**September 11, 2020, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**
Zoom Teleconference
Agenda and meeting materials are available at:
www.sfbayrestore.org

1. **Call to Order**

   Luisa Valiela, Advisory Committee (AC) Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

2. **Determination of Quorum**

   AC Member Attendance: Myla Ablog, Ana Alvarez, Sara Azat, Bruce Beyaert, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Arthur Deicke, Gregg Erickson, Letitia Grenier, Zahra Kelly, Shin-Roei Lee, Roger Leventhal, David Lewis, Sally Lieber, Chris Lim, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Lisa Horowitz McCann, Erika Powell, Marina Psaros, Ana Maria Ruiz, Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg, Luisa Valiela, Diane Williams, Beckie Zisser.

   Staff Attendance: Sam Schuchat, Caitlin Sweeney, Jessica Davenport, Maggie Jenkins, Linda Tong, Karen McDowell, Taylor Samuelson.

   Maggie Jenkins, AC Clerk, determined there was a quorum at 10:08 am.

3. **Public Comment**

   There were no public comments.

4. **Approval of Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Minutes of June 5, 2020 (ACTION)**

   **Decision**: There was consensus to approve the meeting minutes for June 5, 2020.

5. **Chair and Vice Chair's Report (INFORMATION)**

   Chair Valiela recognized the perseverance of everyone through challenging times and thanked them for their inspiration. She announced that there will be changes in membership of the AC. She welcomed Chris Barr, who is replacing Anne Morkill's seat on the AC. She announced that Judy Kelly is stepping down from the AC and retiring from her position as Director from the North Bay Watershed Association. Laura Thompson is also stepping down from the AC. Chair Valiela thanked them for their time on the AC.

   Chair Valiela shared the ground rules for AC meetings and reminded members to use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom.

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Vice Chair Alvarez thanked everyone for creating this safe space amidst abnormal times. She reported a summary of the July 17, 2020 Governing Board meeting, which included the following:

- The board passed a resolution to accept the AC's recommendations for implementing Measure AA in a manner that benefits economically disadvantage communities (EDCs). The resolution included an amendment to move recommendation 3.2 ("Seek ways for the Authority funds to support work the community is already doing or interested in doing") from long term (3-5 years) to short term (1-2 years). Vice Chair Alvarez recognized the members of the AC who served on the Ad Hoc Subcommittee and the support from Authority staff.
- The board passed a resolution to create the Community Grants Program and expressed support for capacity building.
- The board approved the following three projects: Heron's Head Park Shoreline Resilience Project: Phase 1, American Canyon Wetlands Restoration Plan, and Suisun Marsh Fish Screen Rehabilitation Project: Phase 1.
- There were also presentations on the South Bay Shoreline Project and the 2019 State of the Estuary Report.
- The board approved the 2020 grant program materials and appointed a new member to the Advisory Committee and a new member to the Oversight Committee.


6. **Community Grants Program (INFORMATION)**

Linda Tong, Project Manager for the Restoration Authority, presented an overview of the Community Grants Program. The purpose of the program is to support projects led by community-based organizations (CBOs) serving EDCs. The program is separate from the competitive grant round. It is an alternative track that allows applicants to apply for funds on a rolling basis and to receive increased Authority staff support. CBOs may still apply through the competitive grant round if they wish. After reviewing the pre-application and having a phone consultation, Authority staff may advise applicants to work collaboratively with staff through the Community Grants Program track. A webinar was hosted on August 19, 2020 to provide an overview of both the competitive grant round and the Community Grants Program. Authority staff plan to host a matching sessions in the future to help facilitate partnerships between CBOs and larger organizations. Eligible projects include community visioning, training, gaining knowledge of shoreline issues, building relationships with government agencies and nonprofits, and implementing shoreline habitat projects with strong community benefits. The program hopes to facilitate capacity building by developing a cohort to share lessons learned, providing group trainings, inviting AC members to help, and recruiting grantees and other EDC representatives to apply to be on the AC.

The following comments and questions were raised by the AC:
- Is the $200,000 a one-time grant?
  - $200,000 is the allocation for the pilot phase in the current fiscal year. The annual allocation may change as the program progresses.

- Why is the allocation limited to $200,000? This seems like a small portion, approximately 0.8% of the overall Measure AA annual allocation.
  - The Community Grants Program is in the pilot phase, focusing on establishing a successful program before expanding. The allocation of $200,000 was approved by the Governing Board.
- How will the pilot program be evaluated?
  - Authority staff will measure success of the program against the AC equity recommendations. Staff will provide an annual report on progress towards implementing the equity recommendations and the Community Grants Program will be evaluated at that time.
- Have you received any interest to date from CBOs? Is there any outreach that will be done specific to this program?
  - The Authority has not yet received any pre-applications specific to the Community Grants Program, but staff has heard about interest from CBOs. Since applications are accepted on a rolling basis, staff anticipate receiving applicants for the program in the future.
  - The Authority has done outreach through the mailing list and Asian Pacific Environmental Network's mailing list. In addition, Estuary News is doing a feature on the program in the next issue. Staff looked into doing a campaign focused on ethnic media in the Bay Area, but decided to hold off on further program-specific outreach because the program does not have the funding or staff capacity currently to handle a large influx of applications. The program is in the pilot stage and staff would like to have a few projects funded through the program before implementing a larger outreach campaign.
- An AC member commented in favor of starting with a modest amount of funding ($200,000) for the Community Grants Program and stated that it was a good approach.
- An AC member commented in favor of the Community Grants Program and the approach to funding allocation in the pilot phase because it will allow EDCs to participate in discussion of shoreline restoration projects.
- Chair Valiela encouraged everyone to share information about the program within their work circles
- The AC would like to hear an update on the program in nine months.

7. **Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT) Update (INFORMATION)**

Chair Valiela, presented an overview of the BRRIT Workshop, which was a one-year check-in hosted virtually in August 2020. The workshop included the BRRIT staff and members of the Policy and Management Committee. They discussed sustainable funding, gauged how BRRIT can serve as a model, explored synergies with cutting the green tape initiative, brainstormed on lessons learned, and evaluated processes. They also discussed how challenges associated with COVID-19 and travel restrictions within some agencies affected the ability to conduct site visits and how these limitations will impact the work cycle. They checked in on the workload, which includes five projects in the permitting phase, and 8-12 projects in the pre-application phase. They discussed how to continue pre-application meetings, design meetings, and future permitting meetings with

restoration practitioners. A summary of the meeting focusing on lessons learned and focus areas for improvement will be made available on the Authority website after it is approved.

An AC member raised the following question:
- Did the BRITT workshop involve discussion with anyone on the applicant side?
  - No, this workshop was focused on the internal processes, such as communication between the Policy and Management Committee and BRRIT members, and tracking project progress. However, there are future plans to solicit feedback from the applicants and restoration community. The BRRIT members recognize that things have not gone smoothly for all projects and want to address lessons learned from the restoration community.

8. **Performance Measures and Communications Update (INFORMATION)**

Maggie Jenkins, Sea Grant Fellow for the State Coastal Conservancy, presented the Draft Performance Measures table. She noted that the performance measures are useful for tracking progress, providing insight for focus areas for future grant rounds, and improving transparency. She informed the AC that Authority staff are working to improve consistency between the EcoAtlas Dashboard and the Annual Report, and that the Dashboard will be updated shortly to include in the FY19-20 data. She also noted the following:
- Performance measures represent objectives for projects that the board has authorized, not projects that are completed. Staff will check back on what has been completed every 5 years.
- Acres, public access, and community engagement metrics are only counted for implementation projects, not planning projects, to avoid double counting.
- The Authority has funded projects in all nine Bay Area counties. However, counties may not be represented in the "Funding by County" chart if their associated project(s) span multiple counties. These projects are categorized as multi-county.

Taylor Samuelson, Public Information Officer for the Authority, presented a communications update. The Authority has had two sponsored media campaigns, including the Open Road episode and the Estuary News article covering the cumulative impact of Measure AA funding. There will also be a sponsored feature in Bay Nature magazine. Other media coverage included an op-ed on the BRRIT co-authored by the Bay Area Council and Silicon Valley Leadership Group.

The following comments and questions were raised by the AC:
- Where will the funding and restoration targets be displayed—within the performance measure table, in the annual report, or on the EcoAtlas Dashboard? Should a column showing the targets be added to the performance measure table? And when will this information be available? It is useful to have the targets to assess progress for each performance measure.

- o The progress towards funding targets for each region and the targets for the Measure AA Campaign Goals will be displayed as figures that will be available in the one-pager, annual report, and EcoAtlas Dashboard. The FY 19-20 data has been shared with SFEI and the Dashboard will be updated shortly. Staff will present a draft of the one-pager at the November AC meeting, which will include figures showing progress towards both the "Funding by Region" targets and the Measure AA Campaign Goals. These figures will also be included in the Annual Report.
- The AC would like to be updated once the EcoAtlas Dasbhoard includes the FY 19-20 data.
- Some performance measures have zero values, such as Water Trail sites, and some habitat types (i.e., shellfish beds and submerged aquatic vegetation). Can we prioritize these areas that have little or no progress?
  - o Yes, staff recognizes the need to address these areas in the future. There are planning projects, such as the American Canyon Wetlands Restoration Plan, which was recently authorized by the board, and the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy that may lead to implementation of Water Trail sites. There are opportunities for eelgrass and oyster restoration within the Bay and the Authority encourages these types of projects to apply for Measure AA funding.
- How can we better present the "Funding by County" data to show that Napa County is getting funds? There needs to be a better way to display funding for multi-county projects.
  - o Yes, it is difficult to accurately represent funding for multi-county projects. If a project spans three counties, for example, we cannot simply divide the funding evenly across the three counties, because this may not be representative of the actual funding allocation and project scope. However, if the project has distinct sites that are distinctly represented in the budget, we can break out funding by county. For example, this was done with the South Bay Salt Ponds project, which has three distinct sites, Alviso, Ravenswood, and Eden Landing. Staff will work on breaking out funding by county as much as possible in the future when there is a clear distinction in the budget.
- An AC member commented that the funding by county does not need to be numeric calculations, but it should still be described more clearly.
  - o The zero values for San Mateo and Napa County can be replaced with asterisks in the performance measures table, and Authority staff can add a footnote explaining that all nine counties have received Measure AA funding or list counties included in the multi-county category.
- An AC member commented that the county breakdown is more important to county officials than to the public.
- An AC member commented that some counties did not reach the threshold 2/3 margin to approve Measure AA funding, and therefore funding allocation by county should be documented more clearly.
- What does the $140,000,000 value in matching funds represent?

      o   This value represents additional funding, outside of what Measure AA funding has been allocated to the projects.

9. **Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Report** (INFORMATION)

Jeremy Lowe, Senior Scientist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute, presented on the Sonoma Baylands Strategy, which is the first completed Measure AA-funded project. He described the project area, which is divided into camps that are managed in different ways — some submerged with degraded levees, and others with intact levees and greenery. There is infrastructure running through the area, including a highway and railway. The goal of the project was to support acquisition and restoration design. There is potential for 10,000 acres of tidal restoration, which includes the large Skagg's Island parcel. The project evaluated three potential designs. The project vision includes restoring the maximum area of marsh and mudflat, connecting upland to marsh where possible, removing levees to alleviate flooding, using historical channels to convey tidal prism, and protecting the railroad. One issue is that there is high volume of water constrained to passing under the freeway. An alternative explored was to avoid the railroad, have seasonal wetlands, and maintain levees north of the railroad. Another alternative, named the Enhanced Tidal option, was to treat historical channels as the main marsh, and route water through deeper areas, in the middle of the parcels, thereby protecting high marshes. This also reduces the amount of sediment transport needed. This alternative consisted of using existing marsh in channels as the nucleus of new marshes, cutting new channels across diked baylands, removing levees to alleviate flooding, increasing tidal prism through Tolay Creek, placing fill next to existing channel marshes, and focusing on alluvial fans. The strategy included flooding analysis, which showed reduction in flooding. They compared cost and restoration metrics for the three alternatives. Many areas are not in public ownership currently, so they developed public access principles rather than designating trail locations. They included recommendations for State Route (SR) 37 and the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) railroad within the strategy. The next steps will include conceptual design plans. The report has helped identify acquisition opportunities for Sonoma Land Trust, supports Authority staff's recommendation to acquire Camp 4, and provided the basis for comments on the need to raise and lengthen the Tolay Creek Bridge as part of the SR 37 Segment B Traffic Congestion Relief Project. The landscape overview allows restoration practitioners to answer questions related to infrastructure updates and sea level rise protection.

The following comments and questions were raised by the AC:
- An AC member commented in approval of designing around existing fringe marshes and another AC member commented in support of the project.
- Are there weed choked levees — have you thought about active intervention to replace invasive plants with native plants on the levees?
  - The levees will be lowered and invasive plants will be replaced with native plants. They are also looking for adjacent uplands so marshes can migrate.
- Do the cost figures include acquisition of parcels that are still privately owned?

- o No, acquisition costs were not included. There is current competition with vineyards. If there are buyers that move in and can afford to maintain levees, they will need to adjust the strategy. Currently, the land is relatively affordable.
- Is there concern for saltwater intrusion into groundwater?
    - o Yes. The project team received valuable input from Sonoma County Water Agency on the project as a part of the science advisory committee. Early monitoring of existing ground water and looking at how places that are being restored influence groundwater is important. Salinity intrusion will depend on future agricultural use and restoration in the area.

## 10. Discussion of Future AC Priorities and Possible Formation of Ad Hoc Subcommittee (ACTION)

Chair Valiela reviewed the summary of poll responses from the June 5, 2020 meeting. She noted that participants' responses were heard and influenced planning of this meeting and future meetings. Today's meeting was shortened to two hours and included a project update. Future meetings will continue to include project updates and presentations on specific topics.

Chair Valiela launched a poll asking for AC members' preferences of projects that should be prioritized for presenting project updates at the next two AC meetings. The poll identified the North Richmond Shoreline Living Levee Project and the South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project, Phase 2, as priorities for future meetings.

Chair Valiela asked if there was interest to form an ad hoc subcommittee to work on the annual report.
- An AC member expressed interest in developing a standing committee, since the annual report is a recurring issue and substantial time is spent organizing temporary committees.
    - o The Authority staff advised that standing committees are subject to the Brown Act requirements
    - o The AC asked Authority staff to clarify how the Brown Act would be applied to small standing committees
- Arthur Deicke agreed to chair the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Annual Report if others were willing to assist.
- When would actions need to start for the annual report review?
    - o Authority staff aim to share a draft of the narrative portion of the annual report with the subcommittee in fall (October 2020), for review by end of the year (November or December). Review of the draft of the financial portion of the annual report would occur in January 2021. Staff would then circulate a draft of the full annual report in Winter 2021 and hope to release the report in Spring 2021.

Chair Valiela asked if there was interest to form an Ad Hoc Subcommittee focused on BRRIT. AC members did not comment on this.

Chair Valiela asked if there were other ideas for Ad Hoc Subcommittees.

- An AC member asked if there would be a continuation of the EDC Subcommittee and if so, what would the next steps of the subcommittee look like?
  - o Chair Valiela responded that her impression is that Vice Chair Alvarez does not have the capacity to continue chairing the subcommittee. If the subcommittee would like to continue assessing how the equity recommendations are implemented, another volunteer would need to step up to lead the subcommittee.
  - o Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg expressed interested in being involved in the subcommittee but does not have the capacity to act as Chair.
  - o An AC member suggested that the subcommittee could postpone meeting for a year, and then address how the longer-term recommendations have been implemented at the next meeting.
  - o An AC member suggested that a standing committee may be more fitting since equity is also an ongoing issue.
  - o An AC member suggested that the subcommittee meet to debrief, discuss how to move forward, and identify a new chair if needed.
    - ▪ Lisa Horowitz McCann volunteered to plan a meeting to debrief, asses the needs for the subcommittee, and discuss whether the EDC subcommittee should be continued. She did not at this time volunteer to Chair the committee.
  - o An AC member suggested that whoever is responsible for the equity actions could report out to the entire AC, rather than having a subcommittee with a formal Chair.
    - ▪ Authority staff report out to the Governing Board on how staff are doing in implementing the equity recommendations annually. Staff can also share this information with the AC.

## 11. Restoration Authority Grant Reviewer Selection Process (INFORMATION)

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager for the Restoration Authority, announced that the Authority is seeking grant application reviewers for the upcoming grant round. Eligible reviewers must not have a conflict of interest. Potential conflicts of interest could include contributing to writing a partners' application or working for an organization who will benefit from the project being funded. Providing letters of support would not exclude someone as a reviewer, but would prevent them from reviewing those particular applications. It is okay for AC members and prospective reviewers to give general advice about the Authority's priorities. The applications are due October 23, 2020. The tentative time commitment for reviewers would be 10-20 hours in November, December, and January. Those who are interested may email Linda Tong linda.tong@scc.ca.gov. Staff will assess the need for reviewers and there will be an orientation for reviewers hosted in mid-November.

The following AC members expressed interest in helping review applications:
- o Jessica Martini-Lamb

- o Shin-Roei Lee
- o Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg
- o Sara Azat

- An AC member asked if they had a history of being involved with project but are no longer affiliated, does that preclude them from helping?
  - o The Authority staff will assess this on a case-by-case basis.

## 12. Announcements (INFORMATION)

There were no announcements. Chair Valiela thanked everyone for sharing their time and thoughts.

## 13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 pm.