

SB Canal Water Quality Committee
January 24, 2022, 1:00 pm
Meeting Conducted via Go To Meeting

Committee Members: Bob Fisher, Karin Gander, Gary Lessing, Brian Moroz, Chris Vanuga, Dave Wilson

Town Council Representative: Derek Abbott

Town Manager: Maureen Hartman

Guests: Bill McLaughlin, property owner and oyster gardener
Nivette Perez, project manager, CIB
Jim Tulley, oyster gardening expert, CIB

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm

1. Minutes from November 15, 2021, meeting, with modifications, were approved.
2. No public comments were made except for the oyster gardening discussion below.
3. Comment from Derek:
 - a. Derek started us off by saying that Chris would be chairing this committee on an interim basis until Town Council appoints a new chairman. He again asked if any members of the committee would be interested in leading this committee to let him know.
 - b. The Town Council is working on a FY2023 budget. A consulting contract was part of our FY2022 budget and will not be part of the new budget. The funds for water sampling (\$4,700) will be included along with funds for canal monitoring (\$10,000). Other incremental projects can be addressed with the council as they arise.
4. Code Review
 - a. Bob provided some summary comments on the Town Codes that are relevant to canal water quality. He discussed this with Joe Hinks, the Town's Code Enforcement Constable. Joe said most property owners are interested in complying. Bob thinks the opportunity may be to study the opportunity to tighten some of the rules around fertilizer and drains that flow into the canals.
 - b. We will have more discussion on this next month.
5. Grant Funding.
 - a. Chris will prepare some thoughts on what we can consider pursuing this year for next month's meeting.
6. Oyster Gardening
 - a. Nivette Perez made a short presentation to the Committee on CIB's oyster gardening program. Started in 2003 and had at one point 60 cages. SB was one of the original Townships supporting it.
 - b. The program started with community wide oyster gardens and has evolved into one that is supported by individual property owners.

- c. The old cages from the 2015 project to assess the effect of oysters on water quality are still at the canal ends. They aren't active oyster gardens and are covered with algae. The CIB has left the decision to remove the cages to the Town.
 - d. The oyster gardening program for property owners is one that starts with early stage spat that are place on recovered oyster shell. These are collected by CIB when they reach 4 cm in size to be place in other bays.
 - e. The oyster gardening program does not directly improve the water quality in the SB canals. Currently 12 families in SB participate, down from a high of 40. CIB is open to partnering with communities again on restorative oyster gardens.
 - f. The CIB has published the water property owner's handbook. To get a copy, contact Nivette at nperezperez@inlandbays.org. Chris will get a copy and forward it to the committee.
7. Water quality monitoring
- a. Dave updated the committee on the off-season of monitoring. There are 11 sites being monitored in the winter.
 - b. During the winter months, the DO is well above state minimum standard.
 - c. Dave is looking for volunteers to join the team which currently has 5 volunteers.
 - d. We are awaiting the report from University of Maryland-/ Solomon Islands from the most recent nutrient sample submission.
 - e. Brian continues to analyze the data. Working with the UofD for input. He is beginning to supplement Dave's data with meteorological information (precipitation, windspeed and wind direction) from the Delaware Environmental Observing System (DEOS).
8. Town Council Presentation
- a. Chris requested that we all review the draft presentation that Jack Whitney sent the Committee in December and asked to send to him any additional edits and comments in advance of our next meeting. We will discuss with a goal to finalize this at our next meeting.
 - b. Related to this, Derek asked if we should revisit the Committee's Mission to include something on the Sea Level Rise initiatives that will be added to the Committee's responsibilities. We will discuss further at next month's meeting.
9. Wetlands Project
- a. Gary shared an update on his thoughts on the floating wetlands, which included input and perspectives from various external groups and experts such as the Center for Inland Bays (CIB)
 - b. The science on the value wetlands is not conclusive and difficult to quantify; however, there are some clear benefits:
 - i. They remove nutrients from the water
 - ii. They are wildlife habitats
 - iii. They can beautify the canal ends
 - c. Gary will try to develop a proposal for a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for February 28th at 1:00 pm via Go To Meeting.