



Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Executive Board (EB) Call
January 18, 2019

Attendance:

Members: Brian Benham, Andrew Miller, Jason Hubbard, Chanceé Lundy, Kurt Stephenson, Tom Ihde, Lara Fowler, Kathy Boomer

Administration: Bill Ball, Rachel Dixon, Annabelle Harvey

Updates on STAC Business –

STAC Staff, Annabelle Harvey (CRC), began the call by providing an update on the STAC Recommendations Database that is currently being developed by STAC Staff in conjunction with database developers contracted through the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). All recommendations – relating both to management needs and science/research needs – resulting from a STAC-sponsored review or workshop will be made searchable through categories and key terms relating to the recommendation. Harvey has compiled recommendations from 2010-current activities into an excel sheet, that the contractors are now in the process of creating an online database. This is a work-in-progress and input from STAC will be needed, as well as beta-testing of the online database by STAC members. STAC Chair Brian Benham (VT) inquired into the staff time commitment currently being invested in this activity. Given that the initial compiling of the recommendations (2010-present) is complete, STAC staff anticipate that time demands will be manageable as the database is built.

STAC Quarterly Meeting Agenda: March 26-27, 2019 –

Benham provided an overview of the first draft of the March 2019 meeting agenda. A major portion of this quarterly meeting will be dedicated to discussing a new potential proactive initiative for STAC: *Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Chesapeake Bay: State of the Science 2025*. Benham, along with Kurt Stephenson (VT), have drafted a white paper to propose that STAC takes advantage of this time after the 2017 Midpoint Assessment to discuss the water quality standards required by the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) by 2025 and what will happen if they are not met. Stephenson wants STAC to examine the significant gaps that are likely to be present in 2025 and assess how the system would respond to these gaps, prior to the 2025 deadline. STAC has the expertise and vast network of additional experts that is ideal for synthesizing the current science. Benham and Stephenson are looking for the EB's comments and eventual approval, in hopes to bring this *State of the Science* to the floor at the March quarterly meeting for approval by the entire membership.

Kathy Boomer (TNC) expressed excitement about this idea and explained it would be ideal for understanding how to communicate not reaching 2025 goals to the public, without negative messaging. Andy Miller (UMBC) agreed that the way the results are communicated should be handled carefully to avoid discouraging the public about management of the Bay and emphasize actionable next steps. Stephenson agreed that messaging around this effort should be constructive and supportive. Boomer suggested that there be a focus on certain components of the TMDL, not the whole TMDL in general. Miller agreed with focusing on some narrow topics, but that the broader conversation should still be a part of this effort. Benham emphasized that this is not on a specific topic but looking at gaps and a state of the science in general, which is what differentiates this effort from STAC's developing 'science synthesis' efforts.

All agreed this is a great opportunity to increase STAC member engagement, reflect on lessons learned and past STAC recommendations, and leverage STAC's role in the partnership. Tom Ihde (Morgan State)

noted that topics beyond water quality should be kept in mind, and several on the EB suggested that parallel STAC activities (e.g., synthesis, upcoming workshops) might inform this process. Boomer suggested gathering a group of ‘champions/leaders’ to take on this effort within STAC and Rachel Dixon (CRC) agreed this is an important step. The EB brainstormed how this effort would move forward and how STAC could best utilize time during quarterly meetings. Benham and Stephenson agreed to draft a plan to present this idea and next steps to the entire membership in March.

Benham continued to review agenda items on the March 2019 draft agenda. He and others agreed that the ‘Chesapeake Bay Program 101’ would be useful, but the format and presenter(s) would need to be finalized. Gary Shenk would be an important component of this and so this may be put on hold until the government reopens. Chanceé Lundy added that a ‘STAC 101’ would also be useful. STAC intends to host the new CBP Director at the March Meeting. In response to an action item from the December 2017 quarterly meeting, Benham will create a one-pager all about STAC to give to the new CBP Director. Other experienced STAC members and STAC Coordinator, Dixon will assist. Typically RFPs for the upcoming fiscal year are reviewing at the March meeting, but due to the federal shutdown, the timeline may have to adjust as federal workers, including those at the CBP, may be unable to meet the February 15th deadline. Overall, the agenda remains fairly open and uncertain due to the government shutdown. STAC membership and bylaws could both be discussed, if time-willing, and would not be effected by the shutdown.

The March meeting will be held in Annapolis, so people from around the Chesapeake Bay Partnership can attend for the RFP review and in hope the new director will have a meet-and-greet with STAC. In June and September, STAC hopes to hold meetings in Blacksburg, VA (Virginia Tech) and in Pennsylvania (Lancaster or Harrisburg). June would be an ideal time for a meeting in Blacksburg due to the weather and the academic calendar. Lara Fowler (PSU) emphasized that getting out of the meeting rooms to actually see and be out in the watershed is a great experience and moving locations provides a great opportunity for that. There was previously an intention to make one meeting a year a webinar, but with the ‘State of the Science’ efforts that may not be feasible.

DECISION: The Executive Board approved of the proposal for the *Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Chesapeake Bay: State of the Science 2025* and for Benham to bring this to the STAC body during the March 2019 quarterly meeting (QM).

ACTION: Brian Benham and Kurt Stephenson will bring back a proposal on how to present the State of the Science at the March QM to the EB to approve. The EB will plan to meet again in 3 weeks.

ACTION: Benham and Dixon will put together a welcome one-pager about STAC to give to the new Chesapeake Bay Program Director.

Membership Updates—

Maria Hermann (PSU) has rotated off STAC as a PA Gubernatorial Appointee. Fowler has been nominated to replace her in this position, but PA has not yet made a final decision. There are 2 at-large vacancies and there would be 3, if Fowler is approved to take the PA appointment. With these current vacancies and four more following the September 2019 meeting, we need to re-prioritize the process of filling them. The EB agreed that having a diverse STAC membership is still a priority. Miller suggested having further discussions on diversity and representation during the September meeting, preceding nominations for these vacancies. Ihde noted that some individuals previously nominated for STAC vacancies were missing from the collated list provided for this call; STAC Staff will revisit notes from previous discussions to ensure the list is complete in March. Benham agrees

and will prepare for that discussion to be brought up in March. EB members should be prepared to discuss as well.

The vacancy discussed in September 2018 was agreed to be filled by someone with expertise in Environmental Data Analytics/Statistics. Nominations were accepted and the EB rank voted each nominee. Eric Smith (VT) was the top ranked and the EB motioned to approve his appointment to STAC. The motion passed. Benham will approach Smith about his willingness to join STAC and if he agrees, STAC Staff will send over a new member packet.

Zach Easton (VT) finished his first term as an at-large STAC member and requires approval to serve a second four-year term. There was a motion to reappoint Easton and the motion passed.

DECISION: The Executive Board approved Eric Smith (VT) to be an at-large member of STAC and for Zach Easton (VT) to serve a second at-large term on STAC.

ACTION: Benham will approach Eric Smith (VT) about his willingness to serve on STAC as an at-large member. **Update:** Smith has agreed to join STAC. STAC Staff sent him a new member packet.

ACTION: Benham, with help from STAC Coordinator and Staff, will prepare a discussion on diversity and representation in STAC membership for the September 2019 meeting.