

Rhode Island Sea Grant

Senior Advisory Council Meeting

23 May 2007

## MINUTES

Barry Costa-Pierce called the meeting to order at 11:05AM

1. Introductions of all present.
2. Review of Agenda.
3. Review of Packet/Handout materials.
4. Update since November 2006 SAC Meeting (Costa-Pierce):
  - a. RISG carries an approximate 3.5% Administrative burden to the program.
  - b. A new schematic of "how we do business" is in development.
  - c. Developing new was to craft "impact statements" for the program.
  - d. Overview of the upcoming Springer volume "Science for Ecosystem-based Management: Narragansett Bay in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."
  - e. Overview of upcoming 2007 Baird Science Symposium and preview of 2008 "Bays & Sounds" symposium possibility.
  - f. Overview of Regional Initiatives efforts.
  - g. Overview of International Sea Grant efforts.
5. LUNCH
6. Program Updates:
  - a. Legal Program (Fletcher/Higgins):
    - i. Sea Grant Law Fellow accepted as a 2008 Knauss Fellow.
    - ii. Trained 2 Moot Court teams this academic year.
    - iii. Offering summer program that will integrate with RISG Fisheries to get students on boats to experience bycatch issues. Students will also visit Block Island and The Nature Conservancy regarding land use, conservation, and marina expansion issues.
    - iv. Conducting an Institute for Graduate Environmental Leaders in collaboration with the Metcalf Institute; students will do an interdisciplinary course with a focus on environmental justice issues.
    - v. Megan Higgins' research is focusing on alternate energy source issues.
    - vi. Fletcher's research includes innovative ways of fisheries management that are market-based and that attempt to avoid litigation.
    - vii. Six Sea Grant Law Fellows over the past 3 years, engaging in various issues including submerged lands on Block Island, access and policy issues with RI Coastal Resource Management Council (CRMC) and on renewable energy and the EIS process.
  - b. Coastal Program (McCann):

- i. MetroBay SAMP process ongoing. Urban Coastal Greenway Design and Policy Manual completed and implemented, resulting in more than 1 mile of new access in the Providence region so far.
  - ii. Hazards Resilience training ongoing, with a sea level rise workshop focused on Rhode Island taking place soon. The intent of the workshop is to have science inform policy.
  - iii. We have been asked by CRMC to help them reconsider water type classifications in the Allen's Harbor region, and how to balance multiple uses. A 2-day workshop was held, and resulted in new discussions and solutions, even between court room adversaries.
  - iv. Facilitating the Newport Harbor Redevelopment planning process.
  - v. Partnering with Att. Esposito in building capacity at CRMC to better understand courtroom procedure and how to improve effectiveness.
  - vi. The 2007 Baird Symposium is being held on a Fri/Sat to better attract municipal officials. The focus is on Building Vibrant Waterfronts.
  - vii. An NSF "Coyote" proposal is being developed, and will be a stepping stone to engaging stakeholders and bringing social elements into ongoing planning efforts. There is lots of expertise and good partners engaged in this effort.
  - viii. We are opening a dialogue with the RI Foundation to partner in developing the social elements of a Disaster Resilience Plan for RI.
- c. Fisheries (Skrobe):
- i. We are undergoing a leadership transition during the 2008-2010 omnibus period w/Skrobe transitioning into the role of Extension Leader for Fisheries.
  - ii. The catch characterization project has shifted to include the Legal Program and is looking into alternate management schemes with a "How To" guide as an output.
  - iii. The "Haddock Project" will go on to pilot at a larger scale. We will start with an International Haddock Symposium in NH in September.
  - iv. A general summary of lobster shell disease was published.
  - v. A guide to writing collaborative proposals has now been published.

## 7. Discussion Session

- a. Legal Program: How can we develop a relevant environmental justice component to existing program without staff additions? Also, how do we better engage the private sector into our program activities?
  - i. Kogan—Affordable housing along the coast is a major environmental justice issue. How does this fit with the property tax cap? How does this relate to education costs to municipalities?
  - ii. Nixon—Industrial facilities location has environmental justice issues. Recreational fishing is another area; class distinctions borders on racism and will only intensify as diversity increases with population growth. Access is not granted to all equally.

- iii. Bob Smith—The industry is losing access to the coast due to conflict with expensive houses and their tenants who do not want to experience the fishing activities next door. There is an environmental justice component.
  - iv. Menezes—Try pulling in some high level federal or congressional people, for example legislative staff, to provide some names from the private sector to engage in specific activities.
  - v. Nelson—Do it over lunch, that's the norm in the business world. Then you need to have a clearly defined interest area for them to consider.
  - vi. Page—The Coastal Wetland Partnership may be a good model to look at for this.
- b. Coastal Program: Who are some unlikely partners to engage in urban area planning, and are there any special skill sets we should consider building to better engage urban stakeholders?
- i. Nixon—The RI EDC should be a partner. Also, major development groups, such as the one engaged in marina development on Aquidneck Island. Public access would be the key issue here.
  - ii. Page—How about the clergy? These people are often the power centers and glue of local communities.
  - iii. Dawicki—The Chamber of Commerce is an obvious partner, but better still, try to get to and engage individual appropriate business partners within the chamber umbrella.
  - iv. Cuker—Energy companies would be a good prospect.
  - v. Scherer—Power Squadrons and Boat US, both would make good potential partners.
  - vi. Bengston—The electrical power group CH2M Hill/Dominion Power.
  - vii. Nelson—Many companies today are looking at a triple bottom line, one part of which is being green. Watch the ads and those that are promoting being green, socially or environmentally, might be considered.
  - viii. McCann—What about accepting funds from such private sources, particularly big business?
    - 1. Nelson—Of course it is okay, just be sure that everything is transparent and open every bit of the way.
    - 2. Cuker—Consider working with a foundation through which the funds might flow as a buffer.
  - ix. Menezes—Contact the Meeting Street School. This is a hot bed of environmental justice efforts and may be a good partner or source of partners.
  - x. Nixon—RIEMA, maybe try Paul Crowley.
  - xi. Cuker—How about a service employees union?
  - xii. Dawicki—As for special skills, you need to be multi-lingual; Spanish doesn't cut it any longer, other languages are needed.
- c. Fisheries Program: How can we strategically engage the recreational fishing community?

- i. Nixon—Bring up the issue of a saltwater recreation license fee. This would certainly open the door to engagement in a fast way.
  - ii. Bob Smith—Note that access to fishermen is generally improved through licensing fees.
  - iii. Buckley—Recreational anglers are often not very organized; you would need to find a way to get to them.
  - iv. Nixon—Recreational anglers need to understand that the dollars collected via license fees equals power. This may foster engagement.
  - v. Menezes—Try working through nationally-based organizations as well as state/local ones. Maybe consider a town-by-town presentation?
  - vi. Nelson—Consider using some of the mediation skills of arbitrators at Roger Williams Univ. to get past the initial conflict, then look for easy win-win situations to develop trust and move things forward.
- d. BREAK
- e. Program Development: Do we need a more comprehensive strategy regarding our efforts in the climate change arena?
- i. Nixon—NO, there are already too many players and RISG would simply be lost in the multitude. Continue to work in focus areas as you have, and maybe in legal issues around wind power and examples like that. Skip the big picture.
  - ii. Menezes—You have a focus on sea level rise that looks very promising, stick with it and build there first. You will get spread too thin if you tackle such an expansive issue.
  - iii. Dawicki—Maybe try to repackage some of what you have previously done into a climate change context rather than branch off into new areas. Keep your focus in Rhode Island.
  - iv. Cuker—You should however, incorporate climate change elements into all your work and into all your future planning efforts. This is a comprehensive force that will change everything and needs to be accounted for in some form or fashion. Maybe consider developing an interdisciplinary group to assess climate change impact in RI.
  - v. Buckley—Models are incapable of showing local change, so this is an area that RISG might be able to address, particularly impacts to ongoing efforts in commercial and recreational fisheries, aquaculture and coastal development.
  - vi. Bengtson—RI has good long term data sets, perhaps make some of these available to researchers.
  - vii. Dave Smith—A URI Honors Colloquium this fall will focus on global climate change, and RISG may want to sponsor and/or engage some element of the program. Topics are not yet decided so the opportunity to shape things is there.

8. Barry Costa-Pierce noted that next SAC meeting is slated for 13 November 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20PM