

**INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN
FIRST QUARTER BUSINESS MEETING FY2025
DECEMBER 16, 2025**

**MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING, ROCKVILLE, MD
DRAFT MINUTES**

Call to Order: Executive Director Michael Nardolilli called the Business Meeting to order at 9:45am on December 16, 2025. The following commissioners, staff, and guests attended the meeting in whole or in part.

Commissioners

District of Columbia

Willem Brakel (*)
Steve Saari
Tiffany Potter
Kimberly Jones (a)
Hamid Karimi (a)

Maryland

Birthe Kjellerup
Randy Rowel Jr.
Lee Currey (a*)
K. John Holmes (a)
Dan Strodel (a)

Pennsylvania

William Willis
Adam McClain (a)
Jason Minnich (a*)

United States

Bob Sussman (*)
Amy Guise

Virginia

Weedon Cloe (a*)
Douglas Domenech
Del. Kathy Tran
Mark Peterson (a)

West Virginia

Mindy Neil (a*)

Staff

Sarah Ahmed, Senior Water Resources Engineer
Lily Bedwell, Administrative Coordinator
Renee Bourassa, Director of Communications
Laurel Glenn, Director of Administration
Richard Masters, General Counsel
Megan McClaugherty, Ecological Technician
Heidi Moltz, Director of Program Operations
Serena Moncion, Community Outreach Manager
Michael Nardolilli, Executive Director
Garett Pignotti, Environmental Scientist
Cherie Schultz, Director of CO-OP Operations
Mary Stack, Water Quality Data Manager

Guests

Joel Caudill, WSSC Water
Joe Chandler, USACE
Anne Spiesman, Fairfax Water

(a) - Alternate Commissioner

(*) – Executive Committee

1. Roll Call and Quorum Certification

Executive Director Michael Nardolilli identified himself and noted that because this is a virtual meeting, participants should identify their name and affiliation in the chat. He requested that participants state their name for the record before speaking. Mr. Nardolilli certified that a quorum was present.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Willem Brakel introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the First Quarter Meeting of FY26. Chair Brakel highlighted a few items from the First Quarter, including the government shutdown from October 1 to November 12. This action disrupted some activities of the Commission including the pause of the United States Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Secondary Source Feasibility Study. ICPRB succeeded in securing a \$1.8 million earmark for the USACE study in the House Appropriations bill [HR 4554]. ICPRB also completed the 2025 Washington Metropolitan Area (WMA) Water Supply Study accompanied by a press conference as a part of the rollout.

3. Public Comment

Chair Brakel asked Mr. Nardolilli if the Commission received any requests for public comment. Mr. Nardolilli reported that no one asked to address the Commission this quarter.

4. Adoption or Modification of Agenda

Chair Brakel asked if there were any proposed changes to the agenda. Mr. Nardolilli made a request to add an item to the Executive Director's report about ICPRB's Land Prioritization Project. **Chair Brakel asked for a motion to approve the agenda as so amended. Commissioner Hamid Karimi made the motion that was seconded by Commissioner Dan Strodel. All were in favor, and the agenda was adopted as amended.**

5. Minutes from September 9, 2025

Chair Brakel asked for any edits to the minutes from the Q4 FY25 meeting on September 9, 2025. Hearing none, **Chair Brakel asked for a motion to approve the minutes as circulated. Commissioner Karimi made the motion that was seconded by Commissioner Strodel. All were in favor, and the minutes were approved as circulated.**

6. Notes from Executive Committee Conference Calls

Mr. Nardolilli reported on the Conference Calls held by the Executive Committee on October 28, 2025 (Minutes under Tab 2 of the Commission Book), and on December 15, 2025. At its meeting on December 15, 2025, the Executive Committee completed its review of the proposed revision to the ICPRB Manual of Operations (MOO). The Committee decided that the full Commission review of the MOO will occur during the March 17, 2026 in-person meeting in Rockville, MD.

The Committee discussed the new Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule and focused on the removal of interstate waters from jurisdictional categories. Mr. Nardolilli will consult with other River Basin Commissions on their opinion and if they plan to take any action on the matter. He will then make a recommendation to the Executive Committee based on that information. Commissioner Karimi asked Mr. Nardolilli to elaborate on the potential impact of this change. He responded that this is an opportunity for ICPRB and for States to try to keep interstate waters as a separate jurisdictional hook. Commissioner Kimberly Jones asked to clarify if ICPRB would advocate for the inclusion of interstate waters in WOTUS and Mr. Nardolilli stated that was the staff's current position.

Next, Mr. Nardolilli turned to the Pure Water DC Water Reuse Action Plan (WRAP) that was presented at a rollout in November. It proposes to use effluent from the Blue Plains Water Treatment plant and treat it to a higher standard with the goal of bringing effluent up to drinking water standards. ICPRB remains in support of the Travilah Quarry option as a regional answer with the understanding that the region will require more than Travilah for full reliability in the WMA region.

The Executive Committee discussed the logistics of the March meeting and discussed extending its length to include a session after lunch, and possibly a field trip on the day before the meeting. Mr. Nardolilli also mentioned that the Executive Committee is looking for volunteers to join the Audit Committee.

7. Old Business

A. Executive Director's Report

Impact of the Government Shutdown: Mr. Nardolilli reported that while initially disruptive, there do not appear to be any long-term impacts of the government shutdown. ICPRB was glad to be in touch with our EPA contacts again and hoped that the government stays open past January 30 before the continuing resolution expires, as well as past February 2 when the President is scheduled to release his budget for the year.

Revision of the Manual of Operations: Staff completed the draft revision to the ICPRB Manual of Operations. Based on discussion with and guidance from the Executive Committee, staff added three new attachments: an AI Policy, a Continuity of Operations Policy, and a Media Relations Policy. The Executive Committee reviewed the changes. The Commission will include the final version in the Commission Meeting book for the second quarter meeting.

Supplemental Storage Feasibility Study: The House approved a further \$1.8 million Earmark for the USACE Study [HR 4553, H.Rpt. 119-213]. The study was paused during the government shutdown and has yet to resume. In November, the Senate Committee on Appropriations included a \$1.8 million earmark in the Senate Appropriations "Committee Print." Staff have used the release of the 2025 Washington Metropolitan Area Water Supply Study to highlight the need to expedite the completion of the Feasibility Study.

Federal Funding for ICPRB: Mr. Nardolilli reported on the status of the \$650,000 federal earmark. ICPRB did not get an earmark into the House Appropriations Bill. Senator Van Hollen's CDS earmark submission is included in the "Committee Print" by the Senate Appropriations Committee for \$650,000. Mr. Nardolilli noted that if Congress adopts a Continuing Resolution, ICPRB will not receive this earmark. **Chair Brakel asked if there were any comments on the Executive Director's report thus far. Hearing none, Mr. Nardolilli was asked to continue.**

GAO Review Bill [HR 3428]: The House passed this bill by voice vote. This legislation would submit all three River Basin Commissions (Susquehanna, Delaware, and Potomac) to a "review" by the General Accounting Office. The bill is pending before the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee. As of this meeting, Mr. Nardolilli has been unable to arrange a meeting with Senator Alsobrooks' staff. The goal would be to try to exclude ICPRB from the purview of the bill because unlike the other two river basin commissions, the federal government is not a Signatory to the ICPRB Compact and there is no provision in the ICPRB Compact allowing for a GAO Review. He noted that the bill distinguishes this as a review versus an audit, which would mean much less paperwork for ICPRB Administrative Staff.

2025 Water Supply Study: Dr. Cherie Schultz briefed the Commission on the 2025 WMA Water Supply Study and the press release of it on December 4. There was also an 85th anniversary webinar presentation on the study. Commissioner John Holmes suggested that Dr. Schultz and the Communications Section share a social media post with Commissioners to share on their personal profiles. Ms. Serena Moncion shared the link to the LinkedIn post in the Teams chat.

Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership (DWSPP): On November 5, DWSPP held its annual meeting at the Reservoir Center in Washington, D.C. At the event, DWSPP elected Katie Foreman from WSSC Water as the new Chair for 2026. Afterwards, some participants took a tour of the Anacostia waterfront led by Anacostia Waterkeeper Trey Sherad. Mr. Nardolilli noted that ICPRB had a hand in helping in the formation of the Anacostia Watershed Society.

Potomac River Conference: On October 22, ICPRB hosted the fourth annual Potomac River Conference at George Mason University's Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center in Woodbridge, Virginia. The title of the conference was "Integrating Science, Policy & Management to Combat Harmful Algal Blooms." The 2026 conference will focus on water supply issues as a part of the Water-Energy nexus. Mr. Nardolilli asked if Commissioners have any suggestions for next year's topic.

85th Anniversary Webinar Series: To celebrate ICPRB's anniversary, ICPRB launched a six-part webinar series. Each webinar was well attended and garnered favorable feedback from attendees. The dates, subject matter, and presenter appear below:

- October 30, 2025. Who Owns the Potomac? Mike Nardolilli
- November 6, 2025. Water Impacts from Data Centers. Dr. Alimatou Seck
- November 18, 2025. Unsung Heroes of the Potomac River: American Eels. G. Mike Selckmann & Megan McClaugherty presented on the work of the Aquatic Habitats section to support the eel ladder project.
- December 5, 2025. Land Prioritization Mapping. Renee Thompson presented on the project.
- December 9, 2025. The Future of Water in the DC Metro Area. Dr. Cherie Schultz
- December 18, 2025. Connectivity: North Branch Potomac Case Study. Selckmann. (Re-Scheduled)

Land Prioritization Project: ICPRB released its [2025 Land Prioritization Tool](#) update on October 21. The purpose of the tool is to prioritize land parcels for protection from a downstream drinking water perspective - and it's the result of a long-term collaborative effort with DWSPP water suppliers, land conservation groups, and state agencies in the basin. One exciting enhancement to this latest iteration of the tool is that parcels across the entire jurisdictions of DC, MD, PA, WV, and VA are prioritized - not just those parcels within the Potomac basin boundary. As a result, the 2025 tool prioritizes over 5 million parcels. There is a web page up on ICPRB's website with technical documentation, maps, a link to a webinar recording about the tool, and additional information. The geospatial files are also available for anyone that's interested. The ICPRB project team for this effort includes Renee Thompson, Megan McClaugherty, and Heidi Moltz.

Commissioner Questions on the Report of the Executive Director: **Chair Brakel asked Commissioners if they have questions for the Executive Director about anything from his quarterly report.** Commissioner Karimi noted a Bay Journal article on eel migration in the Susquehanna River. It said that over 50% of eels are harmed by migrating back downstream through dams and other obstacles. He asked if the Potomac is becoming a more significant area for the American eel population. Dr. Schultz explained that there are requirements in the operations permits of the hydroelectric dams that they shut off at night from September through December to make sure that the eels can safely migrate downstream. Dr. Schultz said that Mr. Selckmann would be the best staff person to discuss this topic with.

B. Report of the Standing Committee on Outreach, Education, and Workforce

Chair Brakel asked Committee Chair Kjellerup to report on the Committee's activities since the last meeting, including the November meeting of the Committee. Commissioner Birthe Kjellerup reported that the Committee is almost full and shared that Commission support is appreciated and wanted by all Commissioners. The Committee's goal is to engage the community with the Potomac in ways that they otherwise would not be able to. Chair Brakel asked if there were any questions on this status report. Commissioner Randy Rowel expressed interest in joining the Standing Committee.

C. Next Steps Regarding the LFAA (Low Flow Allocation Agreement)

Finalization Process for the Modified LFAA: Dr. Schultz gave an update on the status of the finalization of the modified LFAA which is currently under review by the upper management of USACE. ICPRB has been involved in the agreement since 2017. **Chair Brakel asked if there were any questions or discussion regarding the LFAA.**

Collaborative Framework: Dr. Schultz led a discussion on the status of the Collaborative Process as a follow-up to the approval of the Modified LFAA. Greg Busch of Maryland serves as Chair of the Potomac River Environmental Flow-By Task Force that oversees the work of two Technical Advisory Committees (TACs): the Ecological Flows TAC (for which he also serves as Chair) and the Human Needs TAC which has not been created yet. Chair Busch is working to secure a presentation and speaker for the next EcoTAC meeting, which has yet to be scheduled. **Chair Brakel asked if there were any questions or further discussion on this subject.** He suggested that the Commission should consider giving the Collaborative Framework a new name to sound less bureaucratic and more reflective of its true purpose, such as “Framework on Balancing Ecological Values and Human Needs in Setting the Flow-By.”

D. Federal Policy Changes

Chair Brakel expressed the importance of scientific work amid less resources. He turned it over to Mr. Nardolilli and he highlighted the following federal policy changes:

1. USGS has lost 20% of its hydrological technicians and ICPRB expects some impact as they are an important partner in the issues that we both tackle. Some stream gages have been neglected due to the loss of staff. The last FY25 continuing resolution gave USGS authority to move funds around to the stream gage network. The stream flow drought tool is set to launch its beta release in January and Mr. Nardolilli shared his hope that they have sufficient staff to roll it out.
2. Mr. Nardolilli noted that NIDIS (the National Integrated Drought Information System) needs to be reauthorized by Congress. Mr. Nardolilli shared that the Mid-Atlantic region is getting its own Drought Early Warning System (DEWS) and it will launch on April 9, 2026. Commissioner Karimi asked if ICPRB is aware of any changes to the maintenance of gages in the Anacostia River or Rock Creek. Commissioner Steve Saari responded that USGS maintains service on the gages in the Anacostia and Rock Creek. Mr. Nardolilli asked if ICPRB can do anything to support the effort to continue service. Commissioner Saari recalled that Mr. Nardolilli wrote a helpful letter to USGS on behalf of ICPRB. He shared that the District has faced its own funding shortfalls throughout the past couple of years but stays committed to maintaining the service to the Anacostia.
3. Mr. Nardolilli remained hopeful that the Congress will follow “regular order” and approve appropriation bills before January 30 and he shared ICPRB’s interest in the release of the President’s budget and further possible changes. He noted that Administrations often do not meet that February 2 deadline.
4. The SPEED Act ([Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development Act](#)) [HR 4776] passed the House on November 20 and the key provision is to classify the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as procedural only, rather than just substantive. Commissioner Karimi asked about funding concerns relating to the Big Beautiful Bill. He mentioned great emphasis on appropriate use of taxpayer money as a topic of discussion at the last Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Nardolilli reminded the Commission of our two EPA grants and Dr. Heidi Moltz shared that we have very good relationships with our contacts at EPA and count on them to share any relevant changes as they come out. The Section 117 grant has been operating per normal and have not received any news that would indicate a change in Section 117 funding. Per guidance from EPA, we submitted our Section 106 application for FY26 in June for \$635,000. We

have not received any funds so far, but Dr. Moltz said that is typical. We are operating on the assumption that no news is good news.

5. The Water Resources Development Act 2026 (WRDA 2026) will be kicked off with a House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing on December 17 and Mr. Nardolilli hoped to learn more about the position of the Congress on this bill at that time.

E. Operations Report

Contracts and Financial Report: We do have a new contract with MDE Assessment Units from October 8, 2025 – October 8, 2026. There have been no withdrawals from the contingency reserve account, (the contingency reserve account acts as our rainy-day fund). The general account stands at \$1,542,756.66 including checking accounts and investments. Mr. Nardolilli presented the assets, liabilities, and revenue pages. We stay mindful of possible sudden changes on the federal level. Chair Brakel asked Mr. Nardolilli to elaborate on the status of jurisdictional dues, and he shared that we are still waiting for Pennsylvania’s FY25 jurisdictional dues.

Progress on Hiring the Director of Administration and Finance: Mr. Nardolilli commended Ms. Laurel Glenn’s important role in the administrative unit and said that we are looking for her replacement to have a financial background. The first round of interviews is well underway with assistance from the counterpart position at the Delaware River Basin Commission, Ms. Elba Deck. We may reopen the position in case we do not find the candidate we are looking for. Ms. Glenn will stay on staff to onboard and train the replacement. Commissioners and staff also thanked Ms. Glenn for her terrific work and noted that her shoes will be tough to fill.

Spotlight Program: ICPRB’s Serena Moncion, Community Outreach Manager, presented on the Walk in the Woods program. She highlighted the eight expert-guided hikes throughout the watershed.

Tab 7 Unit Reporting: The ICPRB Unit Directors made themselves available to respond to any questions posed by the Commission concerning their first quarter project reports in Tab 7 of the Commission Meeting Book. **Hearing no questions, Chair Brakel moved on to the next agenda item.**

8. New Business

Guidance Resolution on Pure Water DC: See item 6 above for summary of the issue. ICPRB’s initial position was to follow the lead of the CO-OP Water Suppliers, i.e., that ICPRB will be a “participant” in the process but not a “partner.” The Executive Committee recommended that ICPRB should affirm the initial position of being “participant.” **Chair Brakel asked for a motion to accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Commissioner Strodel made a motion to accept the recommendation which was seconded by Commissioner Potter. All were in favor and the position was approved.**

9. Planning for the Next Meeting

Mr. Nardolilli asked Commissioners for their opinions regarding the in-person meeting in Rockville scheduled for March 17, 2026. He asked if we should plan a field trip, whether we should plan to have a guest speaker, and whether to break the meeting into two parts: one session before lunch, and one session after lunch. There was little discussion on the topic of the next meeting, but Chair Brakel suggested Commissioners reach out to staff with any suggestions.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Brakel asked for any other discussion for the good of the order. **Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Karimi made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Potter seconded the motion. Accordingly, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50am.**

These minutes were written by Administrative Coordinator Lily Bedwell and reviewed by Executive Director Michael Nardolilli.