



Coastal Advisory Council
April 26th, 2021
Virtual meeting via Zoom due to COVID 19
Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions:

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mark McClellan. Jan Mackinnon welcomed new Coastal Resources Division (CRD) Staff member Jaynie Gaskin, who started with CRD January 2021.

Old Business:

Meeting Summary

Mr. McClellan asked the committee for any proposed changes to the old meeting minutes and no changes were brought forward. Mr. McClellan moved to recognize the Communications Committee.

Committee Reports

Communications Committee, *Stacia Hendricks*

Stacia Hendricks welcomed new staff member Ms. Gaskin and asked Council members to be sure they had a chance to review the Coastal Current. Ms. Hendricks reviewed the history of the committee and mission statement. The Committee formed in April 2015 along with the other committees. The mission statement presented by the Committee is as follows: “The Communication Committee will work to effectively communicate the opportunities, issues, and concerns of the Coastal Advisory Council (CAC) to CRD staff, facilitate communication among the CAC and foster communication to appropriate stakeholders.” During the Winter CAC meeting, Ms. Hendricks shared that the Committee had explored the idea of a possible sunset and activating the group on an ad hoc basis. Discussion with members and the Executive Committee resulted in the decision to continue the Communications Committee with a new goal of enhancing ‘two-way’ conversations and information exchange with all CAC members and soliciting input from CAC members to share among the CAC and staff of the GCMP. The Committee currently consists of Ms. Katy Smith, Mr. Charles McMillan, Mr. Buddy Sullivan, Mr. Shawn Jordan, and Ms. Hendricks. Ms. Hendricks welcomed anyone interested in joining the Committee to do so.

The Communications Committee had a phone conversation with Tyler Jones, Communications Specialist and Public Information Officer with CRD, to review potential use of the Slack platform for communication among Committee members and to keep discussion moving forward. One key goal is to identify topics the CAC is interested in hearing about and facilitate more conversations on such topics. Ms. Hendricks recognizes that this something Ms. Mackinnon has expressed interest in the past. The conversation with Tyler Jones was very

productive and shed insight as to the graphic design work and communication services Mr. Jones' contributes to CRD. Mr. Jones is responsible for the organization of CoastFest. In addition, Mr. Jones produces the Gov Delivery Press Release, helps facilitate Beach Week, and is currently creating an archive of coastlines Georgia. Mr. Jones expressed interest in creating a new section in the Coastal Current to include CAC member organizational news. This additional section could be a great way to raise awareness interesting aspects of CAC member's own organizations. Moving forward, Mr. Jones would also like to hear more from CAC members for communication opportunities. Ms. Hendricks asked if anyone else had anything to add on the topic of discussion. Tate Holbrook asked about how the Coastal Current is distributed beyond the email list of CAC members. Ms. Hendricks expressed that her understanding is that the Coastal Current is designed specifically for Coastal Advisory Council members and is archived on CRD website. Ms. Hendricks asked Ms. Mackinnon if the Current is circulated in any other way. Ms. Mackinnon stated that because the Coastal Current was designed to be news for CAC members, it is sent out through the email distribution list and it is also posted on the CAC webpage.

Legislative Committee, Charles McMillan

Charles McMillan shared that along with the Communication Committee, the Legislative Committee is also interested in enhancing the level of communication and discussion. The Committee is attempting to bring forward and discuss legislative issues directly related to the GCMP. Mr. McMillan acknowledged that nothing occurs in a vacuum and assured the CAC that Committee members do not have blinders on regarding issues not directly related. Since the legislative session recently concluded, Mr. McMillan presented a triage of information starting with legislative items related directly to the coastal program, then moving on to items related somewhat to the coastal program and concluding with items of special interest.

Related to Coastal Program:

Did not move:

- HB 748 Marsh Restoration Act of 2021 – This act did not move in the legislature. The Committee is not sure of the full story of this bill but hopes more information will be forthcoming. HB 748 did not pass.

Passed:

- HB 619 Conveyance of Heritage Preserve Properties – Mr. McMillan acknowledged recent discussions of the conveyance of Heritage Preserve properties, however he is not aware of a current, active plan to convey any of these properties. There are over 150 properties throughout the state, some of the notable properties on the coast are Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). Mr. McMillan notes that some of the coast's most high-profile properties are Heritage Preserve Properties.

- GOSP Funding for Budget- Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) funding was in the budget and the coast has received benefits from that funding.

- House Bill 244 Flood Risk Reduction as County Tax Purpose- House Bill 244 should begin to bring some additional funding to the coastal areas that are prone to flooding.

Of Interest:

•HB 355 Carbon Sequestration Registry (Passed)- Georgia now has a carbon sequestration registry.

•SB 511 Dedicated Fee Requirements (Passed) – This bill pertains to the assignment of getting dedicated fees into the trust fund for which they were collected- which was part of the Amendment 1 last year which passed with an over 80% pass rate. The legislature saw fit to pass this bill putting this into place.

•HB 647 Post Closure Care of Coal Ash Surface Impoundments (Did not move) -Mr. McMillan notes that this bill did not pass but expressed that he thinks we will see more major coal ash legislation over the next few years.

Of Note During Committee Discussion:

•Federal Consistency Reviews: Recently increased profile of reviews by CRD - high profile projects come through in a manner that no one remembers such high profiles coming through in the same month or year. A lot of public interest and comments have been generated around these two reviews.

•EPD Buffer Review Process: The Legislative Committee seeks a better understanding of agency practices in relation to the Environmental Protection Division's buffer review process.

Ashby Worley asked if any city and county officials on the CAC were currently tracking the Flood Risk Reduction Bill (House Bill 244). Ms. Worley expressed an interest in what city and county officials might think of the bill and if they believe it will be useful to help fund flood risk projects in the community.

Michael Blakely responded that they do not currently have any projects other than addressing property loss due to repetitive flooding with federal funds. Mr. Blakely noted that he would keep the new bill in mind.

Mr. McMillan noted that a bill like this would set a good precedent for the use of funds. He stated that the Legislative Committee is doing a lot to interact more closely with the Communications Committee and members are looking forward to working on that over the next few months.

National Legislative Updates, Jill Andrews

Jill Andrews directed the CAC's attention back to HB748- Coastal Marshlands Restoration Act of 2021 since this was not agency legislation (CRD) did not have the opportunity to review or comment on this bill until the bill was dropped. Ms. Andrews believes that HB748 did not move because it was brought up so late in the legislative session. Ms. Andrews states that while the bill is called the Coastal Marshlands Restoration Act the bill actually deals with the issue that there are private claims of ownership on coastal marshlands that might go back to a crown grant or state grant. For a person who has one of those grants to validate that grant and claim that ownership it is a very cumbersome process that can take years. It requires them to file a title action in the courts. This bill provides a pathway for those folks to get an audience with the Attorney General's office and expedite that process. There is some language in the bill that

pertains to hammocks but CRD has not yet evaluated how this would affect what we do under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act. Ms. Andrews notes that the bill was sponsored by most of the coastal delegation, so it seems to have broad support there. Ms. Andrews expects HB748 will return under the next legislative session and hopes that at that time CRD will have an opportunity to review the bill and weight in with any recommendations or concerns. Stay tuned for future updates on that.

National Legislative Update:

Not a lot of updates on the coastal front at 100 days into the new administration. The White House did put out their “skinny budget” which is the first attempt at their funding priorities. Four years ago, when this budget came out there was a lot of concern because the administration at the time proposed significant eliminations of budgets for NOAA and at that time coastal programs were zeroed out. This time NOAA is proposed for an increase and while we do not know yet if any is earmarked for coastal programs, we do know that there is an increase of hundreds of millions for NOAA specifically and notes that this funding is to be used for climate resiliency work. While the final budget will be set by Congress and not the White House, this increase of funding does provide an indication of the new Administration’s priorities. It seems to be a good time to be in coastal management! We hope for national funding support to continue the work we are doing on coastal Georgia and possibly even expand.

There was no major coastal-related national legislature moved forward. Ms. Andrews notes that there are no updates on the Living Shoreline Act. Vice President Harris originally put this act forward and no other champion for the bill has taken it up. This act originally proposed setting up a new grant program to fund living shorelines. CRD’s recommendation was that there are plenty of existing programs that could be funded to continue this type of work rather than setting up a whole new program. Ms. Andrews states CRD will keep an eye on this act and other national legislature.

New Business:

None.

Presentations: *Colby Peffer, GCMP GIS Specialist*
“Highlighting 2018-2020 Funded CIGs Story Map”

The story maps are available at the following links:

2018-2019:

<https://gcmp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=6ac0a13cd9754cd08efdbed820ea1ee4>

2019-2020:

<https://gcmp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=aa0a770e7ac649f29a8ce4f08ca91601>

Dr. Clay Montague requested a copy of this presentation and expressed his hopes that Camden county will see the effects of these CIG grants and that this will generate interest from Camden County. Ms. Peffer noted that the presentation will be available on CRD's website and that staff will send out the link to it in the meeting notes. Ms. Peffer mentioned the possibility of also sharing this presentation from the Zoom recording of today's meeting. Dr. Montague asked if all CIG reports are on that website as well. Ms. Peffer responded that all CIG deliverables are available on the website and that CRD's grant coordinator Ms. Beth Tasciotti can assist in finding any of those. Ms. Peffer offered to assist in finding GIS deliverables which are housed at CRD's Coastal Regional Headquarters. Ms. Peffer also stated that the website will continue to be updated as the projects submit their deliverables so the outcomes will be viewable as well.

Staff Updates:

Coastal Management Section Staff Presentations were provided in the following order. A copy of these presentations is available by contacting Jan Mackinnon at jan.mackinnon@dnr.ga.gov

- Buck Bennett - Compliance and Enforcement
- Dominic Guadagnoli - Shellfish and Water Quality
- Josh Noble - Marsh and Shore Regulatory Program
- Jill Andrews (for Ms. Kelie Moore) - Federal Consistency
- Beth Tasciotti - Grant Administration
- Colby Peffer - GIS and UAV Operations
- Jaynie Gaskin - Wetlands
- Jennifer Kline - Coastal Hazards
- Kelly Hill - Green Growth
- Meghan Angelina - State Sea Grant Fellow- Flood Literacy and Climate Inventory
- Jan Mackinnon - Other Program Updates

Mr. McMillan expressed appreciation for CRD staff.

Dr. Montague asked if there plans to use the hydrogeomorphic approach (HGM) to monitor the closing of Noyes Cut and the other remaining cut. He expressed that the Noyes Cut closure is a good opportunity to show the impact of restoration. Dr. Montague noted that there are lot of obsolete navigational cuts along the east coast of the United States and to get some real data to show the efficacy of this type of project would be very helpful in stimulating other projects like this all up and down the coast. Dr. Montague wondered about the possibility of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) using HGM since they are heavily involved in the Noyes Cut project. Ms. Gaskin noted that CRD currently has no plans to use HGM to monitor Noyes Cut but that the ACOE might have plans and it could be worth reaching out to them. Dr. Montague said he would mention it to ACOE.

Dr. Montague mentioned that the Satilla Riverkeeper now has a subcommittee to determine where the organization might need a 319 grant for improving septic systems up and down the river. Dr. Montague wondered how the subcommittee should proceed and asked if CRD could offer any advice based on the mapping of the septic tanks or the idea of agriculture BMPs that might overlap in terms of trying to explain data that may be available on the Satilla River about nutrient enrichment or fecal coliforms. Dr. Montague asked who he should call to get the

subcommittee busy. Ms. Hill offered to email Dr. Montague with some suggestions about contacting EPD staff with project ideas for guidance. Ms. Hill also offered her assistance and guidance for future projects.

Other Announcements:

None received.

Additional Updates from CAC Members:

None.

Council Discussion

None.

Mr. McClellan adjourned the meeting.