

Minutes

Meeting Attendees: Haley Burns (PDE), Elizabeth Butler (EPA2), LeeAnn Haaf (PDE), Kathy Klein (PDE), Megan Mackey (EPA3), Cathy Magliocchetti (EPA3), Jason Minnich (PA DEP), Rachael Phillos (DNREC), Chad Pindar (DRBC), Irene Purdy (EPA2), Bob Schuster (NJ DEP)

Upcoming Steering Committee Meeting

- PDE updates will be presented by various staff members.
- The DELEP FY27 work plan was approved by all partners, so no action will be necessary for approval at the meeting.
- No issues/questions have come up in briefings so far.
- The fall Steering Committee discussion will focus on aligning the meeting time with an in-person event related to the Artist in Residence program (see below for more details).

Artist in Residence Program PR

- PDE is working with the artist to plan an event in Camden during National Estuaries Week. Hopefully a date will be determined by the Steering Committee meeting.
- PDE plans to hire a PR person that has worked with them before to help promote and tell some stories about the artist in residence project, as well as to help plan the September event.
- The September event could also provide an opportunity to do a field trip to the site of the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA) living shoreline project.
 - LeeAnn provided a brief summary of the CCMUA project. Last winter implementation started with marine contractors installing rock breakwaters. Next steps involve more biological and ecological work, including deployment of freshwater mussels, establishing submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), and planting some low marsh vegetation. Her team is working with CCMUA to look at the ammonia concentration in the area to assess the possible impacts on freshwater numbers that are planned to be used in the project.

Hatchery Update

- PDE is continuing to work with PWD on the potential hatchery site previously identified, and they need to answer some questions about what the arrangement would look like long term. Kathy is working to schedule a meeting with Pennvest toward the end of June to formally present the shift in location and proposed plans for moving forward, keeping things as simple as possible.
- \$1M of CDS funding is scheduled to sunset in January 2027- our grant contact at EPA doesn't think it will be a problem to push this further out. PDE is talking to other funders about pushing out other smaller pots of money as well.
- Based on the latest estimate, and on the premise that PWD would cover the costs of decommissioning the building, we should have enough money in Pennvest and CDS funds to do the work to build-out the hatchery. There is also \$1.45M in IJA funds that were budgeted for the hatchery. In rethinking a good use of the funds, PDE is talking with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation about the Hatfield House located next to the hatchery site. This building could possibly become a base for PDE's operations in that part of the estuary. In this scenario, the IJA funds could be used to make improvements to that building if that would be acceptable with DELEP and the money can be used to improve a historic building.
- An extension would also be needed for this IJA money, all of which is currently slated to end between 2027-2029. Megan said that she inquired about this internally and foresees no issues in no cost time extensions for IJA.

Partner Updates

- **PDE:**
 - Summit:
 - Clayton Hall at the University of Delaware has been booked as the venue for 2/23-24/2027.
 - The Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) has formed a subcommittee, chaired by Jessie Buckner, to help plan content and structure. Once a theme and tracks are established, we can start preparing a call for abstracts and looking at fundraising.
 - PDE is hosting the 30th Anniversary Bayside Bash at The Shipyard in Pennsville, NJ, on June 25. This is a casual happy hour style event to bring people together. Tickets are \$50.
 - There will be significant turnover on PDE's Board of Directors at the end of this year and next. The Nominating Committee is currently looking for potential candidates for nomination. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please send them to Kathy. Some targeted areas of expertise include the maritime industry, corporate water users, fundraising, and academia.
 - Three science fellows were hired for the summer, and they will start next week. PDE also plans to hire a short-term science intern to help with some data entry.
 - PDE submitted the application to Fish and Wildlife Service for the \$500k CDS funds for work in Delaware with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2026.
 - The William Penn Foundation grant for the Water Table Project closes at the end of June. PDE has been using the money to build the Climate Resilience Hub on the new website and is hiring Meg McGuire to write some stories about resilience work in the estuary. With the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC) remaining funding, they are planning a final happy hour event on June 23 at Yards Brewing in Philadelphia. The focus of a panel discussion at this event will be resilience initiatives in the estuary.
- **EPA 3:** Michelle Price-Fay is switching positions with Kate McManus, who is currently the Mission Support division director, effective May 18.

Action Items:

- Haley will send information about the Water Table happy hour once it is available. (*emailed 5/13/2026*)
- Haley will share the links to NEP guidance documents on the EPA NEP website, as recently provided by EPA.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- [Chester River Festival](#): Saturday, May 9, 11am-2pm, Union Yards, Chester, PA
- Spring DELEP Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, May 12, 1-3pm, virtual
- Next EIC meeting: Tuesday, June 4, 10am-12pm, virtual
- [Water Table Happy Hour](#): Tuesday, June 23, 4-7pm, Yard Brewing, Philadelphia, PA
- PDE's [30th Anniversary Bayside Bash](#): Thursday, June 25, 5-8pm, The Shipyard, Pennsville, NJ