



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
Business Resources Committee  
May 18, 2022, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
450 St. Louis Street,  
Coastal Alabama Partnership conference room**



**Agenda**

Meeting Objectives:

- a) Update old business
- b) Prepare for various work plans

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

BRC Co-Chairs:

Eliska Morgan, Thompson Engineering

Frank Smith, Wilkins Miller Wealth Management

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

**3. Old Business**

- a) CAFF update
- b) OystersAlabama.com update
- c) Growing the Gulf Coast update
- d) Alternative Packing update
- e) Causeway Cleanup

**4. New Business**

- a) Work Plan/CCMP Update

**5. Adjourn**

- a) Happy Hour to be held after the meeting at Braided River Brewing Company, hosted by Coastal Alabama Partnership

## Minutes

### **In Attendance**

Eliska Morgan, Thompson Engineering  
Beth Thomas, Alabama Power  
Renie Kennemer, Thompson Engineering  
Wiley Blankenship, Coastal Alabama Partnership  
Elizabeth Tonsmeire, Tonsmeire Properties  
Andrew Saunders, Saunders Yachtworks  
Casey Gay Williams, Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce  
Liz Freeman, Long's Human Resource Services

### **Staff**

Roberta Swann, Henry Perkins, Marti Messick

### **Takeaways**

- The BRC has been updated on the status of various projects, including Growing the Gulf Coast, the Coastal Alabama Fisheries Fund, OystersAlabama.com, Growing the Gulf Coast, Alternative Packaging, and the Causeway Cleanup.

Eliska called the meeting to order at 3:04, and the minutes were approved by the committee without objection.

### **Old Business**

#### **Growing the Gulf Coast update**

- Beth Thomas presented on Growing the Gulf Coast, a partnership between the MBNEP, Alabama Power, Partners for Environmental Progress, and WKRG
- The program highlights positive environmental work taking place in the area, with a focus on actions taken by industrial groups and larger businesses.
- A segment from the program was played highlighting the work the Port of Mobile has done in "going green"
- The BRC was asked to submit ideas for stories they have or might know about that would be appropriate for the segment

#### **Coastal Alabama Fisheries Fund update**

- Henry updated the BRC on CAFF
- The first loan has been issued by the CAFF
- A community meeting was held in Coden to educate oystermen about the program, as well as on restoration projects and monitoring developments. Over 60 community members attended.
- 12 applications have been received for the program
- Multiple work sessions were conducted with applicants to prepare their applications and teach basic financial literacy
- Comments were that the program needed more publicity, which would be easier later on after it had shown some success

#### **OystersAlabama.com update**

- Renie Kennemer presented on the oyster marketing site
- The website launched last year marketing Alabama oysters to the general public and restaurants
- The page has been receiving multiple emails a week from distributors and restaurants interested in sourcing Alabama oysters
- The website was featured in an Alabama Media Center piece
- We are partnering with Sweet Grown Alabama to continue promoting the site

### **Alternative Packaging**

- Casey Gay Williams presented on the alternative packaging subcommittee
- Committee met twice to identify hole in market/path forward
- Topics discussed were price of styrofoam, food trucks, small businesses, bulk buying, straws, franchise limitations, opportunities for education
- Individuals have been involved from the BRC, Osprey, EAT Alabama, Downtown Mobile Alliance, Mobile Baykeeper, and Plastic Free Gulf Coast
- The committee will continue working to identify a project

### **Causeway Cleanup**

- Henry Perkins reported on the Causeway Cleanup
- 100 bags of trash and 30 tires were removed from the western end of Battleship Parkway
- Partner organizations included TC Boiler and Partners for Environmental Progress
- Dozens of businesses and 70 people participated in the cleanup

### **New Business**

#### **CCMP**

- Roberta reported on the CCMP development process
- There will be a lot of opportunity for input from the various committees
- A consultant team will likely be involved in the process

#### **Membership**

- A discussion was had about the need for new BRC members, and what qualifications and requirements might be
- How should members be represented or involved in other organizations?
- What exactly is the role of the committee?
- Is it to report information and educate, or to conduct projects?
- Conversation was tabled for the next meeting

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the meeting ended at 3:55. Afterwards members went to Braided River Brewing Company for a happy hour provided by the Coastal Alabama Partnership.