

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Advisory Committee Meeting September 15, 2023, 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:

Lujain Al-Saleh, Casey Ardnt, Sara Azat, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Paul Detjens, Lee Huo, Dulce Jimenez, Maria Katticaran, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Marquita Price, Ana Maria Ruiz, Luisa Valiela, Beckie Zisser

Staff attendance: Jessica Davenport, Karen McDowell, Sara Haugen, Erica Johnson

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Brief Reminder of Ground Rules and Voting Procedures (INFORMATION)

Chair Martini-Lamb reviewed the ground rules and voting procedures. There were no questions.

5. Approval of Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2023 (ACTION)

Jessica Martini-Lamb, Chair

Item 5: [Draft Meeting Minutes for April 14, 2023](#)

Sara Azat moved approval of the minutes and Paul Detjens seconded. There were no objections or abstentions. The minutes were approved with no corrections.

6. Chair's Report from June 30, 2023 Governing Board Meeting (INFORMATION)

Chair Martini-Lamb welcomed three new Advisory Committee members, and those who were present introduced themselves: Lujain Al-Saleh, Maria Katticaran, and Eileen White.

Chair Martini-Lamb reported activities from the June 30, 2023, Governing Board (Board) meeting. The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee presented their annual review of conformance with Measure AA. The Board approved the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 operating and project budget and heard an informational item on the FY 2023-2024 staff work plan. The Board also approved augmentations for two previously authorized projects: Deer Island Basin Phase 1 Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project, to expand the scope of work to include final construction documents, and the Terminal Four Wharf Removal Project, to disburse up to \$2,300,000 in additional funds for final design and

implementation. The Board also approved the 2023 Grant Round materials. Public Information Officer Taylor Samuelson has posted information for the next public Board Tour, which will be held on October 6th in East Palo Alto and is open to the public. Those interested in attending can view information on the website or contact Taylor.

Project Manager Sara Haugen provided an update on the AC Exchange Program, which has five small groups of 11 members participating. Pairs and trios will meet as their schedules permit.

7. **Recommendation on AC Vice Chair for 2023-2025 (ACTION)**

Chair Martini-Lamb called a vote to make a recommendation to fill the Vice Chair vacancy and reminded members of the difference between “abstain” and “recuse” for the vote. Abstaining means a member chooses not to vote but they still contribute to the quorum. Recusing means removing oneself from an item’s discussion and voting due to a conflict of interest, which does not apply for this situation since the nominated person, nor their organization, stands to benefit from the nomination.

Marquita Price nominated Sara Azat, who accepted the nomination. The nomination was approved with one abstention (absent from the room) and no recusals.

Ayes: Lujain Al-Saleh, Casey Arndt, Sara Azat, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Paul Detjens, Lee Huo, Dulce Jimenez, Maria Katticaran, David Lewis, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Marquita Price, Ana Maria Ruiz, Luisa Valiela

Abstain: Beckie Zisser

8. **Grant Round Update (INFORMATION)**

Item 8: [2023 Request for Proposals](#)

Project Manager Sara Haugen shared updates to the Round 7 2023 Request for Proposals (RFP). Updates to RFP include:

- Expanded Definition of “Greatest Positive Impact” Criterion: Now includes list of most relevant regional and subregional plans to cite and an explanation of “Contributions to landscape-scale ecological characteristics”;
- New Prioritization Criterion: "Demonstrate a serious effort to engage California Indian Tribes";
- Expansion of “Likelihood of Success” Criterion related to Partners and Coordination: The criterion that was previously called “Project’s level of community involvement and benefits and/or innovative partnerships” has been expanded to include Tribal engagement and coordination with local jurisdictions; and
- New Application requirements (if applicable): a letter from the landowner confirming their willingness to host the project (if you are not the owner); a letter from Tribal partners confirming their involvement.

Members are invited to participate in reviewing applications. The tentative time commitment is 10-15 hours in the months of October to December. Applications for the

competitive grant round are due October 10th, and there will be a reviewers' orientation later in October and a second meeting in December. Those interested should reach out to Sara Haugen by Friday, September 22.

9. **Tribal Engagement Recommendations Update (INFORMATION)**

Project Manager Sara Haugen shared a brief update on the staff's progress in developing Tribal Recommendations. Staff reviewed several tribal feedback documents from various agencies and equity efforts, then summarized pertinent recommendations into a Draft Recommendations document. To get feedback on this document from tribal members, staff reached out to Bay Area tribes over the last few months and are currently meeting with interested tribal members, who will receive a stipend for their time. Once these meetings conclude, staff will summarize their feedback and update the Draft Recommendations as relevant, then bring those Proposed Recommendations to the AC and Board. Staff will offer the tribes consulted a chance to review the updated Proposed Recommendations before bringing the Final Proposed Recommendations to the Board for approval.

Earlier this year, the Board passed a resolution requiring the Authority to consult with tribes before projects are brought for authorization and approved a new Prioritization Criterion to make a serious effort to engage tribes in this year's RFP.

A member asked for the list of tribes that staff reached out to for the recommendations process, which staff will provide.

A member asked if all applications must have a tribal support letter, and staff explained that this is only required if the application names a tribal organization as a partner.

A member asked to clarify the new tribal consultation process and whether it constitutes another level of review of grant applications. Staff explained that it is not part of the grant application review process; instead, it occurs after application review is complete and staff have prepared a preliminary list of projects that they intend to bring to the Board for authorization. The Interim Tribal Consultation Policy adopted by the Board in May of 2023 requires Authority staff to send a letter to local tribes with an interest in the county where a project is located and offer the opportunity to consult with staff about the project.

10. **Aligning Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program Indicators with Authority Performance Measures (INFORMATION)**

Item 10A: [Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program \(WRMP\) 2023 Update](#)

Item 10B: [Presentation on Aligning Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program Indicators with Authority Performance Measures](#)

Project Manager Erica Johnson introduced April Robinson (San Francisco Estuary Institute) and Alex Thomsen (San Francisco Estuary Partnership) who are leading the alignment of the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP) indicators and Authority performance measures.

April gave an overview of the WRMP, which is a collaborative regional monitoring program for wetlands. The team is developing a comprehensive science framework to

guide monitoring, an open data sharing platform, and a monitoring site network. The Authority is funding the implementation of this work, with opportunities to compare regional data in context with Authority projects. The Authority's Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Performance Measures developed an initial set of metrics but recognized the importance of coordinating with the WRMP to update the metrics and adding new ones.

There are near-term opportunities for this through proposed additional metrics and tools: the Baylands Change Basemap (BCB), the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) scores, and future metrics that are in development. The BCB, funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and overseen by the WRMP's geospatial work group, will be the first updated map of the Baylands since 2009 and is estimated to be completed this winter. It will capture updates to Bay habitats using machine learning and will allow for map-based metrics for analysis, with updates possible every five years instead of every 10-15 years. Relevant metrics include tidal marsh extent, which could track back to Authority-funded projects. This feature would be able to show current versus planned tidal marsh extent. Another metric under consideration is marsh patch configuration, which could show how Authority projects are contributing to larger, more connected marsh habitats. This will mean defining what a marsh patch looks like and applying those definitions to the BCB.

The other metric, CRAM scores, are based on data from surveys of wetlands, and this metric could speak to the habitat quality of Authority project sites. It is well established, has many existing resources for comparison, and is a near-term WRMP priority. Habitat development curves have been generated to show how CRAM scores change over time at project sites and also across a region. The WRMP will bring future metrics to the AC for consideration, including metrics for resilience, people & wetlands, and wildlife.

Alex shared about potential metrics from the People & Wetlands Workgroup, funded by an EPA Wetland Program Development grant. These equity measures could contribute to Authority performance measures. They are working to identify indicators, metrics, and monitoring standards for human connections to wetlands. The workgroup aims to emphasize community and tribal values, align with the needs of decision makers, evaluate equity questions, and incorporate diverse ways of understanding wetland health. They have been meeting for about a year and expect to have indicators, metrics and methods available in Spring 2024.

The workgroup has developed big picture management questions to be addressed by monitoring. The workgroup members' expertise includes social science, environmental justice, wetland adaptive management, regulatory agencies, and tribal engagement. The workgroup is considering various key benefits for consideration, including shoreline protection, water quality, inclusive access, stewardship, knowledge production and transmission, and governance and representation. These ideas will be brought to the Equity Ad Hoc Subcommittee later in October for discussion. The benefits line up well with Measure AA program areas of clean water, habitat restoration, flood protection, and public access. The demographics of volunteers and youth engaged could be analyzed against the demographics of nearby communities, for example. The workgroup is also considering how community vulnerability data and flood protection could be analyzed jointly with the BCB.

An AC member asked if the WRMP is coordinating with Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) to discuss how CRAM would be used in monitoring plans for restoration projects. The WRMP's near term priority is focusing on how they can provide context at a regional level for project-level sites rather than specific suggestions for those sites. However, they will be having conversations with the BRRIT to make sure their work is in alignment. Also, the San Francisco Estuary Partnership team has been leading a Regulatory Engagement Road Map to determine how to use the WRMP indicators with the BRRIT in the future.

There was discussion about the timing of requiring CRAM assessments (such as five years after construction, versus one year after construction), as some funders have requested CRAM scores right after construction. Grantees are concerned about this question of timing because the scores are expected to be low at the beginning then improve over time as the sites revegetate. If CRAM is conducted at early stages post-restoration, it should not be used as a measure of success or failure, but rather as a baseline measurement to be compared with follow-up assessments.

AC members appreciated that the metrics are being presented in an intuitive way and will incorporate human dimensions into the conversations about wetlands and thanked the workgroup participants and WRMP team for their work developing the BCB and suggested metrics. There's an opportunity to be strategic about this progress and share the early success across AC member agencies.

It was reiterated that members can join the AC as hoc subcommittee on equity meeting to discuss the equity metrics further. There was discussion about the WRMP's equity strategy, and that WRMP should be in conversation with those developing the Authority's Equity Guidelines to seek alignment. Authority staff will share the equity report developed by a consultant with WRMP staff.

11. Review Draft Yearly Update on Equity Work (INFORMATION)

Item 11: [DRAFT Memo to Governing Board: Yearly Update on Implementing Advisory Committee Recommendations for Implementing Measure AA in a Manner that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities](#)

Exhibit A: [Implementing Measure AA in a Manner that Benefits Economically Disadvantaged Communities, as Amended by the Governing Board](#)

Exhibit B: [Community Grants Program Applications, FY20-21 through FY22-23](#)

Project Manager Sara Haugen presented the Draft Yearly Update on Equity Work, a draft memo that will be presented to the Governing Board at their October meeting. Progress in FY22-23 included continuing the Community Grants program and forming a grantee cohort, working on the Equity Guidelines with the AC ad hoc subcommittee on equity, continuing Networking Sessions virtually, and updating grant materials to have a stronger equity focus. In the future, staff will continue to recruit new AC members to advance equity, develop Tribal Engagement Recommendations, complete the Equity Guidelines, and establish a communications strategy to reach more underrepresented groups. Members may send comments on the draft to staff ahead of the October 20th Board meeting.

12. Communications and Performance Measures Update **(INFORMATION)**

Item 12A: [Draft One-Pager on Key Performance Measures and Updates FY22-23](#)

Item 12B: [Draft Performance Measures FY22-23](#)

Item 12C: [Draft Map of Funded Projects, Cumulative through FY22-23](#)

Deputy Program Manager Jessica Davenport presented the draft one-pager on performance measures and other communications updates on behalf of Public Information Officer Taylor Samuelson. The Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Annual Report will cover information about Grant Round 6, federal funding opportunities, and grant authorizations and augments. The regional funding chart no longer shows the individual fiscal years, but instead regional progress toward the 20-year targets based on the current year's funding per region. There are also project milestones about the 900 Innes Remediation Project and the Marin City Urban Wetland Community Visioning Project which were completed during the fiscal year, the Invasive Spartina Project's reduction efforts, and Regionally Advancing Living Shorelines success receiving additional federal and state funding.

The performance measures now summarize data from 39 projects total, with a note that there were three new projects and four new phases of existing projects authorized, for a total of seven new grants. Staff have developed a new project map that shows completed projects, community grants, and regular grants. There will also be an interactive project map on the website showing an Economically Disadvantaged Communities layer and clickable information on each of the projects. AC members are invited to join the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to draft the full Annual Report. This year the staff are aiming to streamline the report with the website and minimize the amount of text dedicated to project updates by linking to the project pages online which will be kept updated. Members can contact Sara Haugen if they would like to be involved in this process.

As mentioned earlier, the West Bay project tour is on October 6th and will visit the SAFER Bay Planning Project and Baylands Habitat Restoration and Community Engagement in East Palo Alto.

A member commented that they appreciate that staff are tracking progress on overall and subregional goals and finds it important to emphasize in the publication that it is not in violation of Measure AA if the Authority is not meeting those subregional goals each year.

13. Announcements **(INFORMATION)**

Paul Detjens shared that the Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project, funded in part by the Authority, won an award for the Northern California APWA project of the year. The project also went on to be awarded the nationwide APWA environmental project of the year.

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer for the Authority, thanked the AC members for their service on the committee.

14. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

15. Adjourn

Chair Martini-Lamb adjourned at 11:29.