Citizens Advisory Committee

Of the NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program

April 24, 2023

April 3, 2023 Meeting
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Courtney Botelho, NEIWPCC; Alyssa Le, NEIWPCC; Jessica, NEIWPCC; Robert Johnston, Clark University; Elizabeth Balladares, HEP; Shino Tanikawa, NYCSWCD, Allison Fitzgerald, NJCU, Meredith Comi, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Christopher Girgenti, RIPA; Wynnie-fred Victor Hinds, WPA; Pamela Pettyjohn, Coney Island Beautification Project; Rosana Da Silva, HEP; Christina Carrero, HEP; Rob Pirani, HEP; Isabelle Stinette, HEP; Carrie Roble, Hudson River Park Trust; Saylor Pochan, NYC Surf Rider; Lingard Knutson, EPA; Bob Alpern; Michelle Luebke; Margaret Flanagan; Future City Inc, Michele Langa, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Louis K; Chris Girgenti, RIPA; Phone numbers not identified: 908-578-4095 , 917-548-1414

1:00 PM – 1:05 PM – Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes
- members were welcomed by the CAC leadership and minutes from our December CAC meeting were approved

1:05 PM – 1:20 PM – Stewardship Highlight: City of Water Day 2023
- Liz Balladares introduced the theme of City of Water Day 2023 which will focus on expanding the capacity of our communities to address climate change.
- New shared website will allow for better engagement between participating City of Water Day partners and for consistency around the message of City of Water Day
- More than 60K in grants will be used to support City of Water Day events this year. Funding sources include BIL, HEP 320 program and NYC Ferry sponsorship.
- Goal of this year's City of Water Day will be to continue to encourage partners to work with one another, partner with other community based groups and local agencies.
- Like every year, grants will be prioritized for programs serving environmental justice and higher-need communities.

1:20 PM – 1:50 PM – NEIWPCC Harbor Economic Study
- Courtney Botelho, NEIWPCC Environmental Analyst, began her presentation on the NY-NJ Harbor Economic Analysis project, by providing background on the goal of the project which is to communicate the economic value of clean water in the NY–NJ Harbor Estuary to policymakers, decision makers, residents, and other stakeholders.

- This study is the first of its kind in this study area, although methods used have been used in other places. The reasoning was that people who cared most about water quality are the specific households within the harbor estuary
- Things that weren't included include: benefits to commercial services, change in ecosystems services and economic impacts but could be addressed in future studies.
- Results focused on how much do households value changes in water quality
- Questions/Discussion:
    - Can you clarify what is ICF and Clark? Clark is Clark University in winster massachusetts and ICF is a consultant company
    - There were some comments expressed that the study may not be a good use of time and funds
    - Where did the funding come from? Rob P mentioned that EPA provided funds to NEIWPCC which underwent through an exhaustive RFP process to help narrow the scope of the study and help ensure that the work done was of high quality. A second RFP was drafted by that picked consultant to pick ICF. Team in place has done a lot of work for EPA for providing basis for regulatory changes - including the foundation. Selection process was very exhaustive.
    - What was the study period? how many boaters did you estimate actually making use of the maritime facility? in terms of quantity or numbers did you use usage? Jessica: we were focusing on households themselves - understanding that they would be users themselves. Analysis accounts for both users and non-users. Methodology didnt focus on personal surveys. Courtney: based on individual value of people that value the water within counties.
    - Did you look at income levels for household? No specific questions/surveys were part of the data collection
        - Jessica - average county level income was included as part of background information
            - Robert - the way these studies work is it takes a whole bunch of data and puts it into a statistics model - allows to predict what values would be in a particular area. It's much quicker and cost effective instead of doing unique surveys. What was done is synthesize data from various people ex. from various income levels. Predictions are based on all of the values that are collected.
            - Would it mean that the numbers are also higher for higher income counties?Robert - great question. Thinking about this from household perspective. It's not what they're spending but extra value they would get if water quality went up. One way to think about this is - imagine that you had a referendum of households in an area, here's a change that's going to happen and give people the chance to pay ex. $33 or vote no. If they vote yes than that means they got $33 of value.
    - How can decision makers use this study?
        - Robert - any time under clean water act or another state level agency proposes a particular rule, they have to do a cost analysis. THis approach is how benefits are

quantified, because it's exactly how they quantify benefits within their rule making.
- ○ Not the only kind of benefit of course but this is the same type of methods used.
- Moving away from recreational aspect - i'm assuming you're not talking about amount of fish as a significant fishes that are available to be looked at. fishing advisories? Increased property values - how much gentrification caused by ferries no matter what the water quality is?
  - ○ Jessica - fish catching is just one component
  - ○ Is it fishing for consuming? even though water quality in newark is bad and fish shouldn't be consumed, people will still catch them and eat or sell them.
    - ■ Jessica - a lot of the values used focused more on recreational fishing - do not recall anything that references eating fish. For the most part, it's for increasing recreational experience.
    - ■ Robert: reminder that the goal of the study is to find out what people value in households. tradeoff is that we don't have super specific localized values. We wanted one broader number that stood for wq rather than specific activity like fishing.
    - ■ Study didn't capture anything that was outside of water quality benefits

1:50 PM – 2:10 PM: FY 24 Bipartisan Infrastructure Act Workplan
- Rob Pirani began providing an overview of the projects being considered as part of the third year of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act Workplan.
  - o Looking to get input from everyone today and the next couple of weeks to then share with PC and MC and then submit to EPA in June
  - o Reminder that strategy starts on action agenda priority as well as epa guidelines
  - o equity strategy:
    - ▪ critical when it comes to moving forward and epa guidance. Proposing to do three things.
    - ▪ In terms of where disadvantaged communities are located, we're proposing 4 indicators do that. Any community that falls under any 1 of these 4 is a disadvantaged community
    - ▪ entire hudson raritan and harbor have been mapped and interactive map is to come soon
    - ▪ In summary - we will be using maps in different ways to track spending and work
    - ▪ We're aiming to spend more than 50% of our funding on disadvantaged communities. We will likely exceed 50 but in terms of setting up a goal of 50%.
    - ▪ Benefits will be captured by action agenda goals and other major factors like better understanding, greater community capacity and improved interagency involvement in communities.
    - ▪ Allison is wondering when BIL ideas/projects are asked for

2:10 PM – 2:30 PM – Update on CAC leadership positions: NY Co-chairs & EJ officers
- Candidates being considered for the CAC NY cochair position as well as new EJ officer positions were introduced to the rest of the committee.

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM – Participant Updates & Announcements
- Members shared upcoming events and major announcements

- Rosana shared a brief update on a student internship & opportunities portal HRF has been working on with the goal of connecting students to internships and fellowships