there must be involvement and participation from agency heads.

Clarification was requested as to whether the Chairs or a representative of the standing work groups were to be part of the management committee.

Peter Wepler was announced as the Army Corps of Engineer representative to the Management Committee.

The role of the HEP CAC was discussed, in particular the procedures for conveying its position on issues.

Action: Mr. Warren proposed and Judith Enck seconded a motion to approve the proposed operating procedures for the Policy Committee. The motion was approved unanimously, subject to changes on page 3 reflecting the need to meet at least semi-annually or preferably quarterly.

Action: Mr Tierney proposed and Ms. Kirk-Pflugh seconded a motion to approve Christopher Daggett to join the Policy Committee as the representative from the Hudson River Foundation and Chair of the Committee.

Action: It was noted that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) members can continue to take public positions on issues on behalf of its members independent of the overall Management Committee (MC). However, any such public position must be done per the process outlined in its bylaws including adding a disclaimer affirming that the opinions do not reflect the Management Committee as a whole. The program office must be notified in advance of any statement the CAC plans to release and office will inform the members of the MC prior to any public correspondence. Aside from this notification, HEP staff will not spend HEP resources supporting the CAC when they take public positions. Rob Pirani will examine the CAC bylaws to see if any modification is needed and will propose any such modification to the CAC.

Action: The Program office will send out an annual schedule for the Policy Committee, including proposed meetings dates in July and November.

4. Rob Pirani gave an overview of the CCMP revision and Action Agenda, including the objectives associated with each, the listening sessions, the State of the Estuary report and the timeline (see meeting Powerpoint for details).

The program office will be working with the Management Committee and other partners to move forward on this effort, with the goal of having a final draft ready for Policy Committee approval in the fall of 2016.

5. The meeting concluded with a discussion of what success looks like for HEP and where HEP can add value to the current work being done in the Harbor and Estuary.

During the discussion it was noted that the questions clarifying when HEP adds value are on target. As part of the Action Agenda update, HEP should identify the progress accomplished by the Management Committee to date. Going forward, HEP should focus on measurable achievements as well as improving people's perspective on the Estuary and its value. A key role is engaging scientists to undertake research to understand and better support management decisions, including identifying priority habitat/recreational uses and pollutants on behalf of local government.