

CBGN Working Group Minutes – October 12, 2005

Rules Committee Rm. – Dept. of Housing and Community Development, Crownsville MD

Participating:

Marci Ross, Robert Pickett, Elizabeth Hughes, Lee Epstein, Robert Carter, Lisa Gutierrez, Lynn Bostain, Melanie Teems, Dan Martin, Terry Hough, Bob Campbell, Jonathan Doherty, Rod Torrez, Cheryl Branagan, Paula Degen, Mike Land, Janet Reingold, Sean McPhillomy.

The meeting convened at 10:00 AM.

CBGN Strategic Plan

Jonathan Doherty outlined the revised draft CBGN strategic plan and the changes made in response to comments at the September Working Group meeting, including the elimination of a priorities column. Discussion of the revised strategic plan included the following topics: (a) there was some concern regarding wording in Goal 1, Objective 1, Strategy a. pertaining to water trail standards; (b) renumbering Goal 4 as Goal 2 to highlight the importance of stewardship; (c) encouraging active restoration at Gateways in Goal 4, Objective 1, Strategy a.; (d) including organizational development as a training component in Goal 5, Objective 2, Strategy d. Working Group members agreed that with these changes the strategic plan should be adopted as the guiding document for the CBGN. The complemented the collaborative working process in developing the plan, including the facilitation of the effort by Reingold.

FY06 Annual Program Plan

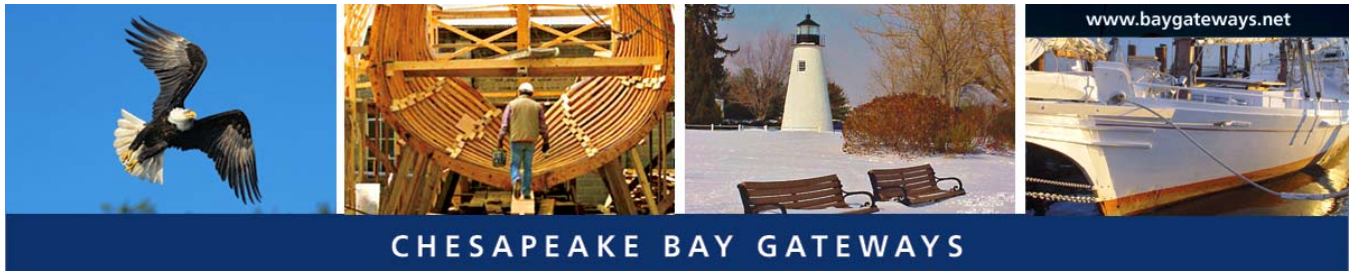
Jonathan Doherty outlined an initial draft of the FY06 program plan, which had not yet factored in budget considerations. Discussion among the Working Group included the following topics: (a) a sense of the group that there should be the ability to “de-designate” Gateways that are not meeting commitments, when determined as such during MOU reviews; (b) recruiting of new Gateways in high-priority areas should focus on nominations that may come in after the near-term grant round cut-off; it was noted that Working Group members can/should play a key role in facilitating recruitment; (c) concern that the on-line field trip element should be done with a schools focus only if it can be demonstrated that schools have the capacity to make use of it; (d) Terry Hough noted there is a need to focus on Gateways and activities that are relevant above the Mason-Dixon line and not to be too Bay-centric.

Jonathan Doherty noted that a revised version of the program plan would be developed for the next Working Group meeting.



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Grant Outcome Measures

Jonathan Doherty introduced Sean McPhillomy of PricewaterhouseCoopers to review the proposed outcomes and process for measuring Gateways grants. Members discussed the following points following the overview of the proposed measures: (a) concern about the potential labor and cost in follow-up evaluation of the educational impact of exhibits when effort to use focus groups in up-front planning could be more beneficial; (b) people are generally tired of or resistant to surveys, especially when in a recreational setting and among certain visitor groups; (c) the reporting process can impose a significant burden on NPS staff in tracking results; (d) applicants for smaller grants could easily be swayed against applying if the reporting burden is perceived to be too burdensome; (e) are the big picture results of outputs being captured – that is often what decision-makers are most interested in; (f) possibility of using a research firm to assist in doing the measurement; (g) possibility of taking a pilot approach, particularly if it involves the web; (h) the overall measurement process needs to be commensurate with the size and scale of the project and the program, both of which are small relatively speaking; (i) there needs to be a mechanism for feedback from Gateways prior to implementation.

Updates and Other Business

Nomination cut-off for 2006 grant cycle: Members agreed the nomination cut-off prior to the 2006 grant round should be moved earlier to late November or December. Members also agreed on the wisdom of moving to a single annual nomination deadline in October beginning in fall 2006.

Determination of eligibility for site near watershed boundary: Members discussed the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, which appears to be just slightly outside the Bay watershed. Without further information and consideration of ramifications, members were uncomfortable with encouraging eligibility of a site outside the watershed boundary.

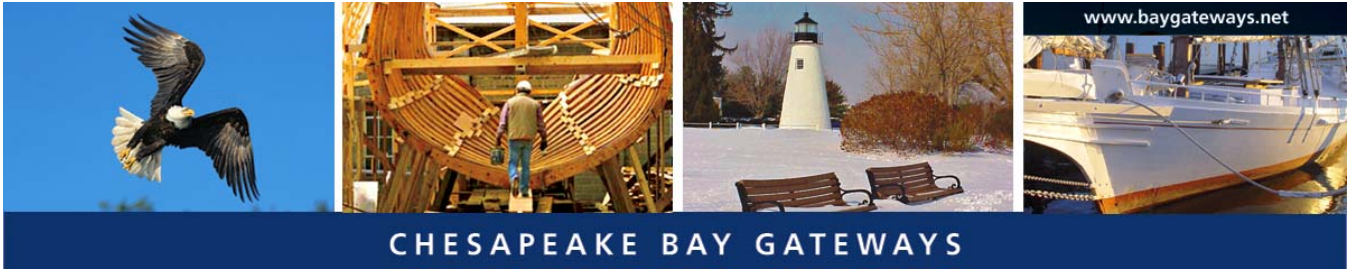
Other topics: Members inquired about the status of the FY2006 appropriation; Jonathan Doherty reported that the Interior Appropriations Act was passed and provides \$1.5 million for CBG/N, a 40% reduction from 2005. On a separate topic, Marci Ross noted the upcoming November 29 meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council and efforts being coordinated by state representatives to develop a CEC letter supporting CBGN.

Jonathan Doherty noted upcoming meetings on Wednesday, November 9 and Wednesday, December 14. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.



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