

Coastal Studies Institute Board of Directors

Fall Meeting: October 18, 2024, 10:00 – 12:00

Location: *CSI Rm.262 or Virtual via ZOOM*

MINUTES

Members in Attendance: Jack Bagwell, David Clegg, Micah Daniels, Mark Garner, Kirk Havens, Cheryl Oliver, Stacy Rogers Ward, George Bonner, Robin Coger, Reide Corbet, Katie Fader, Mike Kelly, Sharon Paynter, Rob Ross, Erin Seekamp

Members Absent: Ken Halanych, Norma Houston, Margery Overton, Kuldeep Rawat, Harvey Seim

1. Call to Order 10:05 AM
2. Roll Call
3. Consideration of Agenda – ALL APPROVED
4. Consideration of Minutes – ALL APPROVED
5. Welcome to new members ... Introductions
6. Nominate and elect new Board Chair
 - 1.1 Mark Garner was nominated by Robin Coger and seconded by Kirk Havens.
Mark Garner did not object to the nomination and was unanimously elected as Board Chair
7. Updates from CSI Partners
 - 7.1 UNC-SO – Norma Houston (Unable to attend)
 - 7.2 ECSU – Dean Kuldeep Rawat (Unable to attend)
 - 7.3 NCSU – Dr. Erin Seekamp (representing Dr. Margery Overton)
 - i. 40 Faculty and students attended the Blue Economy Innovation Workshop held in Morehead City on October 14-15 2024.
 - ii. The 2024 cohort of the Coastal Community Resilience Immersive Training (C-CRIT) Program has successfully completed a comprehensive risk and vulnerability assessment for Jones County, North Carolina, with a focus on flooding, a major hazard for the area.
 - 7.4 UNC-CH – Dr. Harvey Seim (Unable to attend)
 - 7.5 UNC-W – Dr. Ken Halanych (Unable to attend)
 - 7.6 ECU – Provost Robin Coger
 - i. ECU was selected as a regional winner of the APLU's 2024 W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Engagement Scholarship Award, as well as named one of four finalists for the C. Peter Magrath Community Engagement Scholarship Award.

- ii. On campus housing was listed as the top priority for new projects on the 6-year construction plan to the Systems office by ECU on October 4th, 2024.

8. Executive Director's Report – Dr. Reide Corbett

8.1 CSI FY24 ANNUAL REPORT. Five year review was completed 2 years ago. An updated plan of action is located at the end of the report included in the meeting packet.

8.2 HOUSING UPDATES. A new lease is being negotiated now, again, with Manteo Community Housing. Part of the lease states that the rent will go up by 4% every year...we are working to reduce with the new contract The cost to students has gone up as a result. Talks with Dare County Commissioners have continued and hopefully a meeting with the Housing Taskforce will be scheduled soon.

8.3 RESEARCH TRENDS.

- i. A review of Mike O'Driscoll's research, *Rising groundwater levels in coastal North Carolina: Onsite wastewater treatment challenges*. 85-90% of homes in the Outer Banks have septic tanks installed for wastewater treatment. North Carolina requires 1.5ft of vertical separation between the drainfield and groundwater for proper treatment of wastewater. However, rising groundwater levels mean that distance is shrinking and consequently putting septic systems at risk of failure. Currently 14% of land in Dare County is suitable for septic systems, by 2060 only 5% will still be suitable.

A. Discussion. Alternate solutions need to be explored and budgeted for by government agencies now. Alternative solutions could encourage people to stay on property that is at risk for other climate related issues. Dare County water quality is directly tied to the housing shortage issue: it is irresponsible to continue to build new septic systems that will fail and pollute the water within many of our lifetimes. A central wastewater treatment facility would cost billions to switch to and there is a short list of suitable locations as is.

- ii. CSI/ICP has averaged \$4 million in new awards for the past three years, on track with the target goal of \$3-\$5 million annually. \$2.6 million award from DOE for AMEC has been awarded but funds not yet transferred (two months late). This will put the total for FY25 at \$3.1 million so far.
- iii. Renewal of the NSF REU program was applied for in August and is expected to be approved.

8.4 ACADEMIC PROGRAMING.

- i. OBXFS. Currently, 12 students from UNC-Chappel Hill are on site for the program. The presentation of their capstone project for the semester, which centers around the Currituck Sound, will be presented in early December.
- ii. Semester on the Coast. ECU's spring program already has 8 students registered for 2025. Thirty-two students have expressed interest in the program which can accommodate only 14-18 students.

- iii. REU. Nine individuals were selected from the 199 applicants to participate in the summer 2024 program. Three former participants have returned for internships, and one is now in the Ph. D. program. Board members agreed that REU is a great tool for recruiting and noted that partnerships with local community colleges should be explored.

8.5 NCROEP.

- i. A major project happening now is the deployment of salinity measuring devices, powered by wave energy, off the coast of OBX.
- ii. NCSU Rural Works! intern, Jazmyn Fuentes, created three educational video games focusing around challenges faced by coastal communities. She was recently selected to present her work at a conference at Stanford.
- iii. TEAMER is a program that brings together developers of marine energy technologies and facilities where they can test their devices. NCROEP was recently added to the TEAMER “open water testing” facilities list. An application to be added to the “wave tank testing” facilities list is also in the works. This will facilitate new partnerships and expand NCROEP’s role in the marine energy community.
- iv. It was noted that CSI needs to develop improved methods of tracking and documenting its footprint and impact throughout the year rather than just during annual reporting time. Suggestions included contacting other entities at ECU that have similar tracking requirements to see if their methods could be adapted by CSI.

8.6 OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT.

- i. 2909 K12 students reached in FY 2023-2024. Launch of the Seaside Scouts program (day-long mini camps held on teacher workdays for 7-9 year olds) was very successful in the spring and has been extended for the 2024-2025 school year.
- ii. Science on the Sound typically draws 50 attendees online and in-person despite advertising by local news outlets being inconsistent. Board members suggested placing flyers in vacation rental homes, and making contact with local faith-based leaders. Also mentioned was the tone of the last headline, that it was eco-disaster centered and unappealing to locals. Suggestions included hiring a research translator and tailoring the discussions towards the local population.

9. Financial Report – *Dr. Reide Corbett*

9.1 FY’24 BUDGET RECAP. Of the \$6.5 million in expenses last FY, half came from state funds, with 75% of that going to pay salaries. \$3.1 of the \$4 million dollars in revenue was federally funded grant awards. CSI’s overall win rate of grants applied for is 40-50%. Most of the growth in revenue for the last two years has been from energy related grant awards. Faculty are currently at the limit of the number of research projects they are able to support.

10. Ecu Foundation. Multiple upcoming tours to meet with possible new donors already scheduled. Send any leads to Katie Fader. Annual Pirate Nation Gives day will be on March 5th, 2025. Board members agreed that a subcommittee for growing advancement initiatives would be beneficial. Cheryl Oliver, Stacy Rogers Ward, and Kirk Havens volunteered to serve on this committee.
11. Other Business.
 - 11.1 BOARD BY-LAWS. Board Chair, Mark Garner, and CSI Director, Reide Corbett, will meet to do a thorough review of the Board of Director By-laws, consider input from the Chancellor on the overall composition of the Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee and bring revisions to the full Board.
 - 11.2 NOMINATING COMMITTEE. After the review of the by-laws, a nominating committee will be formed and tasked with creating a list of possible new members. Board members discussed the need to diversify their ranks and desires to engage with the public to help the community better understand CSI's objectives.
 - 11.3 25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY – 7/1/2028. All currently sitting board members will still be on the board at that time. Need to begin developing plans...informational only at this stage.
12. Adjourn 12:10 PM