



**Minutes
Quarterly Meeting**

Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025

12:00pm-2:00pm

Please note: All voting items are indicated by an *

1. Call to order and Roll Call

Commissioners in attendance- John Scagnelli (NJ Chair), Philip DeGaetano (NY Vice-Chair), Nisha Patel (CTDEEP), Jeffrey Myers (NY Treasurer), Robert Shuster (NJDEP), Christopher Kelly (CT AGO), Selvin Southwell (NYSDEC), Alan Talarsky (NJDOH), Patricia Bisacky (CTDPH), Rose Trentman (NY), Loel Muetter (NJDOH).

A quorum was present.

Also in attendance: Evelyn Powers (IEC), Michael Flood (EPA Region 2), Michael Eleneski (NJ GAU)

2. Approval of Minutes from the September 3rd, 2025 Quarterly Meeting (Appendix A)*

- a. October 1st, 2025 Executive Committee Summary (Appendix B)
- b. November 5th, 2025 Executive Meeting Summary (Appendix C)

Evelyn reviewed the minutes from the September 3rd Quarterly Meeting, which were approved unanimously. She also discussed the summaries of the October and November Executive Committee Meetings, highlighting topics such as the process for closing out FY25, planning for the annual open house, and discussions on the New Jersey gubernatorial transition.

3. IEC Finances and Current Funds Update

- a. FY25 Preliminary Statement of Financial Activity and Balance Sheet (Appendices D and E)

Evelyn gave an overview of the preliminary FY25 financials. Evelyn noted that it takes several months to finalize the financials, as invoices come in and payment for services rendered under monitoring and other agreements come in, and coding (allocation) corrections are made. Evelyn noted that the FY25 budget was underutilized due to delays in the septic work project, which was budgeted at \$2 million but only received about \$500,000 as ad advance, as per the contract with NYSDEC. She explained that most of the unspent funds were tied to the septic project, resulting in lower income as well as expenses. Evelyn also mentioned that some equipment purchases for PFAS capability development were made in FY25 and not yet reflected in the current financials due to a delay in the receipt of the invoice, and would be charged to the correct fiscal year (FY25).

Commissioner Myers and Evelyn discussed the financial status of IEC. They agreed to have a meeting with the accountant and the new administrative person to better understand and present the financial data, including grant balances and income that has been awarded but not yet received. Evelyn mentioned that IEC is a pass-through entity for several awards, which affects how funding is reflected in their financial reports. They also discussed the possibility of adding additional services from their accounting firm, JITASA, for strategic planning and budget analysis.

Evelyn discussed the New Jersey DEP Harbor Monitoring Project's financial challenges, highlighting unpaid invoices since March 2025 and the need for a budget amendment and MOA signing. Bob Schuister (NJDEP) offered to help elevate the issue by leveraging his contacts in the NJDEP contracts unit. Evelyn emphasized the importance of prioritizing payment and noted that the financial situation would improve once these accounts receivable items are settled.

b. Funding and Grants Update

Federal Funding Updates -CWA Section 106 Assistance Agreements:

- CWA §106 FFY25 status (\$726,000). Awarded.
- CWA §106 FFY24 Status (\$605,143 remaining)
- CWA §106 FFY 23 Closeout in progress
- CWA §106 FFY 26 Workplan Development schedule

Evelyn provided an update on federal funding, thanking Michael Flood and EPA Region 2 staff for ensuring the FY25 award was awarded prior to the lapse in appropriations. The FY25-106 award was received in September, and thus unaffected by the government shutdown.

Evelyn reported that FY24 has \$605,000 remaining, with FY23 closeout in progress and expected completion by December 31st. For FY25, a draft work plan will be circulated targeting FY25 numbers as a budget target, with a submission deadline to be provided by EPA (March-May timeframe).

Long Island Sound Partnership Assistance Agreements

- LISP FFY25 Assistance Agreement (LI-00A01868-0 \$1,532,590 awarded 8/11/2025).
- LISP FFY24 and prior year agreement remaining funding (\$1,117,704 remaining)
- NYSDEC Long Island Sound Septic Replacement Project (Federal EPA LISO Bipartisan Infrastructure Law pass-through funds) \$2,062,500 annual budget. Additional 1-2 years of funding available

The Long Island Sound Partnership received a new assistance agreement of \$1.5 million, funding monitoring and pathogen monitoring networks, as well as a subaward to the Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor. Evelyn also discussed the New York State DEC septic replacement project, noting that 7 projects are complete in Nassau County, with 32 total approved applications, while Suffolk County's process is still being set up. Evelyn explained the reimbursement structure for a

program, clarifying that funds are divided between counties and additional funding is available in subsequent years. She mentioned that Suffolk County's legislature recently voted to adopt a resolution to accept the funds.

State and other Funding

- NJDEP Harbor Monitoring Project (Year 5, Proposed Budget \$559,151)
- NYSDEC 604(b) Year 3 funding (August 1, 2025-July 31st, 2026) \$149,343.85. Awarded 11/12/2025
- NYSDEC 604(b) Prior Year Carryover funding
- Save the Sound Unified Water Study Funding (\$45,940)
- Bronx River CSO LTCP analyses (HDR Inc./NYCDEP)
- State Appropriations

Evelyn gave updates on the New Jersey DEP Harbor Monitoring Project, NYSDEC 604b Harbor Monitoring Project and Save the Sound Unified Water Study. Evelyn also introduced a potential new project with HDR, a consulting firm, for monitoring the Bronx River as part of a NYCDEP CSO Long Term Control Plan effort, which could lead to further opportunities.

Philip and Evelyn outlined efforts to secure state funding, including submitting a request to the governor's office and engaging with environmental advocacy groups for support.

4. Director's Report

a. Project Highlights and Updates:

- NYSDEC Long Island Sound Septic Replacement Project
- NJDEP Harbor Monitoring Project
- Coordinated Volunteer Pathogen Monitoring
- Eelgrass Restoration Monitoring- Living Breakwaters (Raritan Bay)
- Sampling and Analyses in support of +Pool Pilot
- Long Island Sound Monitoring

Evelyn presented a slide deck highlighting IEC's projects, focusing on a new habitat monitoring initiative in partnership with HEP and Stony Brook University. The project involves monitoring eelgrass restoration efforts in Staten Island's Raritan Bay, where data was collected through sensors and periodic surveys. Despite initial success, there was a significant drop in eelgrass coverage by November (likely due to shorebirds), though the roots appeared intact. A discussion is planned with stakeholders about next steps for the spring 2026. Evelyn will distribute the full slide deck to allow those that could not attend in-person to review the project posters which were produced for the annual open house. Bob Schuster shared insights on eelgrass transplantation challenges and suggested coordinating efforts between New Jersey's estuary programs. Evelyn detailed the progress of septic system replacements in Nassau County, noting 32 approved applications, 27 in installation progress, and 7 completed.

Evelyn mentioned that Jovan Snyder and Steven Biazo will be presenting posters at the Northeast Aquatic Biologists Conference in February. She discussed her participation in a panel at the NY-NJ HEP conference in November, focusing on environmental storytelling through art and IEC's recent collaboration with the BioBAT art space.

Evelyn discussed new laboratory capabilities for microsystem analyses and virus detection. IEC has submitted an application for certification to NYSDOH ELAP for microcystin certification through EPA method 546. ELAP will be performing a supplemental on-site assessment on December 11th to finalize the certification.

- b. Update on Staffing and Current Laboratory Operations
- c. Strategic Planning Schedule

Evelyn also addressed staffing needs, particularly for an office administrator, and reviewed ongoing laboratory operations. The group reviewed a strategic planning timeline for FY26, aiming to complete the process by June 2027, with key milestones including issuing an RFP in January 2026 and presenting the final plan in June 2027.

Chair Scagnelli, Commissioner DeGaetano, Commissioner Atkin and Evelyn are forming a subcommittee to guide this effort. Michael Flood, EPA emphasized the importance revisiting the document every five years or so, similar to the CCMP or action plan. The budget for this initiative was confirmed at \$30,000, allocated for FY25, with plans to consult stakeholders, including staff, commissioners, advisory groups, and regulatory agencies, to ensure a comprehensive approach.

Evelyn shared updates on the installation of exhibits in the lab and administrative spaces, highlighting the addition of colorful displays and informational plaques. The group also discussed plans for the next meeting in March, which will be the annual meeting and include elections of officers.

5. Old Business

- a. Commissioner vacancies

6. New Business

- a. IEC 90th anniversary event

the group discussed plans for IAC's 90th anniversary in 2026, considering a commemorative event and a digital timeline to highlight the organization's progress and challenges over the years.

7. Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, March 4th, 2026

Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026 (in-person)

Wednesday, September 2nd, 2026

Wednesday, December 2nd, 2026 (in-person)

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned approximately 2:00pm.

IEC OPEN HOUSE 2:00pm-5:00pm

APPENDICES:

- A- September 3rd, 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes
- B- October 1st, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Summary
- C- November 5th, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Summary
- D- FY25 Preliminary Statement of Financial Activity
- E- FY24 Preliminary Statement of Financial Position
- F- EPA Progress Reports April 1-September 30, 2025