



**New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program
POLICY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
March 4, 1999 @ USEPA Offices, New York**

(DRAFT –Sept 20, 1999)

Jeanne Fox convened the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

1. There were no suggested changes to the agenda.
2. The minutes of the Sept 24, 1998 Policy Committee Meeting were approved without change.
3. Bob Nyman reviewed the March 1, 1999 draft of the HEP FY99 budget. Lance Miller said that there is a need to meet with others to seek additional commitments. Marc Matsil presented an update on the Habitat annual report document. Tom Creamer asked if dredged material was addressed in it and Mr. Matsil said yes. Mr. Matsil said it was now photo-ready. It was written in house and designed by a NYC Parks contract paid for by Parks. Commissioner Shinn requested that logos from all participating agencies be displayed on the document.
4. The discussion then moved to the status of the HEP Office. Kevin Bricke said that EPA was going to provide a director, office space, and overhead costs. He said that \$90,000 would be necessary for the two contract staff who would be associated with the office. EPA agreed to develop position descriptions for the staff. Comm Shinn asked what the source of the \$90K would be. Mr. Bricke relayed a conversation that he had with NG Kaul in which Mr. Kaul said that if there was an increase in the CWA Sect 319 funds, then he would agree to use of HEP funds for the positions. Ms. Fox reviewed the process that had been undertaken to seek other offers of office space. Chuck Warren said he supported the formation of the HEP office. He said that HEP should attract attention to the important issues.

Mike Weinstein said Sea Grant was hiring new person. However, that person would be doing Sea Grant projects, not HEP activities. Mr. Bricke said that HEP needed staff to do the work that the Management Conference requested.

Gene Flatow said that fund-raising should be for the “program”.

Lance Miller asked who Mr. Nyman would report to. Mr. Bricke said that he would do the work of HEP and would be supervised by EPA. He also said that the office could transition into a

non-EPA office. He added that his position description was being modified and would be distributed for review.

Paul Gallay said that he supported the budget. Marcia Bystryn said that an outreach strategy was needed to line up pieces being carried out by various stakeholders. Mr. Shinn said that Sea Grant should be a component of the overall HEP.

Anne Galli said that she thought the program was headed in the right direction. Mr. Shinn asked what would NJDEP not do if they did not receive their \$45K share of the HEP office budget. Lance Miller said that the mini-grants wouldn't get done. Gene Flatow suggested that the New York City Environmental Fund could be a source of mini-grant projects.

Page one of the budget was approved by the Policy Committee: \$10K for travel, \$90K for HEP office staff, \$210K for state staff coordination. Mr. Creamer requested that the work group reevaluate the items on page 2 of the budget and get back to the PC with recommendations.

The discussion then moved to agenda item 9 concerning the habitat map. Mr. Matsil said he was seeking approval of the New Jersey sites. Mr. Bricke said that the intention of the map was for entities to make a good faith effort to acquire and remediate those sites on the list, but that it had no legal standing to force agencies to use the list. He pointed out that some of the sites on the list had already received funding from state bond acts. Paul Gallay said that Jim Gilmore needed to be recognized for his efforts with the site identification. Gene Flatow said the map should be part of a regional habitat plan.

Ms. Fox said that she opposed the Dundee fish ladder on the Passaic because of the potential for contaminated fish to be more accessible to humans. She requested that a footnote be added stating this. Mr. Shinn said that he sees other sites on the list that he has concerns with because they are polluted. Mr. Matsil said he has had success with bioremediation of hydrocarbons. Chuck Warren said there was a need for further description of what the list is. There was then further discussion of specific language changes. Ms. Fox said that the process for review and approval of the product had broken down and that there was a need for reviewing the approval process to assure that miss communications didn't happen again. Mr. Creamer provided some suggested language from the Corps. It was agreed that Mr. Nyman would ensure that language acceptable to the Corps, NJDEP and EPA was provided Mr. Matsil and that once that language was incorporated, the list could be considered approved.

Mr. Blum requested that mosquito control be included. Mr. Matsil stated that mosquito control was not the purview of the Habitat Work Group.

Five new habitat sites in New York state were proposed by Mr. Matsil on behalf of the Habitat Work Group. The Policy Committee approved them subject to final approval by New York State within two weeks.

Anne Galli provided an update on the non-profit account effort. She said that a process needed to be defined as to how the accounts would operate and that the accounts would help provide

greater visibility to the program by allowing more projects to be funded. Ms. Fox asked what the next steps were and Ms. Galli responded that HEP would now reach out to the 3 organizations that had expressed an interest in working with the program. Ms. Fox said that she would have preferred a separate non-profit, but that a decision was made 3-4 years ago to go with an existing organization. Mr. Gallay said that using an existing entity was acceptable to New York State and he supported it. Jim Mueller requested a copy of the EPA SEP Policy.

Dennis Suszkowski gave an update on the CARP effort. He said there would be a meeting next month to evaluate the field effort. He said that it would be desirable to provide some information from the program within two years so that it could be used in the Dredged Material Management Plan and possibly for the WRDA bill. He said that a Statement of Principles was being developed to help coordinate the CARP work and that he would report out on it at the next PC meeting. Mike Weinstein said that a \$500k research effort was beginning that would be looking at the atmospheric emissions of contaminants from dredged material.

Jennifer DiLorenzo gave an update on the NJ outreach efforts. She said that NJ found that the “teach the teachers” concept worked the best. She also discussed other programs the state is conducting with outreach. She requested updated fact sheets so that she could have them distributed at events. Nancy Steinberg described the NY outreach efforts that is being undertaken in conjunction with the New York City Soil and Water Conservation District. Some of the activities described included training sessions for stewards, the Biodiversity conference at the American Museum of Natural History, Tuesday Seminars and the HEP website. Ms. Steinberg also recommended some additional items that would be desirable to develop, such as newsletters, if they could be budgeted.

Ms. Fox said that HEP should undertake a re-analysis of its budget process within 6-9 months to ensure that future budgets are responsive to HEPs needs.

Mr. Weinstein said NJ Sea Grant was developing a teachers guide and workshops and invited HEP participation. He added that NJ Sea Grant was also co-funding development of an oyster reef.

Ms. DiLorenzo presented a pie chart indicating funding that was being spent by NJ on HEP activities.

The PC requested that the next meeting take place in September. Commissioner Shinn invited the PC to have the meeting at HMDC so that he could show them a few of the environmental projects in that area.

Ms. Flatow said that a follow-up to the Manahattan College Conference was being planned.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.