

**MINUTES OF COMBINED VIRTUAL MEETING
OF CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD**

November 17, 2020

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert Barkanic

James Schmid

Cynthia Carrow

Jerome Shabazz

Mark Caskey

John St. Clair

Bill Fink

John Walliser

Mitchell Hescox

Jim Welty

Duane Mowery

Tim Weston

John Over

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) STAFF PRESENT:

Keith Salador, Executive Director

Kate Cole, DEP Policy Office

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD (EJAB) MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

Jenn Baka

Heather Bedi

Adam Cutler

Arthur Frank

Nebraska Hernandez

Hazem Hijazi

Rafiyqa Muhammad

Allison Robinson

Jerome Shabazz

Horace Strand

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD (EJAB) STAFF
PRESENT:**

Allison Acevedo, Executive Director

John Brakeall, Office of Environmental Justice

Abbey Cadden, DEP Policy Office

Justin Dula, Office of Environmental Justice

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Shabazz called the meeting to order at 12:40 PM.

DEP REPORT:

Secretary McDonnell provided a brief update on the following:

Pandemic Telework Update

Since the office closure on March 16, the Department has conducted almost 53,000 inspections, processed over 22,000 permit applications and authorizations, and processed 94% of the applications within the Permit Decision Guarantee timeframe. The Department has also responded to 201 environmental emergencies.

Small Business Advantage Grant

The Small Business Advantage Grant program opened on July 27 and has \$1 million for small businesses and farmers for energy efficiency, pollution prevention, and natural resource protection projects. A new element this year is the opportunity for farmers to install solar pumping systems for their agricultural operations. Applications are being considered on a first come, first served basis and will be accepted until the fiscal year 2020-21 funds are exhausted or April 12, 2021. Additional details are available on DEP's Small Business Ombudsman's Office website.

Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence

Fourteen projects received the 2020 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. The winning projects included: a climate change-focused educational outreach campaign for youth within environmental justice communities in Allegheny County; preservation and restoration efforts at the Lehigh River headwaters; and a large solar installation at Geisinger Medical Center. Applications for the 2021 Governor's Awards will be accepted through 5 p.m. on Monday, December 21, 2020, and applications must be submitted via the online application system, which can be found on DEP's website on the "Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence" page.

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Public Comment Period

The RGGI public comment period opened on November 7 and will close on January 14. Comments will be accepted electronically through DEP's eComment system by e-mail to RegComments@pa.gov. Written comments can also be submitted by the U.S. postal service. More information on the various ways to comment is available on DEP's website. Ten virtual public hearings will be held

from December 8-14, and persons interested in presenting testimony at any of the hearings must register with the Department at least 24 hours in advance of the hearing. Additional information is available on the Department's website.

Environmental Justice Roundtables

Nine Environmental Justice Roundtables have been held around Pennsylvania. Roundtable topics have included lead exposure, acid mine drainage, air quality issues, landfill-related environmental concerns, and blight and economic development opportunities. Communities interested in holding a Roundtable event should contact DEP's Office of Environmental Justice.

Environmental Justice Policy Withdrawal

The draft environmental justice policy was recently withdrawn, with the goal of developing an expanded policy that addresses interagency environmental justice collaboration, mapping, resource and data development, impacts on grant programs and practices, translation processes, and training for DEP staff and external partners. The OEJ is currently working on a planning and implementation strategy for the new policy which will involve meaningful community outreach and engagement.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Work

A Diversity Steering Committee comprised of Department leadership and staff volunteers has been formed to address concerns related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Department. Eight objectives have been identified to achieve the mission. Due to the overwhelming interest throughout the Department, workgroups made up of interested employees and members of the Diversity Steering Committee have been created for each objective to ensure progress is actively being made in these areas.

ECOS Update

The Secretary was recently elected as President of ECOS for next year. Environmental justice will be the focus.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATE:

Bert Meyers, DEP's Director of Environmental Education, offered an update on the Environmental Education Grants Program, including eligible applicants, mini and general grants, program priorities such as water, climate change, and environmental justice, the timeframe from grant opening to final reports (including assessment results and final request for reimbursement), and information about the Environmental Education Grants website.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chairman Shabazz solicited additions or corrections to the October 20, 2020 Minutes. Hearing none, the Chairman requested a motion to approve the Minutes.

Tim Weston moved to approve the Minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting. Thad Stevens seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

EJAB UPDATE:

Chairman Adam Cutler briefly offered that EJAB is an advisory board appointed by the Secretary which provides recommendations on environmental justice issues. EJAB has been working on the RGGI proposal, making some EJ-related recommendations to the Secretary, and will be participating in some capacity in the public comments. EJAB is also very involved in the process of developing what will be the new expanded EJ policy. Chairman Cutler discussed EJAB's strategies for public engagement, planning of an EJ Symposium in April of 2021, and the recent withdrawal of the draft EJ policy.

CAC UPDATE:

Chairman Jerome Shabazz offered that the main issue going forward over the next 12 months is that folks are struggling with public participation and communication, learning how to operate in a virtual space. He expressed the importance of trying to figure out how to keep the Department moving but at the same time have a real connection to what is going on in industry.

Bob Barkanic, Chairman of the Strategic Issues subcommittee, offered that the group had their first meeting recently and would like to propose legacy issues as the strategic issue topic for 2021.

NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION AND PROGRAM UPDATE:

Four members of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection, Olivia Glenn, Shawn LaTourette, Sean Moriarty, and Riche Outlaw, provided details on Governor Phil Murphy's legislation enacted in September requiring its Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate environmental and public health impacts of certain facilities on overburdened communities when reviewing certain permit applications. With this legislation, New Jersey became the first state in the nation to require mandatory permit denials if an environmental justice analysis determines

a new facility will have a disproportionately negative impact on overburdened communities.

CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Policy & Regulatory Oversight Committee

Tim Weston offered that the committee recently heard a report from the Bureau of Air Quality on the draft proposed rulemaking Chapter 129, control of volatile organic compound emissions from large petroleum drycleaners. After discussion, the committee recommends that the Council send a letter to the EQB supporting the proposed rulemaking.

Tim Weston moved that the CAC send a letter to the EQB in support of the proposed rulemaking. Thad Stevens seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Legislative Committee

Cynthia Carrow stated that the committee recently met and reviewed several bills focused on oil and gas waste, which prompted the committee to suggest that the full Council take a broad look at energy production waste in general and requested that Keith Salador arrange for some informational briefings from DEP covering projects from commencement through termination.

Act 54 Work Group

John Walliser offered that the committee is now working on two separate efforts. The first is to accept public comment on the most recent Act 54 report now that it has DEP's comment and response document in hand. Keith Salador is working with the Department to set up the ability to do online submission of comments and possibly a webinar in January where verbal comments on the report could be provided.

Secondly, the committee is looking to provide recommendations to DEP on the establishment of a working group for the revision of the Technical Guidance Document. John welcomed recommendation of members for the work group.

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Under the Secretary's authority, CAC has a seat on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Jim Welty holds that seat and expressed his interest in reappointment.

John Walliser moved that Jim Welty be reappointed to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Bob Barkanic seconded

the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Strategic Issues Committee

Bob Barkanic stated that the committee had a very productive first meeting. Several 2021 strategic issues were identified, but consensus was that the committee should move forward with a recommendation to the full Council to study legacy issues. Chairman Shabazz requested that Bob Barkanic circulate to the full Council the list of potential strategic issues discussed by the Committee.

Public Participation

Jerome Shabazz offered that the Public Participation Committee looked at historical information that is available on public participation. Keith Salador will do some background research, and a more thorough report will be provided at the next meeting in terms of priorities and approach for public participation.

NEW BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION:

The 2021 meeting schedule will be as follows: 10 meetings, with no August and December meeting. Keith Salador will circulate the dates and request that members check their respective calendars for availability.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, Bob Barkanic moved to adjourn the meeting. Cynthia Carrow seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The November 17, 2020 meeting of the CAC adjourned at 3:00 PM.