Meeting was held at Chesapeake Heritage Center in Chester, MD.

**PURSUANT** to notice, Ginny Snead, Chair, convened a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay on Monday, July 22, 2019 at 10:00 AM.

**Board Members Present:** Sally Hornor, Jenn Troy, Susan Johnson, Doug Palmore, Shawn Kimbro, Jim Elliott, Naomi Young, Ginny Snead, Greg Wims, Dennis Chestnut, Deb Lucas, Steve Pattison, Steve Levitsky, Bill Gill, Chris Sigmund

**Members Not Present:** Jack Detweiler, Andy Field, Jan Jarrett, Brian Macnamara, Robert Paul, Tara Scully

**Alliance Staff Present:** Kate Fritz, Nissa Dean, Jaja Leroux, Suzanne Martin, and Marissa Spratley

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Ginny Snead, Board Chair)**

Ginny Snead called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM, followed by introductions.

Ginny thanked Shawn for hosting the Board on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. She also welcomed Doug Palmore of Luck Companies for joining his first Board meeting.

Paula Hamel of Dominion Energy in Richmond, VA had the opportunity to take an early retirement, and has resigned from the Board. The governance committee is searching for a replacement, and will provide an update when they have more information.

Kelly Gutshall of LandStudies in Lancaster, PA unfortunately resigned from the Board due to personal reasons.

Dennis Chestnut was recently awarded a national award from the River Network called the River Hero Award. Only four people received this honor a year. Dennis was excited to have Kate join him in Cleveland, Ohio while he received the award.

**STRATEGIC PLAN WORK (Lauren Maddox, Due East Partners)**

Kate thanked the Board for all of their hard work on the strategic planning effort, and provided a special thanks to the Board Strategic Planning Committee. The Alliance started this process in July of 2018. Due East Partners hoped to finalize and vote on the new plan.

Due East Partners began the strategic plan work with a Growth Capacity Assessment, completed an external survey, talked to Board and Staff, and reviewed some data analysis. This provided some clear feedback about the strategic direction that the Alliance’s constituency hopes to see the organization
move toward. The intention of the strategic plan is for it to be a living plan, with updates being made as the Alliance moves toward 2022.

- Discussion of the Current Draft of the Strategic Plan:

Please see the Draft Strategic Plan on the Board Portal.

Comments from Board Members and Staff:

- The last page of the plan is the most important piece to the plan, as it lays everything out very clearly and can be followed easily so that Staff and Board can be sure that the organization is progressing toward 2022 goals.
- The plan does not have agriculture in the mission statement, which is a big missed opportunity.
  - Kate – This is part of the challenge the Alliance faces as an organization because we work across so many different groups. Staff can do some work to personalize the three groups we call out in the mission in order to really hit on the core groups the Alliance works with.
- The one pager of the plan is very good. Progress indicators need to be flushed out, and the Board should think about calling out the groups the Alliance partners with here.
  - What if we spelled out all the groups the Alliance works with in the mission?
  - Spelling out conservationists in the mission separates them from the other groups; everyone is a conservationist.
- Under priority 2, the plan spells out “critical gaps” – what are those gaps?
  - Kate – The Staff and Management Team will be working over the next several months to identify and explicitly spell out those gaps. There are some geographical gaps, programmatic gaps, partnership gaps, and more.
- What is the rationale between using the term “critical” gaps, versus “priority” gaps? Priority seems more adaptable.
  - The fact that we have cut out all of those fluffy words in the mission, vision, and values is really great and very important.
- It’s important to have a short and sweet mission statement.
- Keeping the mission simple is important. The three c’s of the mission is very catchy, and is very inclusive.
  - The three c’s also provide flexibility to modify the message and include many stakeholders
- The word resilient still gives some Board members pause. Was the use of resilient intended to allude to climate change issues?
  - Kate – While the word resilient is often associated with climate change, it was not meant solely to allude to climate change. The Alliance’s work aims to make it so that landscapes can bounce back after a hurricane or six-inch rainstorm, but also so that the communities and people can bounce back.
  - In ecology, when the word resilient is used, it really means diverse.
- This plan brings the chance for Board and Staff to have a lot more consistency in how we talk about the Alliance.
  - The tagline will be “For our forests, for our streams, for our future.”
• Question about progress indicators: does the Alliance want to as an organization have one in each area that we use public facing?
  o Some of the goals are internal facing, and some are external facing. As we hone them a bit, it will become clearer which can be public facing.
  o For each of these programs, there should be key performance indicators that we are measuring.
  o It would be great to have some of these that align with the three headline goals.
• This process has been very inclusive and has helped Board members align with the Alliance’s strategy.
• The performance measurements will give Staff and Board an opportunity to see what is working and how we can measure success across the different jurisdictions that the Alliance works in.
• Doug read the notes from the May meeting, and read the plan for the first time this weekend. It helped him wrap his head around the organization. He would echo that it’s important to keep it clear and concise. He would also support selecting a few progress indicators to align with the key priorities.
• Does the management dashboard include everything?
  o Kate – No, we are still filling this in and will be continuing to work on this.
• How often will the Board be looking back at this plan?
  o The Board will probably look at the plan at least annually.

Vote Needed: Approval of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

Susan Johnson motioned to approve the plan; Greg Wims seconded the motion. The plan was approved unanimously with the following suggestions in mind.

• This will be a working Plan. We will look at the word resilient in the vision, think about defining the word community in the mission, and look at switching out some photos in the presentation.

- Next Steps – Moving from Planning to Implementing (Kate Fritz):

• The Alliance still has some work ahead of us (primarily the Staff) in identifying and establishing the metrics to monitor.
• As far as rolling this plan out, Kate would love for the Alliance to hit the ground running with the new plan on January 1, 2020.
• The Alliance would like to go back to some of the key informants and unveil the plan to them. State Directors and Board Members will be helping with this.
• The Alliance is about to head into the budget season for 2020. The Board needs to look ahead to see if we want to allocate some funding for our priorities.
• Who will own this plan? Who will be responsible for monitoring the plan and making sure we’re updating the metrics? Does the Alliance need to allocate some resources or shift someone’s work plan to do this?
• The Board will continue to have conversations about the Board committee structures to be sure they make sense with the Alliance’s new strategic direction.
There are some really big and exciting things coming up. Now, its time to dig into the specifics.

**Board Comments:**
- What if the Board reconvenes the Board Strategic Planning Commission as the Alliance moves into the implementation stage?
  - This is an opportunity to re-engage past Board Members and Honorary Directors.

**Constituency: The Secret Sauce for Growth:**

*Please see PowerPoint presentation on the Board Portal.*

**BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATE – PART ONE**

**Approval of Minutes from May 17, 2019**

Susan Johnson motioned to approve the January meeting minutes; Ginny Snead seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously without any amendments.

- Request that we try to post the minutes within two weeks of the Board Meeting.

**Governance Committee Update – Jim Elliott**

- Votes needed:
  - Jenn Jackson (VA), Board Member – She works for Capital One, and has already been sharing some of their environmental strategies in hopes that we can partner together. She drove all the way from Richmond to join Board Members/Staff for dinner Sunday evening, so she demonstrates a strong interest and wants to be an active Board Member.
    - Susan Johnson made a motion to approve Jenn joining the Board; Dennis Chestnut seconded the motion. All were in favor.
  - Matt McGehrin (MD), Board Member – He has been an active Project Clean Stream captain since 2009. He reached out to Kate about joining the Board. He is with Merrill Lynch. He has experience in working as a financial advisor for NGOs, which is a skillset we are looking for the Board. He has been working in impact investment.
    - Susan Johnson made a motion to approve Matt joining the Board; Steve Levitsky seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- Term cycles – Do new members join at the next meeting, or do they wait until January 1 to formally join?
  - If they have the energy and excitement now, let’s bring them on board right away. Its good to spread out the transitions.
  - If someone joins mid-year, does their term start now and end in mid-year three years from now?
    - Yes.
  - If we stagger bringing Board members, its easier to onboard them, fully welcome them, and keep the strongly engaged.
Agreed, it was awkward for new Board members when they were recruited but had to wait until January to join a meeting. It caused a lag in the momentum.

- Unanimous agreement that new Board Members should join as soon as they are voted on and ready to join.
- Three action items were discussed:
  - Ask new Board members what committee(s) they would like to join.
  - It was suggested that the committee chair could serve as a mentor to the new members.
  - Create an onboarding checklist for new members.
- New Board member skillset survey
  - How does the skillset survey fit into the larger needs that the organization has for the Board?

- The Governance Committee has started talking about trying to revive and strengthen the program for Honorary Directors. They plan to put together an Ad Hoc committee to think more about the Honorary Directors rolls.
  - Putting together a process for identifying Honorary Directors
  - Thinking about how to better engage Honorary Directors
  - If you are interested in helping with these things, please consider joining the Ad Hoc committee. Let Andy or Jim know if you would like to join.
  - Shawn Kimbro, Dennis Chestnut, Susan Johnson would like to join
    - Susan Johnson made the recommendation that there be a representative from each committee on the committee

- Don Boucher (MD), Honorary Director
  - Susan Johnson made a motion that Don Boucher joins as an Honorary Director.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT (Kate Fritz)

- Headquarters is getting a makeover!
  - $20,000 facelift to the building exterior
  - Virginia and Pennsylvania offices will soon be outgrowing their space. Staff will soon be doing some outreach to find some new spaces.

- Communications Successes
  - The Alliance now has two full time staff that are working exclusively on communications
    - Lucy Heller joined us as our Communications & Maryland Outreach Coordinator
  - The Alliance applied to the Chesapeake Bay Trust for a capacity building grant to help create communications SOPs
  - The Alliance’s Facebook following has grown by 63% in the past year, which has been a true testament to the ongoing communications efforts
  - Since our last Board meeting, staff have written twelve original blog posts telling the Alliance’s stories in them
  - Since January 1, the Alliance has had over 50 major media hits
Kate was invited to speak at UCMES Chesapeake Bay Report Card Release and was quoted in the Associated Press.

- During Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week, the Alliance created a Chesapeake Challenge that encouraged people to take one action per day for clean water:
  - The Mayor of Annapolis took the Challenge on YouTube.
  - Staff would like to continue to replicate and build upon this.
- Water Week in Lancaster, PA (PA’s version of Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week)

**Programmatic Updates: Capacity Building**

- Forest team held an impact investment round table in order to help bring private equity and the public sector together to discuss how the Chesapeake restoration efforts can bring private dollars into the public sector.
- The Alliance held a Microplastics Forum in coordination with the Choose Clean Water Coalition at the Coalition’s annual conference in May.
- The Alliance hosted Scotts Miracle-Gro Partnership Network in June and coordinated their annual meeting in Annapolis:
  - This is a service we could potentially help other companies with as a fee for service.
- Organized a walking tour of the work that the Alliance is doing through RiverSmart Homes in DC.
- Hosted a Local Leadership Workgroup meeting in Frederick, MD.
- Gearing up for our 14th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum this fall.
- Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative has been helping with the Potomac Riverkeeping Network set up a bacterial monitoring network.

**Programmatic Updates: Implementation**

- **Maryland:**
  - Cape St. Claire living shoreline restoration.
  - One Water Partnership (with Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake).
  - Potential: Stream Restoration at Walter Reed (Bethesda, MD).
- **Virginia:**
  - RVA H2O (green infrastructure implementation).
  - RiverWise Schools – looking to fund work at another High School. Potential expansion to Northern Virginia?
  - Expanding Citizen Science work (Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative).
- **Pennsylvania:**
  - Expanding Turkey Hill model outside of PA.
  - Lancaster City partnership – administering stormwater rebate.
- **Washington, DC:**
  - Potential: two new grants open to continue to support District Dept of Energy and the Environment.

**Staffing Updates:**

- Local Leadership program:
  - Jennifer Starr promoted to Director.
  - Laura Cattell Noll joined the team as the Local Leadership Workgroup Coordinator.
• Posting Events Coordinator and Executive Assistant Positions
  • Virginia office – hired Christina Bonini, RiverTrends Coordinator

• Upcoming Program Opportunities:
  • National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) – Capacity Building Institute
  • EPA Region 3 Green Infrastructure Workshop – Chesapeake Bay Trust
  • Stream Restoration Project at Walter Reed (Bethesda) – Navy, Department of Defense
  • Formative research on behavior change with businesses, in partnership with the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy (GVC) (Baltimore County) – Chesapeake Bay Trust

BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATE – PART TWO

Program Committee Update – Sally Hornor

• The Program Committee shared the current draft of the dashboard that Kate and the management team have been working on.
• They have identified many of the key programs that are currently active and have categorized them by geographic area and by focus area.
• The goal is to develop a document that communicates the broad range of projects to both internal and external audiences.
• It would be very helpful to see a regular communications report with events happening in each of our regions.

Development Committee Update – Jenn Troy & Susan Johnson

• The Development Committee is delighted to announce that board member Deb Lucas will be joining the Development Committee later this year
• Taste of the Chesapeake
  • Two months until the Taste of the Chesapeake Celebration
    ▪ Two main goals:
      1) Promote the Alliance’s work, and 2) Honor the Alliance’s Award Winners
      • Four stations, one for each of the jurisdictions the Alliance does major work
      • A small scavenger hunt with a pamphlet where attendees can learn more about each of the regions and the work going on there
    ▪ The other purpose of the Taste is to raise those critical unrestricted dollars
    ▪ The Development Committee needs commitments locked in for sponsors by the end of August so everyone’s logo is on the materials for the Taste
    ▪ Silent auction items are always needed. The Development Committee is looking for bigger ticket items like vacation homes, artwork, etc. If you know of anything please let Suzanne know.
    ▪ A discount is available for the Crowne Plaza for the night of the event, so if you would like a room for that night please let Susan know.
• Organizational sponsorships (Kate Fritz)
  • The Alliance is trying to streamline solicitations for corporate sponsors so instead of asking three or four times a year, the Alliance approaches once with a streamlined ask and a full list of benefits.
This will also help define the Alliance’s value proposition as an organization.
Kate and Suzanne will bring back this full package once it is fully flushed out for the Board to review.

• Crab Cake Week
  o The Alliance hosted its first ever Crab Cake Week this year as a celebration of Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week
  o Results:
    ▪ 49 participating restaurants
    ▪ Sold over 4,000 crab cakes
    ▪ Reached over 53K people on Facebook
    ▪ Great media coverage and visibility
    ▪ Awesome response and engagement from the public
    ▪ Completed our first ever drip campaign
      • We collected 238 email addresses through a contest and then sent them three different emails welcoming them to the Alliance and moving them through the donor funnel
    ▪ Great feedback from the restaurants involved
    ▪ Lots of new developing relationships
    ▪ Total expenses were a little under $8,000, and we brought in a little over $10,000, so we net about $2,000
  o Lessons learned
    ▪ Paid advertisements on Facebook are very effective
    ▪ If we are able to streamline the design and ordering process of collateral and marketing materials in advance, the restaurants may print some of this themselves
    ▪ We would like to increase the number of emails and people’s information that we collect
    ▪ Sponsorships were challenging to collect, so this is an area for growth
  o Future Efforts:
    ▪ We hope to expand to other cities in Virginia. We have already started conversations with Virginia Tourism about grant opportunities to offset costs
    ▪ Creating a transferability package to replicate this effort in other areas of the watershed
    ▪ Question: should the Alliance expand this into Maryland and DC?
      ▪ Restaurants pledge to commit to using Chesapeake Bay blue crabs
      ▪ View this year’s efforts as a pilot effort
      ▪ Staff can’t get everywhere, so we’ll need Board Members to be champions and help communicate with restaurants in their area
      ▪ This event falls under priority 3 or 4, and from now on we are going to focus on our key objectives in our strategic plan. We need to focus on things that are going to further our strategic plan and can be measured by our metrics.
        o Discuss this within the development committee and staff before making a decision
• What is the actual goal? Setting overall purposes and metric goals
• It can be a successful event without hitting an actual goal. Just because people see a Facebook post, or visit our website doesn’t necessarily mean that they are really gaining an awareness of the Alliance.
• Monitoring the second click past the website
• Thinking about materials that will last and inform people somehow about the Alliance and our work.

  o Board Comments:
    ▪ How are we valuing the people we touched on Facebook versus those we actually collected information from and are moving through the donor funnel?
    ▪ Metrics should be more meaningful. We should be tracking where people go when they go to our website, and how they move through the funnel.

**Finance Committee Report – Jaja Leroux (Director of Finance)**

• Audit:
  o It looks like this year we will be showing about a zero-net gain.
  o It also looks like we have another clean audit.

• Financials:
  o Income – pretty much on task
  o Taste is a little behind, but July and August is usually when Taste sponsorships start rolling in, so we are in good shape
  o We are 10% over our expected indirect, so we are maximizing our indirect and managing our grants better
  o Expenses are on track

• Financials are in a new format so that we can compare where we are now to where we were last year
• Statement of activities is all looking good
• Everything is still very draft because our auditors haven’t come back with everything finalized
• We have kept $60K in our savings consistently since the beginning of the year, and we reached $100K this week

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative – Dennis Chestnut**

• Everyone is aware the Alliance initiated a DEI resolution that was adapted by the Board
  o At the last Forum we had a workshop that focused on DEI and had a great attendance and received good feedback
• At River Rally this year, they had a DEI track with all of their workshops, and this year they became aware of the DEI resolution that the Alliance Board approved
  o River Network would like to adapt our resolution to fit their needs which shows that we can be leaders of this efforts
• The Alliance needs to now move into the implementation stage of our DEI efforts
  o The Watershed Forum this year has an even larger focus on DEI with about a quarter of workshops
  o Bringing the Young Professionals of Color networking opportunity to the Forum
Kudos to the Alliance for a strong social media presence and for marching in the Pride parade in Annapolis

Board meeting schedule:

- Ginny – Does it work to choose a day for meetings through Doodle Poll?
  - Some Board members would prefer if one day was selected and stuck to that
  - Mondays are better for some, Fridays are better for others
- March meeting is in DC, May meeting is in PA, July meeting is in MD, November meeting is at NCTC in WV

Ginny Snead motioned to adjourn meeting at 3:00 pm; Steve Levitsky seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. Post Board Meeting minutes within two weeks of the meeting. – **Marissa Spratley, Jim Elliott**
2. Notify Jenn Jackson and Matt McGehrin that they have been approved to join the Board. – **Ginny Snead**
3. When new members join the Board, ask them what committee(s) they would like to join and the committee chair should serve as a mentor to the new members. – **Ginny Snead, Committee Chairs**
4. Create an onboarding checklist for new Board members. – **Executive Committee**
   a. New Board member skillset survey
5. Put together an Ad Hoc committee for improving the Honorary Director structure. – **Governance Committee**
   a. If you are interested in helping with these things, please consider joining the Ad Hoc committee. Let Andy or Jim know if you would like to join. – **All Board Members**
6. Create a regular communication with the Board about events and other opportunities happening in each of the regions. – **Kate Fritz, Marissa Spratley**
7. Taste of the Chesapeake:
   a. Keep doing hard outreach for Taste sponsorships. Susan Johnson has challenged all Board members to bring in $6,000 worth of sponsorships to help us reach our sponsorship goal. – **All Board Members**
   b. Let Suzanne Martin know if you have anything that might be a good fit for the Taste silent auction (vacation homes, sports tickets, etc.). – **All Board Members**
   c. We can get a discounted rate at the hotel so if you would like to stay at the Crowne Plaza at the night of the Taste, please let Susan know. – **All Board Members**

Minutes taken by: Marissa Spratley, Alliance Staff
Edited and Submitted by: Marissa Spratley, Alliance Staff, Jim Elliott, Board Secretary