

Minutes of EJAB

Meeting Date: November 13, 2007

Call to order: The quarterly meeting of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board was held in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St, Harrisburg, PA on November 13, 2007.

The meeting convened at 8:45 am, Arthur Frank presiding.

Members in attendance:

Laureen Boles	Eli Brill
Rocky Brown	Arthur Frank
Clea Hollis	C Nolan Howell
Ayanna King	Mark White
Hazem Hijazi	Ann Morrison
KV Singh	

Members absent (excused):

Robbie Ali	Erlinda Aguiar
Monica Fisher	Luvennise Gamble
Mary Vuccola	Mario Browne
Patrick O'Neill	

Members absent (unexcused):

Michael Walker	Jerry Balter
Rocky Boone	

Non-members:

Marylou Barton	Holly Cairns
Nora Carreras	Kelly Heffner
Janis Dean (CAC)	Doan Barefield
Christina Simeone	Alice Wright
Jennifer Winston	Cheryl Peoples
John Stefanko	Dean Van Orden
Shirley Riley	Howard Dunbar

Welcome and Introductions

Arthur Frank, Chair asked everyone to introduce themselves. He gave a special welcome to Hazem Hijazi and asked if he would tell us a little about himself.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Reverend R. Brown to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2007 meeting, with edits.
- Seconded by: Mark White
 - All in favor: motion carried

OEA Staff Reports

Arthur Frank asked for a brief overview of the OEA Staff reports.

- OEA Staff gave brief reports and responded to any questions from the board members.

Briefing from the Secretary McGinty

Arthur Frank welcomed and thanked the Secretary for joining the group, he expressed to her that the advisory board was at full composition for the first time in its history.

- Secretary updated the group about the ruling on mercury and clean cars. Both were difficult battles that turned into victories for the Department.
- Secretary McGinty applauded the Board for their 5-year strategic plan.
- She supported the idea of having an Environmental Justice State-wide conference whereas the DEP would not only commit staff time but also monetary resources between \$10-20,000 for leverage to raise additional funds.
- The Secretary asked if the Board had reached out to any other agencies. The board had planned to reach out to the following
 - Dept. of Community & Economic Development
 - Dept. of Health
 - Dept. of Transportation (PennDot)
 - Dept. of WelfareShe directed Ayanna to work with Joe Powers on this initiative.
- A question was raised to the Secretary asking her for names of Legislators who would be supportive of environmental justice initiatives? Legislators that they could educate on the issues and gather support from them.
 - Secretary responded:
 - The Black Caucus: Thaddeus Kirkland, LeAnna Washington, Shirley Kitchen, Jake Wheatley, and Dwight EvansRev. Rocky Brown suggested his Senator, Dominic Pileggi
- Another question to the Secretary regarding "how can environmental justice be inclusive in alternative energy projects"
 - Secretary responded:
 - Making affordable energy available to everyone and educating them on bio-fuels. Also, to partner with Brian Hudson at PA Housing Finance Authority to share his affordable energy efficient housing projects.

- The Secretary was asked her opinion on the adoption of the Precautionary Principle as a way of doing business and the agreement of using health as a surrogate.
 - Secretary responded:
 - She thought the group was moving towards a model that embraced social and economics demographic instead of race base.
 - She requested for Ayanna to submit examples from other states and she would be willing to review the information.
 - Secretary directed Ayanna to update Joe Powers on the progress of getting environmental justice language in the regulatory packages.

Briefing from Patti Vathis, Environmental Education Advisor

Arthur Frank introduced Dr. Vathis.

- She mentioned that she is in charge of two million children that are in the public school system, not including private systems that do not fall under their regulations. In Pennsylvania there are 501 school district, her job was to provide assistance to teachers and school districts.
- In 1984, a master plan was developed by all departments of environmental education communities in PA.

Public Comment Period

- No discussion

EPA Collaborative Partnership Video & Discussion

- The film is a documentary about the ReGenesis Environmental Justice Partnership. Regeneration, a local Spartanburg South Carolina non profit organization, started with a \$20,000 grant from the EPA in 1999. Since that time, the partnership has worked with private and public organizations to leverage over \$166 million in funding. ReGenesis has worked with government and industry to cleanup the Arkwright municipal dumpsite, a former fertilizer plant, and six Brownfield sites. They also demolished 184 old, substandard public housing units and built more than 500 new, single-family and multi-family units for rental and home ownership. Ayanna will give members the information to obtain a copy of video.

Follow up on EJAB Strategic Planning Session

Arthur opened the floor for discussion on the proposed environmental justice state-wide conference:

- The board was very clear that the overall goal was to educate the community and create awareness for environmental justice, the DEP's Office of Environmental

Advocate, and the Environmental Justice Advisory Board. The board proposed holding the conference with a Sunday arrival, until Tuesday or Wednesday based on cost. They would seek funding to offer scholarships and the expense of the conference. The board decided to hold the conference in 2009 to allow enough time to raise funds and get folks interested in the conference from the communities. Arthur asked Clea, Holly, Laureen, and Alice to work on the conference program committee. He asked Nora, Rocky, and KV to work on logistics. He asked Ann and Ayanna to work on the 501(c)3 partnership. Eli will check with his company Waste Management on how they can support the conference. The next steps are to prepare a working narrative and budget to gather support for the conference. Arthur is prepared to travel to Harrisburg to talk with agencies for funding support for the conference.

New/Unfinished Business, Questions, and Comment Period

- The Board is looking into making a non-voting position (emeritus) for Jerry Balter, if he agrees to it.
 - A motion was made by Rocky Brown to create an emeritus position.
 - Seconded by: Clea Hollis
 - All in favor: motion carried

- Eli Brill has red-lined the Work Group Report and will forward it for comments from the other Sub-committee members (Mario Brown, Erlinda Aguiar and Marylou Barton).
- Eli mentioned that there are pre-draft massive amendments to the solid waste regulations. He said there are very interesting references in Chapter 280 regarding environmental justice in the proposed regulations.
- Ayanna mentioned the EPA's National Achievements and Environmental Justice Award Program. If you are aware of any community member/group please submit nomination by the deadline: January 11, 2008
- Ayanna will e-mail members information regarding the Brownfields Workshop for Disadvantaged Communities

Motion to adjourn meeting by: Rocky Brown
Seconded by: Clea Hollis
All in favor: motion carried

Adjourned at 2:35 pm