

RI EXECUTIVE CLIMATE CHANGE COORDINATING COUNCIL

SCIENCE & TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

1:30-4:00 PM

URI Coastal Institute – Small Conference Room

URI Bay Campus, Narragansett

In attendance: Peter August, URI, Board Chair
Todd Bianco, PUC
James Boyd, CRMC, Board Secretary
Kelly Knee, RPS/ASA
Ronald Pitt, RIC
Carol Thornber, URI
Henry Walker, EPA, Board Vice-Chair

Absent: Jason Osenkowski, DEM and Timmons Roberts, Brown University

Welcome, Peter August

Chair August opened the meeting at 1:30 pm and welcomed Board members and public attendees to the third meeting of the Science & Technical Advisory Board (STAB). He noted that the STAB had been working diligently on fulfilling the request from the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) to develop a clear and succinct package of Power Point slides with notes concerning the current state of climate change as it pertains to Rhode Island. Today's meeting would be a review and discussion of the draft slides and to modify content with Board input. Chair August also noted that following his consultation with EC4 Chair Janet Coit and Vice Chair Marion Gold, he contacted Department of Health (RIDOH) Director Dr. Alexander-Scott and requested her designee of a RIDOH staff person to assist the STAB in addressing health-related issues associated with climate change impacts. Dr. Scott has appointee Julia Gold, the RIDOH Climate Change Program Manager to assist the STAB as needed.

News from EC4 – Elizabeth Stone, RIDEM

Elizabeth (Liz) Stone of the DEM Director's Office provided a description and breakdown of the \$35 million Recreation, Green Spaces and Healthy Communities Bond in the Governor's proposed FY 2017 budget. The bond includes \$100,000 to the University of Rhode Island to provide needed technical assistance to municipalities to address climate change impacts. The bond also includes funding for state bikeway development, historic state park development, brownfield remediation and economic development, state open space land acquisition, local land acquisition matching grants, stormwater pollution prevent matching grants and local recreation development matching grants. Liz also noted that the EC4 would be meeting on February 10, and that there would be no EC4 meeting in April. There is thought that the EC4 would hold a State House presentation with the House Commission to Study Economic Risk Due to Flooding and Sea Rise in late April or early May. Additionally, the Green House Gas (GHG) Study Technical Committee was scheduled to meet on February 23.

Review of December 9, 2015 meeting minutes (For Action)

Next on the agenda was the review of the December 9 STAB meeting minutes. Following brief discussion, a motion to approve was offered by Ron Pitt and seconded by Carol Thornber. The Board voted to approve the meeting minutes as read.

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New Business – Review of EC4 State of Climate Change PowerPoint Collections

The STAB was requested to address the following topics:

- Sea Level Rise
- Warming Air
- Warming Water
- Storm frequency
- Biodiversity
- Precipitation

Chair August had earlier developed a STAB DropBox for members to upload and edit slides and notes, and he reminded members that our task is to review the relative science for each assigned topic. Accurate content and completeness of data is paramount to provide a clear picture of climate change issues. Additionally, once the content and notes are completed, the EC4 Advisory Board would be polishing the format for presentation and communication. The slides and notes will aid in clear communication among the EC4 and its Boards, as well as other state agencies and the general public.

Board members had previously been assigned as leads and cooperators for the climate change topics as shown in the table below. For purposes of this meeting, Chair August using a laptop and projector opened each topic slide presentations for online editing. Members with assistance of Julia Gold (RI Department of Health) extensively discussed the slide content and notes to develop clear and concise visual, graphic and notation elements for the slides associated with each topic. It was determined that additional graphics and scientific references will be necessary to complete and refine the presentations.

Topic	Primary	Additional
Sea Level Rise	J. Boyd	H. Walker, K. Knee
Warming Air	T. Roberts	T. Bianco
Warming Water	C. Thornber	J. Osenkowski, T. Bianco
Storm Frequency	H. Walker	J. Boyd, K. Knee, R. Pitts
Biodiversity	J. Osenkowski	C. Thornber, R Pitts, P. August
Precipitation	H. Walker	K. Knee, J, Boyd

Following lengthy discussion, the Board completed the review and editing of each climate change topic slide presentation. Chair August requested each topic group to continue working on revisions and uploading the final draft presentations with notes, including a bibliography with citations in MS Word format to be completed over the next several weeks. It was also requested that suggested peer reviewers be included with each topic presentation. The next STAB meeting will be scheduled in March to review the final draft climate change topic slides and a discussion of content for the STAB annual report to be included within the EC4 annual report due May 1. Vice Chair Hal Walker offered to email to members a Doodle poll to schedule the March meeting.

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Public Comments

None

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by STAB Secretary James Boyd

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 23, 9:30AM-Noon, Public Utilities Commission, Hearing Room A, 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick.