

DRAFT MINUTES

**San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Advisory Committee Meeting
March 18, 2022, 10 am – 12 pm**

Agenda and meeting materials are available at:

www.sfbayrestore.org

1. Call to Order

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

2. Determination of Quorum

AC member attendance: Ana Alvarez, Chris Barr, Erika Castillo, Steve Chappell, Arthur Deicke, Nahal Ghoghaie, Letitia Grenier, Christopher Gurney, Lee Huo, Shin-Roei Lee, Rebecca Schwartz-Lesberg, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Greg Martinelli, Mike Mielke, Marquita Price, Luisa Valiela, Diane Williams

Staff attendance: Jessica Davenport, Karen McDowell, Erica Johnson, Laura Hollander, Catie Thow

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

3. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager, explained that the Governing Board has amended the stipend policy for AC members so that any members not working for government agencies are eligible to receive the \$100 stipend. Jessica also mentioned that San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (Authority) staff will be coordinating with the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to find common locations in each region for future remote/in-person hybrid meetings.

4. AC Charter Revision (ACTION)

Jessica Martini Lamb, Chair of the Advisory Committee

Item 4: AC Charter, Redline Version

Chair Martini-Lamb presented proposed changes to the AC Charter to reflect the Governing Board's amendment of the AC Procedural Document requiring the AC to record the votes of all members in the minutes.

Ana Alvarez made a motion to adopt the changes and Arthur Deicke seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: Ana Alvarez, Chris Barr, Erika Castillo, Steve Chappell, Arthur Deicke, Nahal Ghoghaie, Letitia Grenier, Christopher Gurney, Lee Huo, Shin-Roei Lee, Rebecca Schwartz-Lesberg, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Greg Martinelli, Mike Mielke, Marquita Price, Luisa Valiela, Diane Williams

5. Approval of Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Minutes of November 19, 2021 (ACTION)

Item 5: Draft Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2021

Mike Mielke moved the motion and Erika Castillo seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously with no corrections.

Ayes: Ana Alvarez, Chris Barr, Erika Castillo, Steve Chappell, Arthur Deicke, Nahal Ghoghaie, Letitia Grenier, Christopher Gurney, Lee Huo, Shin-Roei Lee, Rebecca Schwartz-Lesberg, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Greg Martinelli, Mike Mielke, Marquita Price, Luisa Valiela, Diane Williams

6. Chair's Report from December 10, 2021 and February 25, 2022 Governing Board Meetings (INFORMATION)

Chair Martini-Lamb gave a summary of the December 10, 2021 Governing Board Meeting. The Board approved two grants: the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program and San Pablo Baylands Collaborative Protection and Restoration Project, Phase 2: Camp 4 Ranch Acquisition and Stewardship. The Board approved amendments to stipend policies for the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee and the Advisory Committee so that members are now asked to “opt-out” rather than “opt-in”, heard an update on the Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project, accepted Audited Financial Statements and Reports for Fiscal Year 2020-21, appointed Oversight Committee Members, and heard an item on upcoming events in economically disadvantaged communities.

Chair Martini-Lamb then gave a summary of the February 25, 2022 Governing Board Meeting. The Board approved a community grant for Bay Restoration: Youth Engagement and Service Learning in East Oakland. The board also approved a change to the AC Procedural Document to require the AC to record the votes of all members in the minutes from now on. The board heard an overview of Grant Round 5, approved the text of the Annual Report, heard presentations on the Measure AA Special Parcel Tax Annual Levy Report and on watershed management approaches to getting sediment to Bay wetlands from San Francisco Estuary Institute, and adopted a resolution expressing support for the Bay Adapt Joint Platform.

7. Grant Round 5 Overview (INFORMATION)

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager

Item 7: Staff's Anticipated Recommendation on Projects to be Considered for Funding in Fifth Grant Round

Attachment 1: Grant Round 5 Summary Table

Jessica Davenport presented an overview of Grant Round 5.

- One AC member asked about for clarification on funding for the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT).
 - Staff explained that the Board authorized funding for the BRRIT at \$650,000 a year for 5 years, and the Authority has accepted additional funding from other agencies to go towards the BRRIT.

- One AC member asked for clarification on whether there was a restriction on the number of projects per region or a cost restriction that prevented more projects from being funded in the North Bay.
 - Staff clarified that the North Bay has not exceeded its number or dollar amount. There is no restriction to number of projects, but staff decided to not fund an additional project in Marin because there had already been so many.
- Another member clarified that the geographic distribution provision is over the total life of parcel tax, not per year, but staff tracks regional allocation per year.

8. Recommendation on Process for Grant Round 6 (ACTION)

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager

Item 8: Staff Recommendation on Process for Round 6

Attachment 1: Proposed Grant Round 6 Summary Table

Jessica Davenport presented on staff's proposal to forgo a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Grant Round 6. Due to the large number of high-scoring projects in Grant Round 5, staff instead recommends asking these applicants (except those that are fully funded) to submit updates in summer or fall and then address remaining funding need of partially funded projects and consult with AC reviewers to develop a list of recommended projects for Round 6. Jessica outlined how these projects present opportunities to achieve equity. Jessica explained that there are other significant grant opportunities in the coming year, and that staff would share this information with potential applicants.

- One AC member asked if the need to forgo the RFP is due to staff constraints.
 - Staff responded that while this would save time for staff, the purpose of this is more to increase efficiency overall for everyone. Because of the new pre-application consultation process, there were many more high scoring projects than ever before, and many more that they would like to fund. The total amount requested was five times the funding available.
- Another AC member commented that it would be great to get a broader sense of funding need across the board, above the Authority budget.
- Other AC members expressed concern that not opening the RFP restricts access to funding only to entities that are already known to the Authority and will be closing the door to projects from other organizations that have not come forward yet. AC members would like to make sure that these organizations will still be engaged through the pre-application consultation process and ensure that there won't be a gap in projects coming forward in the future.
 - Staff explained that the pre-application process will remain open so people can still schedule meetings to discuss their potential projects and get feedback from staff. Networking sessions will also continue, in order to engage new organizations and encourage new

partnerships. Community Grant Program funding will still be available on a rolling basis.

- One AC member asked if some of the saved staff time could be used to host a workshop or another type of outreach at an earlier stage for potential applicants, prior to submitting a pre-application.
- An AC member commented that there has been a huge effort in recent years to involve smaller organizations with less access to funding, many of which have in mind that the Authority has been supportive of smaller organizations and might be anticipating applying. They suggested having an RFP round and using the pre-application consultation to communicate that there is limited funding and provide information about other funding opportunities.
- An AC member asked if low-ranking projects from Round 5 would be considered in Round 6.
- Several members expressed support for a hybrid approach, where projects will not have to reapply, but new projects can be considered to compete with them.
 - Staff clarified that the Community Grants Program is still open and rolling and that there is plenty of funding available, and staff is planning on putting more time into outreach and coaching for those.
 - AC member responded that some community-based organizations that have been supported previously by a Community Grant might have a bigger funding need now and want to apply for a competitive grant.
 - Staff responded that the Authority will continue to support groups they have built a relationship with, and that organizations such as this could apply for a larger community grant, since staff is recommending an increase in the cap for Community Grants from \$100,000 to \$200,000 and these organization can also apply for State Coastal Conservancy funds.
- One AC member commented that public perception and urgency around restoration work should be considered, and that it shouldn't appear that the Authority has changed its pace or practice.
- AC members commented that this proposed change is essentially not a "pause" on funding, but rather will result in getting funding out to projects more efficiently. With the significant increase in state and federal funding coming available this year, there is an opportunity to build on community outreach that is already underway to point smaller groups and CBOs to these other sources of funds and might ultimately result in getting projects funded sooner.
- A member asked about community grants and whether multiple proposals from the same area would compete with one another.

- Staff explained that there is \$300,000 left for community grants in this fiscal year, and that there is an effort to have funding distributed geographically, but there isn't a cap on any certain area, and there are clusters of projects in the same area.
- An AC member commented that while there is a benefit to efficiency, there are some organizations that aren't CBOs but are still small entities that haven't historically been engaged in restoration and have planned to apply for Authority grant.
 - Staff commented that they cannot increase staff capacity, as there is a cap on how much of Measure AA funds can allocate to administration (5%).
- One member asked if they could defer a vote so staff and AC could address issues raised with respect to public perception and optics, and efficiency. They asked if there could be a special meeting or create an ad hoc committee to look at these issues with staff, and then work on an item to present to Governing Board with consensus from the AC.
 - Staff responded that the AC could wait to take action on this item and ask the Governing Board to wait to take action until June, but this could delay the release of an RFP if there is an RFP.
- Several AC members commented that they would like to vote on a compromise that staff will work on a hybrid solution to bring to the Governing Board.
- One AC member addressed an earlier comment about slow spending by grantees, saying that in some cases, this was due to the pandemic.

David Lewis made a motion for the AC to make a recommendation to the Governing Board to approve staff's recommendation to not have a Grant Round 6 RFP and to instead rely on the Grant Round 5 applicant list. Shin-Roei Lee seconded. Consensus was not reached on the motion. Six members recused themselves from voting because of a conflict of interest due to having a project that would benefit their agency or organization in Round 5, leading to the loss of a quorum. (A quorum is 14 members; 18 members were present, but after recusals, only 12 members were eligible to vote.) Therefore, the AC was unable to take a formal position on the recommendation. Three members abstained from voting due to a lack of consensus. The votes were 6 ayes, 3 noes, and 3 abstentions.

Ayes: Christopher Gurney, Shin-Roei Lee, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Mike Mielke, Luisa Valiela

Noes: Erika Castillo, Arthur Deicke, Diane Williams

Abstentions: Lee Huo, Nahal Ghoghaie, Marquita Price

Recusals: Steve Chappell, Chris Barr, Ana Alvarez, Letitia Grenier, Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg, Greg Martinelli

Luisa Valiela, US Environmental Protection Agency, announced that under the federal stimulus bill and the federal budget, additional funding has been allocated to support water quality and restoration activities in the San Francisco Bay Area. Two Requests for Applications (RFAs) will be released by EPA in spring 2022 to solicit projects. One will be for approximately \$5 million using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding and will likely not require a match (match waiver currently being pursued according to national guidance) and is intended to support Biden Administration goals of climate resilience and supporting underserved and overburdened communities. This \$5 million BIL RFA will be repeated in four subsequent years. The second RFA will be for \$24 million and will be similar to previous years of San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund grant opportunities that focus on implementation projects that restore habitat and improve water quality.

9. Update from Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Equity (INFORMATION)

Luisa Valiela, Member of Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Equity

Item 9: DRAFT Proposed AC Recommendation on Implementation of Equity Work

Luisa Valiela, member of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Equity, presented on the work of the subcommittee. The ad hoc subcommittee is working to make sure the Authority is meeting goals of increasing the amount of funds that reach underserved communities and tribes. The three recommendations are:

- Increasing the cap for projects funded by the Community Grants Program;
- Direct staff to engage the AC in evaluating equity goals, perhaps developing a dashboard for identifying and tracking progress on equity goals; and
- Hiring a consultant to look long-term at data, and keep the website updated with best practices and actions.
 - One AC member asked if funding for a consultant would count towards project or administrative budget and if this would present a problem given the limited allocation for administration.
 - Staff commented that it might come out of the administration budget so staff and the board would have to budget for this, but it might not be a problem for smaller amounts.
 - Another AC member commented that the issue of engaging underserved communities has already been examined with a consultant, and that putting a training requirement on CBOs might create a hurdle. There should be an emphasis on those who represent communities rather than having a consultant.
 - Luisa responded that the goal of having a consultant is to help the process of continually improving our understanding of how to direct public funding toward supporting community goals. In scoping the work of hiring someone to analyze data and develop next steps to improve the program, there would be a focus on

choosing a consultant that communities would want to work with, including community representatives.

- One AC member asked for cost estimates for this at next meeting.

10. Announcements (INFORMATION)

An episode of the show Open Road will air on March 27th on NBC at 6:30 that is focused on the work of the Authority and regional projects will air on March 27th on NBC at 6:30.

11. Public Comment

No comments.

12. Adjourn