

**Joint Policy & Management Committee Meeting**

**October 29, 2025**

**10am – 12:30pm**

**LOCATION:**

Suffolk County Community College, [121 Speonk-Riverhead Road](#), Riverhead, NY 11901

**Briefing Materials Package:**

[Link to Briefing Materials Folder](#)

**MC August 6th, 2025 Meeting [Minutes](#)**

**PC March 19th, 2025 Meeting [Minutes](#)**

Montaukett Learning Resource Center- Library (MLRC)

Links to: [College Map](#); [Google Map](#)

**Agenda:**

**10:00** Welcome

Policy Roll Call: *Jennifer Juengst, Policy Committee Chair*

Management Committee Roll Call: *Management Committee Representative*

\*See attendance end of the Minutes\*

**10:05** Minutes

**Action:** *PC approval of meeting PC minutes from March 19th, 2025*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**Action:** *MC approval of MC meeting minutes from August 6th, 2025*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**10:10** Committee Leadership

*Under the PEP bylaws, Committee leadership is reviewed every two years.*

*The current Policy Committee Chair, representing the Suffolk County Executive, was recommended for reappointment for the 2025–2027 term.*

**Action:** *PC approval of PEP Committee Leadership*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**Action:** *MC recommendation for the approval of PEP Committee Leadership*

*Due to a vacancy in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water and the need for additional internal review by Suffolk County Economic Development & Planning, the MC leadership recommendation was postponed.*

**Action:** *Table MC Leadership Appointment to January 2026 MC Meeting*

*Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Leadership approval next term chair Matt Sclafani PhD., Vice-Chair Stephen Heck PhD.*

**Action:** *MC recommends TAC leadership to the Policy Committee for the next term (2025–2027) Dr Matt Sclafani, Cornell Cooperative Extension as Chair; Dr Stephen Heck, Stony Brook University as Vice-Chair*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**Action:** *PC approve TAC Chair and Vice Chair leadership for the next term (2025–2027)*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

*The CAC requested additional time to consider leadership appointments due to an intensive year of communication strategy work.*

**Action:** *Table CAC Leadership Appointment to Winter 2025 CAC Meeting*

*No objections were raised.*

*The Committees considered the recommendation for Southampton Town Councilman Michael Iasilli to continue as Chair of the Local Government Committee for next term.*

**Action:** *MC recommends reappointment of LGC Chair (2025–2027)*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**Action:** *PC approve LGC Chair (2025–2027)*

*All in favor, no members abstained, none opposed – Motion Approved*

**10: 15** *PEP Seagrass Strategy; Joyce Novak, PhD, PEP Executive Director*

*Dr. Novak provided an overview of PEP's multi-year investment in seagrass research, including the bio-optical model work, new monitoring strategy, cold-water pocket mapping, and the regional coordination undertaken through the Coastal Watershed Grant. The update highlighted the shift toward science-based site suitability, regional collaboration, and the establishment of new long-term monitoring sites across the Peconics. Additional questions can be addressed by Jonathan Lefcheck PhD, UMCES*

PEP noted that further technical detail would be provided at the **November 5 TAC meeting** and offered a separate briefing for East Hampton due to meeting conflicts.

Javier Laureano, Policy Committee Member representing EPA, raised concerns regarding management of internal and external programmatic debates, referencing past scallop meeting debates as examples of how differing viewpoints can become contentious.

Javier introduced the following motion:

*“In order to continue to strengthen its partnerships with different organizations, the Policy Committee charges the PEP Executive Director with developing a Standard Operating Procedure to establish how to elevate to EPA and discuss internally key scientific, outreach, and other programmatic debates. This SOP should be presented, discussed, and approved by the Policy Committee within the next 120 days.*

The PC Chair asked if there was a second on the motion.

No second was offered by Policy Committee Members.

Following the lack of a second, the PC Chair Jennifer Juengst recommended tabling the motion, stating that new policy motions should be brought before the Policy Committee alone prior to presentation at a joint meeting.

Javier Laureano stated that EPA will discuss internally how to move this effort forward, independent of Policy Committee approval, through changes to the terms and conditions of all grants that PEP manages.

The PC Chair, Jennifer Juengst, logged an objection to the EPA representative’s final comment.

EPA Representative Javier Laureano closed with a note that EPA will discuss internally.

**10:45** Three years of PRB monitoring in East Hampton, Molly Graffam, PhD. Water Resource Geochemical Specialist, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County

- Discussion of potential PEP Letter of Recommendation to expand this project.

Molly Graffam described well placement (150–250 feet landward of the shoreline), nitrogen reduction performance, and the need to evaluate deeper and more southerly wells in future phases.

*Molly Graffam requested support for the expansion of the project and asked whether PEP could provide either:*

- *a Letter of Support (LOS) for the expansion proposal, or, if PEP is unable to issue a LOS at this time,*
- *a letter stating that, if external funding is awarded through East Hampton water Quality Grant, PEP will work with CCE to develop a monitoring plan for the expanded scope.*

*Committee members acknowledged that only three of the five committed monitoring years have been completed and indicated that evaluation of any expansion should occur after the full dataset is available for review.*

*Timing was discussed, and if a letter is provided, it is needed by around March 2026, allowing adequate time for Committee review. Policy Committee's EPA representative stated that EPA will need to review the project before supporting any formal recommendation. Peconic Land Trust representative asked if this had been reviewed by the TAC. PEP Director responded that the project was presented to the TAC a few years back. TAC Chair Matt Sclafani emphasized the importance of the dataset and recommended bringing the findings and expansion proposal to TAC for technical review. PEP Director agreed and said the Program Office would use the January TAC meeting for this presentation. EPA Policy Committee rep Javier Lauraeno stated the EPA would need more time to review.*

**Action:** *The Committees agreed to table consideration of a letter of support or a conditional letter, and that PEP staff will circulate additional information and return the item to the Policy Committee following EPA and TAC review.*

**11:20** PEP 2025 Marine Conservation & Policy Fellow at Stony Brook University

- *Reviewing the No Discharge Zone of the Peconics, Viktoria Skobodzinski*

*Victoria Skobodzinski provided an overview of her research into the No Discharge Zone (NDZ) of the Peconics, including outreach and data collection, and future steps,*

**11:30** Review PEP's 2026 Draft Projects - Joyce Novak

**11:45** PEP Updates

PEP Committee Updates

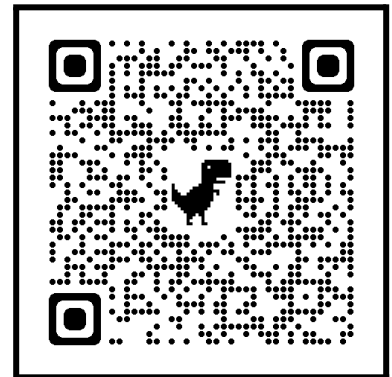
- Local Government Committee, **Councilman Michael Iasilli, Chair**
- Citizens Advisory Committee, Valerie Virgona, PEP Communication & Outreach Manager
- Technical Advisory Committee, **Matt Sclafani, PhD. Chair**

**12:00** PEP Active Project Updates, **Program Office**

- [Tracking System](#)
- PEP Outreach Updates: 2026 Mini Grant open!
- Open Call for two new staff members
  - Outreach Assistant
  - Project Specialist

Join Us November 15, 2025  
PEP & Peconic Land Trust  
Community Recreation Day!

Sign up! ⇒



**12:25** Public Portion / Additional Comments

No additional comments were made during the public portion of the meeting.

2026 Management Committee Meeting Dates:

- January 14, 2026
- April 15, 2026
- July 22, 2026
- \*Joint Meeting\* October 28, 2026

2026 Policy Committee Meeting Dates:

- April 29, 2026
- \*Joint Meeting\* October 28, 2026

Policy Committee Members & Attendance to Oct 29th 2025 Meeting

(\*indicates via Zoom)

**Chair: Jennifer Juengst** (Suffolk County Executive Office)

**\*Cathy Haas**, Regional Director (NYS DEC, Region 1)

**\*Al Krupski**, Supervisor, Town of Southold (Local Government Representative)

**Not present- Kevin McDonald**, (Citizens Advisory Committee Chair)

**\*Javier Laureano**, Water Division Director (EPA Region 2)

Management Committee Members & Attendance to Oct 29th 2025 Meeting

**Not present-Chair: TBD** (DEC Division of Water)

**Not present- Vice-Chair: TBD** (Suffolk County Dept. of Economic Development & Planning)

**Not present-Liz Butler** (US EPA Region 2)

**Cassie Bauer** (DEC Division of Marine Resources)

**Jeremy Campbell** (New York State Department of State)

**Mike Jensen** (Suffolk County Dept. of Health – Office of Ecology)

**\*Corey Humphrey** (Suffolk County Soil & Water Conservation District)

**Not present- Catherine Stark & Ann Welker Reps sent** (Suffolk County Legislature – Districts 1 & 2)

**\*Councilwoman Cate Rogers** (Local Government Representative to the MC)

**\*Council Member Michael Iasilli** (PEP Chair, Local Government Committee – Southampton Representative)

**Matt Sclafani, PhD** (PEP Chair, Technical Advisory Committee)

**Chris Clapp** (PEP Vice-Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee)

**\*Paul Shepson, PhD** (PEP Host Institution – Stony Brook University)

**\*Shavonne Smith** (Shinnecock Indian Nation)

Additional Attendees:

Della Campbell (NYSDEC)

Irene Donohue (Office of Suffolk County Legislator Ann Welker)

Rebecca Shuford (New York Sea Grant)

Kim Shaw (East Hampton)

Josh Halsey (PLT)