

## **Mobile Bay NEP Community Resources Committee Meeting Minutes**

Killian Room, International Trade Center  
June 4, 2019

### **In attendance:**

Carol Adams-Davis, Alabama and Mobile Bay Sierra Club  
Sherry-Lea Bloodworth Botup  
Casi Callaway, Mobile Baykeeper  
Yael Girard, Weeks Bay Foundation  
Tammy Herrington, Conservation Alabama  
Tom Herder, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
Dr. Tina Miller-Way, Dauphin Island Sea Lab Discovery Hall Program  
Christian Miller, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** At 1005, Casi Callaway opened the meeting and initiated self-introductions. New MBNEP Deputy Director Sherry-Lea Bloodworth Botup introduced herself, and Tom Herder provided an MBNEP update with the departures of Rick Frederick and Paul Lammers and arrival of new Sherry-Lea and new Restoration Program Manager Katie Dylewski,

2. **Approval of Minutes.** As we moved to approval of minutes, Tina reminded us of unfinished business related to the CRC's designated social media campaign, The Diverse Delta. She also reminded us of ideas to host a CRC specific FB or web page linked to the MBNEPs to elevate the Committee's profile. Most agreed that the return on that investment of time and effort would not justify undertaking it. With regard to the Diverse Delta social media campaign, discussion at the March meeting included added flexibility (geographically and topically) and scheduled months of responsibility by CRC organizations. Consensus was that the campaign was more than volunteers could sustain. After conversation, Carol moved to discontinue the media campaign effort, Yael Girard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. **Identifying Current Roles.** Casi moved the proceedings towards development of a CRC work plan, posing questions:  
How is this committee different from others?  
What is its purpose?  
How can we make it effective?

She introduced an exercise to define current roles of member organizations with geographic ranges and target audiences. Potential Goals, Objectives, and Activities from the updated draft CCMP with CRC identified as a potential lead were included on a large board. Participants were asked to use markers or sticky notes to indicate the Objectives and Activities in which their organization was engaged to varying degrees, from support to implementation. As effective resource managers, the purpose of the exercise was to develop an understanding of the "lanes in which we drive" to identify gaps to determine who is missing from the table and overlaps to avoid duplication and seize opportunities for synergies.

The data and comments captured in this exercise are recorded in Attachment A.

With comments and annotations completed by participants, discussion continued. Casi alluded to the recent meeting of Management Conference committee co-chairs, in which MBNEP Director Roberta Swann suggested featuring stormwater-borne trash and litter, a ubiquitous problem across all coastal watersheds, as a focus appropriate to all MC committees. It was noted that the CRC-specific strategies

were not specific to the problem of trash. It was implied in Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building Objectives 4.1 and 4.2, but members generally agreed that trash and litter could be more specifically targeted in Objectives or suggested Activities.

Tammy Herrington of Conservation Alabama described her organization's advocacy efforts to shape policy in recent legislative deliberations over separate bills that 1) tried to prohibit municipalities from banning or taxing plastic bags abilities to limit single-use packaging and 2) enhanced capacities of local governments to increase enforcement actions and potentially charge fees associated with plastic bag use to fund litter reduction efforts. She noted that the former bill died before consideration, while the latter bill past, largely based upon municipal input from the coast.

CRC member organizations, who employ advocacy and education as primary tools, undertake one of three approaches to education and advocate:

- 1) Policy objectives are related to creating or guiding policy development and legislation. Efforts to advocate against the first bill, apparently cut and pasted from American Legislative Exchange Council models, and for the second bill, originating on the coast where impacts of waterborne trash and litter are most severe, are example of employing policy objectives. Re-drafting Charleston's litter ordinances,
  - 2) Community action and outreach objectives include organized cleanups (Coastal Cleanup, MLK Days of Service, etc.) and initiatives like the Litter Free Mardi Gras, the Trash Blows campaign at the Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, or the Trash Mob, active events that celebrate and stimulate good behaviors. Due in part to partnerships in the Trash Blows Campaign, local bottling companies, disinclined to support bottle deposits, have expressed willingness to increase recycling efforts.
  - 3) Educational objectives include curriculum development, Discovery Hall programs, Estuary Corps, and other efforts to use data and information to educate audiences about the problems and solutions related to litter.
4. **Identifying and Discussing Gaps.** Current CRC member organizations not represented at today's meeting and organizations not yet engaged by the Committee were discussed in an effort to ensure the all CRC approaches could be pursued. Included in the discussion were:
- Organizations able to tie plastics to water quality, including the Ocean Conservancy, the Audubon Society, and others concerned with habitat quality.
  - Organizations able to represent low-income communities battling both perceptions and realities related to environmental stewardship and justice.
  - Keep Mobile Beautiful
  - Master Naturalists and Environmental Educators – The MEE program is being embraced by Baldwin County partners. Potential synergies with the Strategic Watershed Awareness and Monitoring Program (SWAMP) were discussed.
  - Science Curriculum Specialists at the Mobile County Public School System (Stephanie LeGrone) and Baldwin County Public Schools were discussed. While their presence is most desirable, meeting participants recognized their unlikeliness to be directly involved with the CRC.
  - The Mobile Area Education Foundation and its Baldwin County analog.
  - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics promoters, like Airbus.
  - Material Recovery Facilities, Osprey Initiative, and Earth Resources
5. **Identifying and Discussing Overlaps.** With noon approaching, Committee chairs indicated a desire to make engagement efforts and host an interim meeting in late July in advance of the already-scheduled September 4 Quarterly CRC meeting. The meeting would specifically focus and the issue of trash, allowing participants to brainstorm what resonates with member committee organizations' audiences.

6. **Exploring New Approaches.** Heading towards a late July meeting, Tom Herder agreed to incorporate the date populated on the chart to a spreadsheet, prepare minutes, develop a spreadsheet organizing specifically Trash and Debris work being undertaken by CRC member organizations (under categories of Policy, Community Action and Outreach, and Education) and sending it with minutes to members, and conduct a Doodle poll to schedule a late July/early August interim meeting along with the September 4 quarterly meeting. Tina and Casi agreed to develop a list of organizations and people willing to engage on trash issues in the Mobile Bay area and upstream and contact them to try to engage them to get involved in CRC efforts.
7. **Reports.** Time did not permit.
8. **Set Time and Date for Next Quarterly Meeting.** A Doodle Poll will be distributed to determine when to hold the interim meeting described above. The quarterly meeting of the CRC will be held as scheduled on September 4. Save the date.
9. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at noon.