



**SAN FRANCISCO BAY**  
RESTORATION AUTHORITY

**MEETING MINUTES**

**San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Advisory Committee Meeting  
May 14, 2021, 10 am – 12 pm**

Agenda and meeting materials are available at:  
[www.sfbayrestore.org](http://www.sfbayrestore.org)

**1. Call to Order**

Jessica Martini-Lamb, Advisory Committee (AC) Chair, called the meeting to order.

**2. Determination of Quorum**

AC member attendance: Myla Ablog, Ana Alvarez, Sara Azat, Chris Barr, Erika Castillo, Steve Chappell, Arthur Deicke, Gregg Erickson, Nahal Ghoghaie, Letitia Grenier, Christopher Gurney, Lee Huo, Shin-Roei Lee, Roger Leventhal, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Lisa Horowitz McCann, Mike Mielke, Marquita Price, Ana Maria Ruiz, Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg, Diane Williams, Beckie Zisser.

Staff Attendance: Josh Bradt, Erica Johnson, Karen McDowell, Taylor Samuelson, Caitlin Sweeney, Linda Tong, Laura Hollander.

Erica Johnson called the roll, and Laura Hollander, Clerk of the Advisory Committee, determined there was a quorum.

**3. Public Comment**

Karen McDowell, Deputy Program Manager, shared updates on behalf of San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority) staff. All Governing Board terms expired at the end of March; new appointments were made at the March Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) meeting. There are two new members, Sally Lieber and Sophie Hahn. The other five members were reappointed to four-year terms and were sworn in at the April 16 Governing Board meeting.

Karen McDowell gave an update of the Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee will have their final meeting of the year on May 27 to finalize their Annual Review Letter to bring to the board in June. They are also reviewing the Annual Report for fiscal year 2019-2020.

**4. Approval of Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2021 (ACTION)**

**Item 4:** Draft Meeting Minutes for February 26, 2021 and Appendix A: Presentation Summaries

**Decision:** There were no comments, and the meeting minutes for February 26, 2021 were approved.

**6. Chair’s Report from April 16, 2021 Governing Board Meeting (INFORMATION)**

Chair Martini-Lamb announced that the Governing Board appointed her as Chair and Lisa Horowitz McCann as Vice-chair at the April 16 meeting. She thanked former Chair Luisa Valiela and Dr. Ana Alvarez for their leadership of the Advisory Committee.

Chair Martini-Lamb gave a summary of the April 16, 2021, Governing Board Meeting. The Governing Board received an overview of Grant Round 4 and an update on the Community Grants Program. The Board approved the first community grant for the Marin City Urban Wetland Community Visioning Project. The Board also received a presentation by Letitia Grenier of the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) on the Regional Sediment Strategy, which is available on the Governing Board website. Letitia Grenier commented that SFEI can offer staff time to any groups that want to learn more about the issue. Several members of the Advisory Committee expressed interest in a future presentation on this topic, and Chair Martini-Lamb responded that SFEI will be contacted to organize this in the future.

**7. Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program – Briefing and Draft Proposal (INFORMATION)**

Caitlin Sweeney, San Francisco Estuary Partnership  
Melissa Foley, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Caitlin Sweeney, director of San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP), presented an overview of the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP). Regional monitoring supports efforts to meet regional objectives and aims to provide greater efficiency in wetland restoration. The WRMP Plan was developed last year and lays the groundwork for the project to move from program development to the implementation phase.

Melissa Foley presented an overview of the science framework laid out in the WRMP Plan. The program is currently focused on conducting regional baseline surveys of tidal wetlands in order to develop a Baylands Change Basemap, and establishing a monitoring site network, which will support assessments of how external drivers are affecting wetlands at a regional scale. Melissa Foley also described data management aspects of the program, including the goal of creating an easily accessible database for use across participating restoration projects.

Caitlin Sweeney described how the WRMP will support regulatory alignment with monitoring recommendations and will support coordinating indicators and aligning performance metrics across agencies and organizations.

The funding proposal to the Authority was then presented. The proposal requests funding for critical components needed to move the WRMP to full implementation, develop and coordinate performance metrics, and support project delivery in a 3-year phased approach of \$750,000-\$950,000 per year. The majority of this budget is for personnel – a lead scientist, SFEI support staff, WRMP staff, and consultants. SFEP and SFEI will present a more detailed proposal to the Advisory Committee in September 2021.

- An AC member asked about public interface/data sharing of site locations (i.e., what platform will be used). They expressed that it would be beneficial to be more centralized in how and where we present data. SFEI staff responded that this needs to

be decided by the Technical Advisory Committee, but that key criteria will be to leverage existing tools (e.g., EcoAtlas, Point Blue bird data), for both tools and data, with the goal of accelerating delivery of results.

- An AC member asked about support from the Supplemental Environmental Program (SEP) of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Staff explained that some dischargers pay into the Bay Regional Monitoring Program, but that it is not set up to support WRMP. Another AC member added that SEP generally cannot pay into establishing a program.
- An AC member asked about the Baylands Change Basemap project timeline: how granular it will be and where the data will be sourced? SFEI staff responded that the Technical Advisory Committee is being formed to answer such questions and the Basemap will be completed in 2023.
- An AC member asked if Suisun Marsh will be included in the program, and SFEI staff replied that it will be included.
- An AC member asked if Arrowhead Marsh will be included. They also asked about outreach efforts to date, as well as plans for outreach in the future. SFEI staff replied that so far, outreach has only included people involved in project, but part of the future plan is to assess community benefits and include communities that are adjacent to key baylands throughout the next phase of the program.
- An AC member suggested that a key outcome of the program should be guidance for planners and engineers that contribute to reducing costs for wetland restoration design plans.
- An AC member commented on community involvement, specifically citizen science, and how to engage the local community in what they are interested in locally. Another AC member mentioned that there is a need to create a metric for community engagement around the WRMP and other restoration, in addition to science-oriented metrics.

Chair Martini Lamb stated that discussion will continue at the September meeting.

## **8. Encinal Dune Restoration and Public Access Project Update (INFORMATION)**

Joe Sullivan, East Bay Regional Park District

### **Item 7: Presentation on Encinal Dune Restoration and Public Access Project**

Joe Sullivan of East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) described the Encinal Dune Restoration and Public Access Project. Goals of the project included to remove non-native vegetation, restore dune habitat, improve public access, remove debris, including a barge, and stabilize the shoreline. Funding sources included Measure AA funds, EBRPD matching funds, and a NFWF grant, totaling \$1.1 million. Joe described the tasks and grant deliverables. The project was successfully completed, including eradication of non-native vegetation, significant raising and restoration of beach and dunes, debris removal, repaving of Bay Trail, stabilization of shoreline with rip rap, native grass and shrub plantings in dune and upland habitat, and public access improvement.

- A member of the public asked that staff please consider surrounding communities in such restoration projects.

- An AC member asked about the origin of the sand used. They also asked why rip rap was used instead of a living shoreline. EBRPD staff responded that Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) staff visited the site and suggested a living shoreline, but that EBRPD ultimately decided against it since it was such a small section of shoreline and softening it would create a vulnerable spot in the shoreline. Another project staff member commented that the sand is from Hansen Aggregate, and had been extracted from Pt. Knox shoal within San Francisco Bay.
- An AC member commented on the importance of involving the local community. EBRPD staff responded that they are considering ways to involve Encinal High School.
- An AC member commented that it is important to distinguish between cobble and rip rap, and they would like to see projects move away from rip rap, although the harder approach did make sense for this small section of shoreline. EBRPD responded that the shoreline transitioned from rip rap to cobble. Additionally, in discussing with BCDC, it was clear that there were constraints on putting a living shoreline there since it would interfere with the Bay Trail, which was another reason they decided a living shoreline was not a good option for the site. Marin County has produced a new report on gravel bay beach restoration that can be shared with EBRPD as they plan for the rest of their 55 miles of shoreline.
- An AC member commented that they were pleased to see dune restoration occurring within San Francisco Bay. They also noted that this project used commercially available sand from within the Bay, and the Authority should consider the limits on materials for the public good in the long run, and to consider sourcing and availability in the future.

## 9. Grant Round 4 Overview (INFORMATION)

Karen McDowell, Deputy Program Manager

### Item 8: Overview of Round 4 Grant Recommendations and Summary Table

Karen McDowell presented an overview of Grant Round 4. There were 18 applications with a total funding request of \$25 million. Eight AC members were reviewers along with staff. Eight projects were recommended for funding, including 3 construction projects and 5 planning projects. Total amount recommended equals \$11.8 million, including \$0.8 million to North Bay, \$5.8 million to East Bay, \$1.8 million to West Bay, and \$3.4 million to South Bay. Progress towards geographic distribution 20-year target after 4 years are 31% for North Bay, 22% for East Bay, 26% for West Bay, and >100% for South Bay, all exceeding the 20% target for this time frame.

- One AC member asked if the Authority is tracking where applications are coming from, indicating that doing so would allow the Authority to identify areas where more outreach is needed about available funding. Staff responded that there will be a discussion at the next board meeting on current geographic distribution of funds and future funding needs by region, and that information can also be presented to the Advisory Committee. Another AC member expressed she would like to see all applications, including those that were not funded. Staff informed them that this information is public.

## **10. Community Grants Program Update (INFORMATION)**

Linda Tong, Grant Program Coordinator

### **Item 9: Update on Community Grants Program**

Linda Tong gave an update of the Community Grants Program that the board authorized in July 2020. The program funds projects led by community-based organizations in economically disadvantaged communities. Types of eligible projects include community visioning, training and education, relationship building with restoration focused organizations, and implementation of shoreline habitat projects. Pilot phase included three eligible projects recommended for funding: Marin City Urban Wetland Community Visioning Project (has been authorized), Yosemite Slough Wetlands Stewardship Project, and Bay API Youth Connected to Environment. In the pilot phase, staff also facilitated four networking sessions between community-based organizations and restoration-focused agencies. Lessons learned include a need to provide clear eligibility criteria, streamline the grant application process, and reframe networking sessions as an opportunity to connect with staff, as well as other groups. Next steps include coordinating with grantees to share strategies, providing group trainings on Authority processes and inviting AC members to help with this, and recruiting representatives from economically-disadvantage communities to join the AC.

- An AC member asked about how many AC reviewers will be solicited for the next round and stated that they were interested in participating. Staff responded that the applications come in on a rolling basis and that two AC members and two staff will review each application. Two AC members have already volunteered to serve through the end of the calendar year, and other AC members will have opportunities to serve in the future. Staff also mentioned that a list of backup AC member reviewers is being kept.

## **11. Announcements (INFORMATION)**

Karen McDowell announced that the BRRIT is currently soliciting projects.

Chair Martini Lamb acknowledged that this is Sam Schuchat's final AC meeting before retiring.

## **12. Public Comment**

There were no additional public comments.

## **13. Adjourn**