

**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

*Approved Minutes of the Wednesday, February 20, 2008 Meeting
Eastport Environmental Campus ~ Port Charlotte, Florida*

Attendance of Voting Members

Joan Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener
Warren Bush	Lee FYN Master Gardener
Roger DeBruler Jr.	Sea Grant - Charlotte
Debra Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Rene A. Janneman	Sarasota County
Wilma Katz	Coastal Wildlife Club, Inc.
Stefan Kataras	CF Industries
Ernesto Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District
Kaley Miller	Mosaic Fertilizer
Harry Phillips	Cape Coral ERD
Kathi Rader-Gibson	Sarasota County Lemon Bay Park
George Ruby	Peace River Audubon Society
Jean Srodes	Turtle Talks

Attendance

Kristen Collins	Manatee County EMD
Kim Cressman	Cape Coral ERD
Sonia Fortenberry	Kastaway Lake Management
Molly Meadows	SFWMD
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Lisa Beever	CHNEP

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 10:00 with all in attendance introducing themselves. Ms. Highsmith reported that there is a quorum of appointed members.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review

Director Beever asked that two items be pulled from the consent agenda. These changes were approved and were considered separately under committee reports.

- e. State of the Estuaries and Watersheds and Conservancy Report Card (**pg 97**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of the update and hosting
- h. Public Opinion Survey (**pg 117**)
Action Item: Recommend direction to staff

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda

Ms. Miller moved, seconded by Mr. DeBruler, that the consent agenda including a-d, f, g and i be accepted as amended. The motion carried unanimously. Agenda items approved include:

- a. Approval of the minutes of the January 16, 2008 CAC meeting (**pg 9**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of minutes
- b. Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Update (**pg 15**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of the CCMP Update
- c. Compendium of Existing Monitoring Programs (**pg 17**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of the update and hosting
- d. Environmental Indicators Report Update (**pg 39**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of the CCMP Update
- f. Research and Restoration Partner Projects (**pg 101**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of proposals F, I, J, A and B
- g. Pre-Development Vegetation Map (**pg 111**)
Action Item: Recommend approval of projects for funding
- i. Reservoir Workshop (**pg 121**)
Action Item: Recommend direction to staff

Agenda Item 4: Presentations (a) Lower Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan

Ms. Meadows presented an update of this plan to the CAC. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the website at www.CHNEP.org.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (a) Nomination of members for appointment by the Policy Committee

Ms. Highsmith reviewed the process to nominate members for those new to the CAC. At this time, it is believed all those who've been attending meetings have been appointed.

Ms. Highsmith presented several voting members with a CHNEP padfolio, including Mr. DeBruler, Mr. Janneman, Ms. Katz, Mr. Katzaras, Ms. Miller, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Ruby and Ms. Srodes.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Ms. Miller, for staff to send correspondence to any members whose voting rights have lapsed along with a copy of the current bylaws. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: New Business (b) Election of Officers

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Bush reported that Mr. Bush and Mr. Nedza have agreed to continue serving as co-chairs of the CAC. No nominations were made from the floor. Members then verbally voted for the new officers.

Ms. Hilgendorf thanked Ms. Bush for serving as a tri-officer of the CAC this past year.

Agenda Item 5: Report from Officers

Mr. Bush provided an overview of the FYN annual conference that CHNEP sponsored with a public outreach grant. Mr. Bush thanked Mr. Katzaras and CF Industries for hosting the past meeting and a tour of the phosphate mining industry, which greatly illuminated his understanding of the process.

Agenda Item 7: Committee Reports - Environmental Indicators

Director Beever asked that the Environmental Indicators committee be re-initiated and asked Mr. Lasso de la Vega to continue serving as chair. Mr. Lasso de la Vega expressed his discomfort in being listed as chair and not taking any action. Ms. Hilgendorf explained that with the CCMP update, the work of the environmental indicators report took a back seat but now that the CCMP has been updated, this committee will become active again and a report will be produced. Ms. Miller asked if it would continue to be easy to read by the public. Dr. Beever said that TAC members were mixed as to the value of the letter grade. Dr. Beever said that she hopes that three or four indicators are reviewed at every meeting. Her hope is that a more technical, in-depth companion be prepared for the website.

Ms. Highsmith, Ms. Miller and Mr. Janneman offered to help. Every one on the CAC will receive notices of this committee's meetings and is welcome to participate. The first meeting will be held in May with meetings perhaps held every other month.

Ms. Highsmith would like to see a press release be written when each report is published by the CHNEP. These releases of information would become part of the public domain so that others can benefit from the information.

Agenda Item 7: Committee Reports – Public Opinion Survey

Director Beever said that CHNEP needs to create a conference-wide adhoc committee to consider methods and options available. CHNEP will hire the work to be completed by a contractor, possibly a university to lend additional credibility to the study. In addition, the state waives its requirement for competitive bids for work done by universities.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Mr. Ruby, the establishment of a conference-wide adhoc committee to proceed with the public opinion survey. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 8: Program Reports

Dr. Beever reported on the FY09 workplan development. The CHNEP had \$1 million of unspent funds that are now nearly spent. Funds from Congress increased this year and staff have been able to bring in sponsor funds and grants. Projects are being completed quicker so there are fewer projects carried over. The CAC motions regarding public outreach grants and micro-grants helped with this. She reviewed the draft budget for public information and education projects with \$25,000 of the *new* money from congress being allocated to support implementation of the strategic communication plan.

Ms. Highsmith asked about unspent projects for public information and education. Dr. Beever said the money is released for reprogramming except for public outreach grants. Because the director has authority to spend up to \$5,000, if funds by public outreach grant applicants are released then those funds are reprogrammed for new public outreach grants. The CHNEP policy is to provide 25 percent of the budget for public information and education. She believes it is at 40-45 percent.

Dr. Beever provided an overview of the CHNEP advocacy role. On February 21, 2003, the Policy Committee adopted *Advocacy and Review Procedures*. However, CHNEP's advocacy began four years earlier with a letter to request designation of Horse Creek as an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW). In its history, CHNEP has issued 52 letters in support of various advocacy stances. Seventeen (33%) have yielded successful results and 26 (50%) have been unsuccessful. Partial successes account for 12% and pending or unknown accounts for the remaining 18% of occurrences. Some of the unsuccessful letters have been released multiple times. For example, CHNEP has requested a region-wide programmatic EIS four times before receiving an answer on January 11, 2008. By reducing duplicate requests, our rate of non-success is 45%.

In year 2007, CHNEP initiated 14 requests, more than any other previous year. Seven requests (50%) were successful with one a partial success. Over time, we have gotten better at advocating our positions and working with our partners to achieve results.

Periods of many successful letters correspond to the 2006 and 2007 State Legislative seasons as well as the recent the conceptual adoption of the *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) update*.

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that we two people attending the meeting were new to the CAC – the first person ever to attend from Manatee County and someone who learned of the CAC from the website!

Director Beever mentioned that the TAC had adopted a motion in favor of green meetings, electronic agendas and other changes. The CAC will be asked for recommendations on how to make the CAC's efforts more earth-friendly.

Director Beever said that an alternate to the Policy Committee had an idea for the CAC that each person on the CAC be a "free agent" and not represent an agency; however, CAC members declare their affiliation and would like it to continue.

Ms. Hilgendorf presented updates on several projects, including the *CCMP Summary*, publication brochure, signing ceremony, Charlotte Harbor Watershed Summit, children's book, 2009 calendar, National Estuaries Days and Nature Festival.

Agenda Item 9: Partners Report

No reports were offered.

Agenda Item 10: Member Comments

Ms. Miller asked about the reservoir workshop that was considered under the consent agenda.

Agenda Item 11: Public Comments

Ms. Highsmith explained that blanket approvals are often granted for municipalities for bridges, etc. An announcement of a blanket approved appeared two days prior to the CAC meeting is for Lee County to dredge 48 primary and secondary channels through aquatic preserves and seagrasses in exchange for four pull-and-troll zones in Matlacha Pass, Pine Island Sound and Estero Bay. Lee County Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution in agreement along

with FDEP staff. CHNEP staff commented on the draft but the Management Committee has not yet responded. This is precedent setting. The amount of dredging is significant. The zones are now only 4,000 acres while the 11,000 acres aquatic preserve in Lee County. Ms. Highsmith would like the zones to be expanded and enforcement to occur. There's nothing in writing on what Lee County will do. She's willing to prepare an advocacy position and present to the CHNEP for their consideration. They are asking for too much and offering too little.

Mr. Rene asked about the rate of dredging, which is an expensive activity. The aquatic preserve area managers reviewed it and excised some of the preserve from the dredging area. The CHNEP seagrass prop scar map was used as a reference.

Director Beever said it is fair for CHNEP to consider amount of dredging versus amount of zones.

Mr. DeBruler said Charlotte County is trying to put in pole-and-troll areas in Cape Haze. He believed that Sarasota County had been trying to do something similar but found it wasn't legal because of navigation concerns. There are two areas that exist, one in Indian River and another near Fort DeSoto.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega asked that Ms. Highsmith prepare a summary that can be distributed electronically. Dr. Beever said that she'll incorporate maps and other information in the Management Committee packet this afternoon and will send it by email to the TAC.

Mr. DeBruler reported that Charlotte Harbor is being recognized internationally. Some people from Indianisia will be doing a site visit to learn more about Sea Grant and will include Charlotte Harbor to learn more about the mangrove restoration project.

Discussed ensued whether the fundraising training session should be rescheduled. Ms. Katz asked if the decision had been made to establish the Friends organization. Ms. Miller provided an overview and that this season is on how to solicit people to put us in their will. Ms. Katz recommended that CAC members keep the CHNEP in mind and encourage them to participate in the committee. Ms. Hilgendorf said she is holding a donation from Ms. Rohrer "ransom" to get information from Mr. Wotitzky and that CHNEP is able to accept tax-deductible donations. SWFRPC is a 170 c(1).

Agenda Item 12: 2008 Meetings

The March 19 meeting was cancelled to encourage members to attend the signing ceremony on March 24 and watershed summit on March 25-27. The April 16 meeting will be held at the Lemon Bay Park in Englewood.

Agenda Item 13: Adjourn

The meeting ended at 12:08.