

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL  
October 10, 2023**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Duane Mowery	James Schmid
Trisha Salvia	John St. Clair
James Schmid	Tim Weston
Jerome Shabazz	

The meeting does not have a quorum.

**CAC STAFF PRESENT:**

Max Schultz, Interim Executive Director, Citizens Advisory Council  
Ian Irvin, new Executive Director, Citizens Advisory Council

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Jerome Shabazz called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed the new Executive Director and thanked Max Schultz for filling in while search was being conducted for the Executive Director.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**

Chairman Jerome Shabazz solicited additions or corrections to the September 12, 2023 Minutes. None were heard. No vote could be taken on the Minutes without a quorum.

**DEP UPDATE**

The DEP Update was provided by Max Schultz, CAC Interim Director.

***Local Climate Action Program***

The program provides free technical and personnel assistance to local governments that want to create their own greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans with the goal of reducing emissions and combatting climate change. This includes engaging the community in the planning process via in-person workshops, virtual meetings, and on-line surveys. The technical and personnel assistance is provided by EPO staff and university partners. The 2023-2024 LCAP kicked off at the beginning of the 2023 semester.

***Home Energy Rebates from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)***

Two programs are being developed within the IRA home energy rebates: the Home Owner Managing Energy Savings (HOMES) focusing on whole-house efficiency retrofits, with rebates determined by total projected or measured energy savings for the house, and the High Efficiency Electric Home Rebate (HEEHRA) which provides point of sale rebates for low to moderate income households to electrify their homes. DEP has contracted with Deloitte to help prepare for both programs.

### ***DEP Environmental Education Grants***

The 2023 Environmental Education Grants program began in July 2023 and will conclude on June 30, 2024. The program awarded more than \$1 million to fund 70 environmental education projects throughout the state; 54 of the projects will engage folks in living, working, and going to school in EJ areas. Priority funding will be awarded to projects that engage audiences within EJ areas on topics related to climate change and water.

### ***Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP)***

On August 30, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced the availability of up to \$350 million nationwide in formula grant funding to help monitor and reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector and for environmental restoration of well sites. The goal of MERP to help oil and gas well owners and operators of applicable facilities to voluntarily and permanently reduce methane emissions from leaks and daily operations of low producing conventional wells on non-federal lands. Pennsylvania's allocation is just over \$33 million, third only behind Texas and Kansas. The deadline is October 10, 2023, and DEP's Office of Oil & Gas Management has been working diligently to meet the quick deadline.

Q&A included the EE grants application deadline, the contradiction between DEP's data and landfill data on the amount of waste derived from oil and gas operations, and the subsidy programs encouraging folks to move away from certain fuel types and move toward electrification of homes.

### **CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### ***Legislative***

The committee briefly met last week to meet the new Executive Director and provide an update on committee priorities. The top three are: obtaining a Fact Sheet from the Department on municipal and electronic waste with the intent of drafting a letter to the General Assembly; (2) prioritizing issues within the State Water Plan; and (3) obtaining a list from the Department of legislative priorities for the Council.

#### ***Policy & Regulatory Oversight***

No meeting since last month.

### **NEW BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION**

New Executive Director Ian Irvin expressed his great pleasure in meeting individuals of the Council. Public participation is forefront in his mind.

Max Schultz identified issues DEP foresees as important for 2024. Those include revisiting and re-examining Act 101, spill reporting regulations, PFAS, and food processing residuals.

Executive Director Ian Irvin will email proposed 2024 meeting dates to the members. Generally, meetings will be the second Tuesday of the month.

The November 14 meeting will be with the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB). Council members were encouraged to make a concerted effort to participate in person. Joint presentations will focus on the Oil & Gas Program's orphaned and abandoned well plugging

undertaking, carbon capture focusing on risks, pitfalls, technology, and hazards to be aware of moving into the future. A contact from the Department of Health will speak on next steps in oil and natural gas production studies, hydrogen, and abandoned well issues.

Members were encouraged to review the language of the civil penalty calculations section in the new EJ Policy and make concerns known.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With no further business, Chairman Shabazz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tim Weston seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The October 10, 2023 meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 1:45 PM.**