

ILIO Executive Committee Optional Meeting

June 22, 2020, 10:00-11:00 pm

Webex

Meeting Summary

Executive Committee Members Present:

Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Tim Callison, Mayor of Langley
John Mishasek, Coupeville Port District

Janet Saint Clair, Island County Commissioner
Blaine Oborn, City of Oak Harbor
Molly Huges, Mayor of Coupeville
Jill Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Curt Gordon, Port of South Whidbey

Technical Committee Members Present:

Keith Higman, Public Health Director
Linda Lyshall, Snohomish Conservation District
John Lovie, Habitat SIAT, Citizen Volunteer
Brian Tyhuis, NAS Whidbey Island
Barbara Bennett, Marine Resources Committee

Also Present:

Lori Clark, Island County DNR, ILIO Coordinator
Ann Prusha, Island County DNR

Commissioner Price Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:07am.

Approval of March 23, 2020 Meeting Summary Notes

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the ILIO EC March 23, 2020 Meeting Summary Notes. Mayor Callison seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vital Sign / Human Wellbeing (HWB) Vital Sign Survey

- The Island LIO will use Structured Decision Making approach to update and revise the Ecosystem Recovery Plan to ensure meaningful participation with the regional partners in these phases. David Trimbach, Postdoctoral Research Associate with Oregon State University, assisted the ILIO Technical Committee (TC) in developing a survey to check in with our partners and the residents of Island County to gauge priority Vital Signs and see which Human Wellbeing Vital Signs would be most relevant to incorporate in our Ecosystem Recovery Plan update.
- This survey was developed as a part of an EPA-funded project that has been conducted between OSU and the Island LIO, as well as two other LIOs in Puget Sound, since the fall of 2017. The project is referred to as the Human Wellbeing (HWB) Project, which is a group of vital signs that directly relate to people's interactions with the natural environment of Puget Sound and include familiar aspects of human health, such as clean air and access to local foods. They also include key measures of psychological and cultural wellbeing. This survey aims to capture the context of how of Island County residents experience the natural environment and what they value. We are looking to gain a better understanding of the human dimension of ecosystem goals so that we can better focus our efforts and direct funding to the highest restoration and protection priorities in Island County.
- Tribal representatives, Todd Zackey and Stan Walsh, could not attend the EC meeting today, but do not have any suggested changes to the survey. They are both on the TC and have been part of the development of this survey. They do want to be informed about any changes made today. Additionally,

Commissioner Saint Clair shared that we can get participation through the Island County GovDelivery system and make it a link for Facebook and Nextdoor. These are all good options. She also shared that the survey is highly “science” focused and doesn’t recognize enough the emotive value of seeing shoreline and water. She shared that she takes strong pleasure in looking out her window and seeing our islands. That should be recognized. The natural beauty of our place is important. John Mishasek with Port of Coupeville also commented on this. He said that the positive aspects of seeing the Olympic Mountains or the Cascades from shoreline sites might be detailed better in the survey. Commissioner Saint Clair also suggested doing a Hispanic translated version. Anna Toledo works in Natural Resources and she can translate this for us.

- The first survey question is meant to get a broad look at what Island County (IC) residents care about in relation to how they experience the natural environment. The choices are hyperlinked to the Puget Sound Partnerships (PSP) Vital Signs (VS) webpage to give information about each of the choices. The TC decided to list all the HWB VSs instead of eliminating ones that we would not be able to measure or monitor. For example, with the drinking water vital sign, the TC discussed that this VS uses only nitrate levels to talk about drinking water. Although IC has data on nitrate levels, this only accounts for water quality, but not quantity. Also, the public has little say in decisions regarding this, yet it is strongly considered for all of our restoration projects because of salt-water intrusion risks to shoreline projects. The results from this will just be used to include the values of IC residents in our Ecosystem Recovery Plan, not to establish goals or measure progress. Commissioner Saint Clair commented that on the PSP website, the Good Governance VS only has examples that are outside of our area. It feels disconnected from our local community. Lori will ask PSP to add a broader definition of Good Governance to their website. She can also put a description next to it on the survey, as was done with commercial shellfish beds.
- Q2 asks the survey respondent to prioritize the HWB VS list in ranking order to get representation of our priorities. This may help direct the ILIO’s decision on which HWB VS we want to monitor. Commissioner Saint Clair had comments about the usability of this question. She mentioned that the ranking of priorities was difficult to figure out how to do at first. She thought she should click the box and put a number in. Thus it took her a while to figure out how to move the lines. David can change the format to make this easier for the survey respondent. There were no comments for this question at today’s meeting.
- Q3 is looking to gauge IC residents’ views on ecosystem components. Like Q1, this one allows the user to select as many as they want. Q4 forces them to prioritize. Commissioner Price Johnson commented that the questions are not numbered, and it is difficult to know which ones we are looking at. Lori clarified that Q3 refers to “From the list below, please select...which natural resource goals matter to you.” It is the same list for both questions, but for Q3 the respondent selects what matters to them and can pick as many as they want. Q4 asks the respondent to prioritize the ones selected in Q3 by putting them in ranking order. This will help us determine if there is a gap in monitoring, and/or it might help inform us about how to develop projects, according to what people care about here. There was discussion that it might be easier for participants to drag selections to put them in order for Q4 (as mentioned above for Q2). Commissioner Price Johnson commented that she prefers drag and drop, but each way has its own barriers. Commissioner Saint Clair commented that it should have clear instructions and agreed that it is better as a drag and drop. Lori replied that she wants this to be as easy as possible for participants.
- Q5 and Q6 are trying to tease out what we are missing in relation to the value IC residents have in living here. It is clear from Commissioner Saint Clair, John Mishasek and Barbara Bennett on the TC that there is a missing value of the visual landscape of the water and mountains. Barb and other TC members suggested adding Blue Therapy (the mental wellbeing piece of being near the waters of Puget Sound) to the choices. Commissioner Price Johnson suggested putting the definition first, and then adding “Blue Therapy” in parentheses after. It could say “Enjoying the beauty of our natural habitat and landscape” or something similar. Lori commented that the TC determined that we should capture the visual landscape aspect, and we are going to add the mental well-being piece of being near the waters of Puget Sound. This should go in the HWB section rather than Natural Resources. Barb commented that we are capturing last week’s TC

conversation well. She added that, in addition to the beauty of our place, the health of the place and functionality of our shoreline is also important; not only seeing it, but knowing that it is working well. Lori replied that it would be interesting to know if our residents care about the health and the functionality of the ecosystem.

- You will notice that questions Q7 to the end of the survey are a little different as they are focused solely on shorelines. As a follow up to OSUs 12-county survey and a 4-county interview series, we are trying to gain a better understanding about the relationship between communities and coastlines and about Island County residents' sense of place specific to shorelines. The case study to evaluate these results is being funded by the American Association of Geographers. Q7 aims to see how the residents engage on the shoreline. There were no comments for this question at today's meeting.
- Q8 allows the respondent to add language about what the shoreline means to them.
- Q9, Q10 and Q11 are looking at how the resident views changes on the shoreline and asks where they have noticed changes. Barb has commented that it is difficult to only choose 3. Q9 and Q10 are delineated because Q9 is asking about any changes seen, and Q10 is specific to the areas checked on the map. We're trying to gauge if residents feel that there is change, and then if they feel impacted by change in the areas that they frequent. For Q11, Commissioner Saint Clair commented that there have been de-armoring efforts, and we can include this to see if people are noticing it, as well as the efforts that IC has been making. Commissioner Price Johnson commented that there is no recognition of positive change, such as restoration efforts and the protection of public lands. We have boat ramps that have been inundated with an addition of sand affecting the ability to launch boats, but it is augmenting sand along the beach. Lori replied that it would be good to see if we can tease out if people are noticing some of the benefits that we have been working on. Commissioner Price Johnson commented that it would be nice to have a place to recognize the restoration efforts. Curt Gordon commented that it would also be good to recognize places where groups have worked to improve beach access. Lori asked if there should be an option for noticing change, and have a subset of that question where the participant can indicate an increase or a decrease. Curt Gordon commented that at the Port, they use the word "improve."
- Q12 asks how frequently the respondent visits the shoreline. Q13 asks for the reason the respondent visits the shoreline.
- Q13 asks about capturing thoughts about the shoreline. It will be interesting to hear what residents think.
- The remainder of the questions are to get the demographics from the survey respondents.

Input Requested: The ILIO Technical Committee would like the Executive Committee to provide input on the Vital Sign / Human Wellbeing (HWB) Vital Sign Survey and ideas for distribution.

- How can we get the best participation? Lori suggested Govdelivery, Facebook, and Nextdoor.
- What other information/questions would you like to see included?
- Is the language relevant to your constituents? And if not, can you recommend relevant changes?
- Commissioner Price Johnson suggested Drew's List. She asked Brian Tyhuis if we can incentivize the Navy to get this out, particularly to help ensure good participation in North Whidbey. Schools and Whidbey Watershed Stewards have a good connection with families. She expects the South Island to respond well. Brian said that he can take all of the links that the survey has gone out on, and blast that out to all active duty and civilians on base. She also asked about making sure that there is opportunity for people with disabilities to participate. She suggested engaging with human services staff to make it available to people of all abilities. Lori will ask David if he has a suggestion about this. Commissioner Price Johnson went on to say that we are trying to view everything through an equity lens, and wants to make sure that we do specific outreach to underserved communities and demographics that do not always participate. She also said that it would be good to have feedback on language choices. She also asked if Tribal members have information about participation from tribal members, and if this language is inclusive for them. Lori will check with them.

- Blaine Obsorn brought up marina residents and people who live on the shoreline. He can reach out to the Marina residents to make sure they have the survey. They have access to computers and wifi. The survey can be put out in their monthly newsletter.
- Commissioner Saint Clair had no more comments.
- Commissioner Johnson had no comments.
- John Mishasek commented that the shoreline can be a source of activity for health reasons, like walking. Lori noted this for the survey.
- Curt Gordon said that it would be interesting to know how people feel about economic activity on the shoreline. There are commercial businesses along the shoreline and it would be interesting to add a question about how people feel about this, as well as how they feel about the recreation needs on the shoreline in general.
- Mayor Huges had no comments.
- Mayor Callison suggested using a QSR code on posters on points of access to the shoreline.
- Commissioner Price Johnson thanked the TC, Lori, and her staff.
- Lori will continue to take feedback for this week. Her goal is to send this out August 1. She will send out a link with the updated survey. It should be ready by Monday the 27th so everyone can see the final version before it goes out to public. Lori will make a list of who will send the survey out through which channel.

The meeting adjourned at 10:54am

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