

Peconic Estuary Protection Committee
Meeting Summary – December 5, 2018

Board Room, Town of Riverhead Town Hall
200 Howell Avenue, Riverhead, NY
10:00am- 12:00pm

ATTENDEES

Committee Member Representatives

Town of Riverhead | Drew Dillingham (Committee Chair)

Town of Brookhaven | Veronica King (Vice Chair)

Town of Southold | Michael Collins

Town of Southampton | Christine Fetten

Town of East Hampton | Mark Abramson

Suffolk County | Elyse Jay

Additional Participants

Peconic Estuary Protection Committee | Patricia Aitken, Coordinator

I. October 10 Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the October meeting, and other prior Committee meetings will be circulated electronically for approval by Committee members.

II. TMDL Development

A TMDL workgroup has been formed to provide input and advice to the NYSDEC on the development of new TMDLS. The TMDLs were rescinded on November 14. The initial workgroup meeting was to be held on December 5 immediately following the PEP Committee meeting and the focus of the Committee meeting was the TMDL workgroup.

Discussions were held as to what the Committee's priorities will be for incorporation in the revised TMDLs, what information will be needed for development of appropriate and implementable TMDLs, and what data gaps there may be:

- Will need to ensure that all water bodies are classified (i.e. SC, SA) appropriately;
- It is crucial that administratively closed waterbodies not be listed as impaired;
- Committee members feel that municipalities should have been invited to participate in the workgroup;
- The Committee would like to see a map and a list from the NYSDEC of every waterbody closed for administrative reasons;
- Is it possible to break water quality analysis into seasons
- Does the data currently available have enough rainfall analysis, and does that rainfall correlate with bacteria;

- The bacteria are not always higher in the summer due to the high number of geese in the estuary in the winter;
- Goose management specific to the estuary should be developed;
- One waterbody cannot be related to another, each waterbody has its unique characteristics – Northport is very different from Orient;
- Highly developed areas vs. low development areas;
- The working group is not representative of area stakeholders; without sufficient knowledge of the waterbodies and watershed areas the TMDLs will not be accurate and we'll be back to the same situation we have been in;
- Some waterbodies are listed as impaired, even though the area surrounding them are undeveloped, but the waterbody has poor flushing (i.e. Hallock Bay);
- Move septic systems away from bulkheads;
- The committee would like to know the scientific data behind water management decisions;
- The DEC has not been sampling in accordance with NSSP standards;
- Models should be developed to show where impairments are coming from, not using wet weather data;
- Data has to come from the DEC so it can be used;
- DEC has to allocate sampling resources for the 6 – 8 waterbodies they are developing TMDLs for;
- TMDLs were originally focused on impairments as a stormwater issue, the view should be broadened to include other components;
- The TMDL has to be a solvable problem
- Do the sampling stations align with current DEC stations; are these stations adequate;
- Municipalities should be brought in to the process so that the DEC can use their resources and local knowledge.

III. Need for an additional shellfish laboratory

A letter expressing the need for an additional shellfish laboratory will be sent to Governor Cuomo, and copied to DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos, Carrie Meek Gallagher, Carl E. Heastie, Steven Englebright, Fred Thiele, John J. Flanagan, Thomas F. O'Mara, and Todd Kaminsky. The letter has been signed by all the protection committees on Long Island, as well as a broad coalition of environmental groups.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35.