

ILIO Executive Committee Meeting January 27, 2016

Meeting Summary

Members Present: Molly Hughes, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Richard M. Hannold, Island County Commissioner
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Jill Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Tim Callison, Mayor of Langley
Curt Gordon, Commissioner, South Whidbey Port District

Also Present: Stan Walsh, Skagit River Systems Cooperative (alt. for Lorraine Loomis)
Suzanna Stoike, Puget Sound Partnership
Lori Clark, Island County DNR, ILIO Coordinator
Brian Wood, Watershed Planning, IC DNR
Keith Higman, Director of Public Health and Natural Resources
Barbara Bennett, Member of MRC
Mark Daily, Puget Sound Partnership (on phone)
Virginia Shaddy (administrative assistant)

I. Call to order

Chair Commissioner Helen Price Johnson called the ILIO EC meeting to order at 9:00 am.

II. Minutes review & approval

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Hannold made the motion to approve the December 23, 2015 summary notes. Mayor Hughes seconded the motion. No discussion followed.

DECISION: December 23, 2015 Summary Notes approved unanimously.

III. ILIO Updates (Lori Clark)

- Jim Sundberg will represent the City of Langley on the ILIO Technical Committee
- The ILIO 2016 NTAs were reviewed by the Strategic Implementation Transition Teams (SITTs) and put into triage categories. NTA owners will have a chance to be rescored after revising based on the feedback from SITTs team. The ILIO NTAs fared well. There is no vote needed on these NTAs at this point. The NTA owners will revised the proposals and submit directly to Puget Sound Partnership (PSP).

IV. Puget Sound Partnership Updates (Suzanna Stoike)

- There were a total of 398 NTA submittals, both local and regional. Two-thirds have been vetted and approved through a local process, and one-third are regional NTAs which do not require a local vetting process.

- 2016 NTA feedback was provided by SITTs teams, other LIOs and by tribes (regarding treaty rights conflicts). All NTAs were reviewed with attention to regional significance by SITTs team. Other reviewers were the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (monitoring), Marine Resources Advisory Committee (ocean acidification), & PSP (division of behavior change).
- NTA submittals were put into triage categories:
 - ¼ of NTAs were cat 3 (need substantial revision or would not move forward)
 - ½ of NTAs were cat 2 (will move forward, but with revisions suggested)
 - ¼ of NTAs were cat 1 (will move forward without revisions)
- The NTAs were given great feedback, not normally seen in grant applications, that allows NTA owners a chance to make changes based on recommendations.
- Oak Harbor NTAs were deemed incomplete, due to blank scientific justification boxes in application.

V. Questions/Discussion

Summary of Discussion:

- Commissioner Jill Johnson expressed strong concern regarding PSP putting process ahead of quality projects and social capital. She noted that:
 - Oak Harbor is our largest urban area in Island County and that they have historically been reluctant to pursue ecosystem recovery project proposals.
 - The City of Oak Harbor is new to the process and that their efforts were complicated by a requirement that they break their project into 3.
 - The decision to not allow the City of Oak Harbor's NTA proposals will compromise their willingness to participate in the ILIO.
 - Other NTAs were scored despite having serious flaws, so we are allowing poor projects to revise and move forward, but good projects are being disqualified.
- Mark Daily recognized that this was the first time for this new process, and that time lines were aggressive. However, he spoke to the need for a consistent process. He noted that:
 - PSP's executive director and the EPA felt that this was a fair process.
 - The process was clearly defined in the solicitation and they had predetermined that incomplete proposals would not go forward.
 - The current process was developed in response to criticisms that prior efforts were too permissive and this was unfair to sponsors that worked to address all required elements.
 - The City of Oak Harbor was not disqualified on a technicality. It was missing critical scientific justification. The review team looked over the whole application in an effort to find the relevant criteria, so it was not just a case of a missing box on the application.
 - This was not the only chance for NTA submittal. There may be other opportunities for projects to be funded, including the possibility for the City of Oak Harbor's projects to be evaluated as NTAs after the gaps analysis.
- Stan Walsh gave support for Commissioner Johnson's statements. He indicated that the gaps analysis is a sound wide evaluation and would be unlikely to help the City of Oak Harbor's situation.
- Lori Clark noted that the technical problems for the City of Oak Harbor resulted from a misinterpretation regarding the scientific justification query. They are new to process and

did not understand how they were to establish the scientific basis of their project or where it fit into a regional perspective. They were under the impression that the application was an opportunity to get feedback that would allow them to address those issues.

- Commissioner Price Johnson wanted to know if there was a way forward.
- Mark Daily indicated that there were ways to get the projects going and he was willing to meet with the City of Oak Harbor staff.
- Lori Clark added that she had reached out to regional partners and that she believed that there were good opportunities to move forward through other funding sources and partners.
- Stan Walsh and Commissioner Price Johnson recognized the extra effort that Lori Clark has put forth to advocate for the City of Oak Harbor and to help them move forward with their projects.
- Suzanna Stoike noted that
 - PSP is not the only agency competing for NEP funding and they are pressed for time just as the project sponsors were.
 - There are more opportunities to weigh in on this process and give feedback. There is an after action review in the next six months. PSP will be adjusting their process based on feedback received.
 - NEP dollars are not the only funding source and only 28 million will be available for all of the 398 projects.
 - Lori brought \$2.6 million to Island, which had nothing to do with this process. It was above and beyond and there is no reason that this can't happen again.
 - This project is part of the 5 year process and will not be forgotten.
- Commissioner Price Johnson noted that we need to find a way to make this work for the City of Oak Harbor, regardless of where the funding comes from.

VI. Meeting adjourned

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