

# ILIO Joint Executive & Technical Committee Meeting

April 24, 2019, 10:30-11:00 pm

1 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Coupeville, WA (Annex Room B-102)

## Meeting Summary

**Members Present:** Helen Price Johnson, Executive Committee, Island County Commissioner  
Tim Callison, Executive Committee, Mayor of Langley  
John Mishasek, Executive Committee, Coupeville Port District  
Janet St Clair, Executive Committee, Island County Commissioner  
Stan Walsh, Skagit River Systems Co-operative (Swinomish Tribe)  
Curt Gordon, South Whidbey Port District  
Blaine Oborn, City of Oak Harbor  
Molly Huges, Mayor of Coupeville

**Also Present:** Lori Clark, Island County DNR, ILIO Coordinator  
Laura Ferguson, PSP Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator  
Dawn Spilsbury Pucci, Technical Committee, Lead Entity Coordinator  
Jill Wood, Island County Environmental Health  
Keith Higman, Public Health Director

### I. Call to order

Chair Commissioner Helen Price Johnson called the ILIO EC meeting to order at 10:32 am.

### II. LIOs Role Action Agenda Implementation (briefing memo attachment)

#### DISCUSSION:

- Last week the ILIO had a great opportunity to connect with the Strategic Initiative Leads (SILs) which are state agency representatives. Shared frustrations that the LIOs are not treated as partners within the NEP Funding Model/regional SIAT processes. The original vision of the LIOs was to bring together the elected officials and the tribes to ensure we are getting the most bang for the buck on funding projects and the political will needed to help restore Puget Sound. The funding model is not reflecting a meaningful and effective engagement from the LIOs and those elected officials, agencies, Tribes, and other key Puget Sound recovery participants.
- Although there have been steps toward greater collaboration and communication with LIOs, LIOs are not treated as partners within the NEP Funding Model/regional SIAT processes. LIOs are looking for additional partnership opportunities within the NEP funding

model and Action Agenda implementation processes more broadly. The LIOs could be more effective if adequately supported.

- LIO's need to have more influence of the development of the goals and strategies and the projects selected for implementation. \$100,000 is insufficient incentive to maintain LIO participation. We are losing human infrastructure and participation in the process, because the funding is much too small to justify participation. Commissioner Price Johnson expressed frustration with the current lack of LIO legitimacy and influence and indicated that it may be a better strategy to dissolve the Island LIO and operate without an active LIO. The Skagit LIO develops NTAs and gets them into the Action Agenda for project funding consideration. Either we advocate for this change or we withdraw participation.
- Commissioner St. Clair asked if we did not have an LIO would we still be eligible to apply for funding. Lori responded that we are not supposed to be eligible for NTA funding without the LIO process in place. Commissioner Price Johnson added that she wants the Leadership Council to decide if they are not going to utilize the LIO structure then they need to change it so that Counties can apply and not have to go through the strenuous process.
- The Stilly-Sno LIO calculated that it took \$43,000 of staff capacity to make a decision on allocating \$100,000. LIOs are not finding the funding to be commensurate with the time it takes to engage in the process.
- Curt Gordon reflected on how and why the EPA funding model was revised to give more local direction to where funding is being directed. The Island LIO respects EPA and PSP, but the system is being bogged down by bureaucracy. Governor Gregoire was an advocate for local engagement in this process.
- LIOs receive approximately 4% of the 15million NEP regional allocation. The EPA is supportive of having the conversation about revising the NEP model and supporting LIOs having more influence over project development and implementation.
- Stan Walsh explained that the EPA put out an RFP for the SILs and the state agencies were the only ones that had the capacity/structure to support that function. TMC discussed responding to the RFP. Made more sense to engage from the outside.
- John Mishasek asked if the EPA trust the LIOs. Lori responded that, yes, given the LIOs develop Ecosystem Recovery Plan the EPA has confidence/trust in the local process for prioritization and project implementation.
- Commissioner Price Johnson shared that this is similar to a conversation she is having at the Ecosystem Coordination Board, that the bureaucracy of the state is growing and they are outsourcing the cost to the local governments.

- The ILIO Technical Committee recommends the ILIO Executive Committee moves to approve the engaging Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) Whidbey Basin Action Area Representative, Ron Wesen, on LIOs Role Action Agenda Implementation issue with goal of finding additional utility for LIOs in the recovery framework. The ILIO EC discussed not limiting the motion to only engaging Ron Wesen.

**MOTION:**

Stan Walsh made a motion to authorize Lori to represent the Island LIO engaging in continuing conversations on restructuring role of the LIO s with the ECB, PSP Boards, EPA, Tribal Management Conference. Commissioner St. Clair second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Meeting adjourned**

*Audio recording of all ILIO meetings are available, by request.*