



CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE WEBINAR SUMMARY-DRAFT

March 20, 2020

LINK TO ALL MEETING PRESENTATIONS AND MATERIALS:

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2020/3/20/chesapeake-bay-and-water-resources-policy-committee/>

DECISIONS & ACTIONS:

The CBPC members:

- Approved the FY '21 Regional Water Quality Management Work Program and Budget.
- Approved the January CBPC meeting summary.
- Agreed to push the Forum with EPA and the states back to a tentative date of September 25.
- Advised not to schedule a Chesapeake Bay Foundation boat trip before September.

1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Jon Stehle, Chair, City of Fairfax

Chair Stehle welcomed members.

2. APPROVAL OF FY 2021 REGIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT WORK PROGRAM & BUDGET

Steve Bieber, COG Acting Water Resources Director

- Mr. Bieber noted that the COG Board approved a 3.88% increase to the overall budget.
- COG will continue to track Chesapeake Bay work such as Phase III WIP progress, modeling tools and applications in CAST, climate change impacts to load allocations, and Conowingo Dam WIP.
- COG is continuing water supply coordination including COVID-19 news via AWWA, WEF and others, and regional messaging about water being safe and “protect your pipes from wipes” messaging.
- The Virginia Tech Occoquan Lab funds that have been dedicating for Chain Bridge monitoring are being shifted to freshwater salinization monitoring and research, with directional guidance by the WRTC members.

Member discussion

- A member asked how stable is funding for the Occoquan Lab and for USGS monitoring? The USGS monitoring stations are long-term and high priority. The data from these two sources has been very similar.
- Members voiced that their county budgets are going to be revised. Therefore, the COG budget may be subject to revisiting.
- Even if funding for environmental programs is slashed, one member said its important to advocate for them not to be removed.
- Members approved the Regional Water Quality Management Budget.

3. CBPC MEETING SUMMARY APPROVAL

The CBPC members approved the Summary from the January 17th CBPC meeting.

4. AG TASK FORCE UPDATE

Craig Rice, Montgomery County Councilmember

- Ms. Smith opened by saying COG has been actively coordinating regional food assistance, access to food, including farmer's markets, and working on procurement.
- Councilmember Rice said now, more than ever, food supply continuity is critical—free and reduced meals at schools and standing up non-profits to name a few. Commodity crops are affected. Stock market impacted. Perhaps this is an opportunity for regional farmers to shift to table crops versus commodity crops.

Member discussion

- Addressing the multitude of issues associated with the pandemic is a marathon, not a sprint.
- Members noted individual concerns over farmer's markets, SNAP programs, social distancing measures in stores, including seniors shopping first.
- A member inquired whether farmers will be eligible for the microgrants for small businesses?

5. STAFF UPDATES & MEMBER DISCUSSION OF COVID-19

A. STAFF UPDATES

- Ms. Bonnaffon said the Chesapeake Bay Foundation boat trip would be planned for June or later. Members voiced concern over a June date. Ms. Bonnaffon inquired about pushing the Forum with EPA and states back to September 25. Members were supportive of this measure and date.
- Adair Ravencraft, COG Department of Homeland Security and Policy, briefed the CBPC on COG's COVID-19 regional coordination. She said there has been regular coordination with the CAOs, police, fire, school superintendents, grant makers, CEEPC and water utilities. In addition, COG has been coordinating best practices with the Board of Trade and the Association of Regional Councils.

B. MEMBER DISCUSSION ABOUT COVID-19

Chair Stehle reserved a section of the agenda for members to have an open discussion on COVID-19 concerns and efforts to address them.

- Members cited wipes clogging pipes as an issue making national and local news. COG staff said it is good that this message is being multiplied and COG would develop and send out infographics and messaging points for wipes.
- Members said getting out coordinated messaging on social distancing and stay at home orders was important. Members expressed the importance of the states taking equal precautions.
- A common concern was a need for increasing testing. A member said it should be via doctor orders, since early pop up testing sites were using up limited test kits and most results were coming back negative.
- A member inquired whether there was a COG regional cache of personal protective equipment. Ms. Ravencraft answered that while the emergency managers are working together, the caches are generally managed at a jurisdictional level.

6. WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT OF WEBINAR

Chair Stehle adjourned the webinar at 11:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members and Alternates:

Amy Jackson, Alexandria
Cindy Dyballa, Takoma Park
Craig Rice, Montgomery County
J. Davis, Greenbelt
Jon Stehle, Chair, City of Fairfax
Keith Levchenko, Montgomery County
Kenny Boddy, Prince William County
Laurie-Anne Sayles, City of Gaithersburg
Libby Garvey, Arlington County
John Boland, District of Columbia
Penny Gross, Fairfax County
Jeff Seltzer, DOEE
Joel Caudill, WSSC Water

Karen Pallansch, Alexandria Renew
Pam Kenel, Loudoun Water

COG Staff:

Adair Ravencraft
Christine Howard
Heidi Bonnaffon
Karl Berger
Katie Dyer
Lindsay Smith
Lisa Ragain
Lisa Reynolds
Steve Bieber
Steve Walz