

**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD
November 17, 2020**

Members Present Via Phone:

Jennifer Baka
Heather Bedi
Adam Cutler
Arthur Frank
Hazem Hijazi
Rafiyqa Muhammad
Allison Robinson
Jerome Shabazz
Horace Strand
Tom Torres

**Non-Members Present Via Phone
(Commonwealth Employees):**

Allison Acevedo, DEP
John Brakeall, DEP
Abbey Cadden, DEP
Brian Chalfant, DEP
Glenda Davidson, DEP
Justin Dula, DEP
Heidi Kunka, DEP
Krishnan Ramamurthy, DEP
David Saunders, DOH

Non-Members:

Mike Ewall, Energy Justice Network
Briann Moye, PA Climate Equity Table

Call to Order:

Chairman Cutler called the virtual meeting to order at 9:00 AM with a quorum.

Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Cutler solicited additions or corrections to the Minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting.

**Rafiyqa Muhammad moved to approve the Minutes of the
October 20, 2020 meeting. Arthur Frank seconded the motion,
which was unanimously approved.**

Review of Action Items from October 20, 2020 Meeting:

RGGI Recommendations

Secretary McDonnell and the Governor's Policy Office responded to EJAB's letter of recommendations around RGGI. In the letter, EJAB members offered comments and posed questions for additional response. In particular, EJAB discussed examining other cap and invest programs that have been implemented and identifying environmental justice and public engagement best practices. EJAB member Heather Bedi will be teaching a class on civic engagement in spring 2021. The class will conduct a review of cap and invest programs in other states that could help Pennsylvania better understand environmental justice considerations in

RGGI. RGGI hearings are scheduled for December 8-December 14 and will be open for public comment.

RGGI Equity Principles

The RGGI Equity Principles are still being reviewed internally.

COVID-19 Resources

There are no known resources within the agency for PPE waste. DEP's Waste Management is referring folks to the CDC website for best practices associated with waste and PPE.

LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM:

Heidi Kunka, Energy Program Specialist in DEP's Energy Programs Office, provided an in-depth review of the first Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) offered by the Energy Programs Office for the period of July 2019 – June 2020. The LCAP provided assistance to 20 PA municipalities interested in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by matching local governments with college students across the state, who were then trained by DEP contractor, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability – USA, to develop GHG inventories and climate action plans. In 2021 LCAP will work with 135 municipalities across the state. In addition, OEJ and EJAB members plan to deliver a webinar to 2021 LCAP participants about community engagement and environmental justice.

OEJ Updates:

Allison Acevedo mentioned DEP's withdrawal and revisioning of the EJ policy.

OEJ will be leading training on environmental justice within the agency to ensure staff have a basic level of understanding on EJ and to engage staff on development of the new policy. After internal training within DEP, the OEJ will work with the interagency workgroup to determine what agencies would want to receive training around environmental justice.

Through the Secretary's Office and Energy Programs Office, DEP is offering the Climate Change Professional training and certification. OEJ has been participating in the training.

The OEJ continues to work with DOH, particularly the Environmental Health and Epidemiology Division, around EJ/EH mapping data and the gathering of information.

DEP and OEJ are involved in various initiatives around diversity and diversity planning. A key objective is to consider diversity among DEP boards and commissions. The Commonwealth has a diversity committee that is developing diversity efforts across Commonwealth agencies.

Through a Water Infrastructure and Improvements for our Nation Act (WIIN Act) grant, Pennsylvania, along with other states, was awarded funds to conduct lead in water testing in schools and childcare centers. PENNVEST is leading the work on this and has brought together different state agencies, as well as a contractor, to begin a strategy for conducting testing in schools and childcare facilities. Facilities in EJ areas are being prioritized.

OEJ serves on the PA Healthy Environment and Reopening Schools workgroup. One area of focus is the PA Environment and Ecology standards, which have been overlooked within the new draft standards. Tammie Peffer, the Environment and Ecology Content Advisor with the Department of Education, offered that the original standards in 2002 were separate standards defined as interdisciplinary in order to be taught across different arenas. The proposed standards recommend that the environment and ecology standards no longer be a separate set of standards but will be integrated into the science standards. Tammie recommended that those interested reach out to the Pennsylvania Association for Environmental Education (PAEE) with questions about the standards. PAEE is welcoming letters and input.

OEJ is participating in the PA Healthy Environment Reopening Schools workgroup in developing materials and resources for reopening schools.

Northwest/Southwest

OEJ still does not have a regional coordinator in DEP's western regional offices. John Brakeall has been assisting western regional office staff with community engagement.

Northcentral/Southcentral

John Brakeall reported that the Sunbury transfer station has proposed an expansion to triple the tonnage of daily waste. The Environmental Justice Public Participation Policy is being exercised for the permit application review. A 2-page fact sheet was created and distributed to local civic and nonprofit organizations. John has been working with DEP's Communications Office and Waste Management program within the northcentral regional office to engage the community. The administratively complete permit application was received and is being reviewed by Waste Management staff and the public comment period, which just began, will end in early January.

DEP levied a \$736,000 civil penalty against Transco related to construction of the Atlantic Sunrise pipeline. The Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance will receive \$100,000 from the civil penalty for water quality improvement and erosion and sedimentation control projects.

Northeast/Southeast

Justin Dula has been involved in a local watershed planning effort in the Northeast referred to as the County-Wide Action Plan, focusing on meeting the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP 3). Four counties have been working with planning commissions, elected leadership, and County Conservation Districts.

EJ Symposium planning is moving forward. A decision was made that the event will be 100% virtual. The speaker lists and sponsorship materials are expected to be completed very soon. Proposed dates for the EJ Symposium are April 19, 20, 6, and 5, in that order.

Policy Office

Abbey Cadden, from DEP's Policy Office, solicited input regarding the type of policy updates or topics of interest that EJAB would be interested in hearing about during the 2021 meetings. Suggestions should be provided to either Abbey Cadden or Allison Acevedo via email.

MEETING DATES:

OEJ will compile a list of proposed 2021 quarterly meeting dates. It is anticipated that all meetings will be virtual.

Allison Acevedo solicited feedback from EJAB members regarding more streamlined 2021 planning meetings.

EJ POLICY DISCUSSION:

The original Environmental Justice Public Participation Policy was finalized in 2004. DEP created a revised draft EJ Public Participation Policy that was posted for public comment in July 2018. After reviewing comments received on the draft Policy, DEP decided to cease review of the draft policy and create a new EJ Policy. Allison Acevedo solicited feedback from EJAB members on what works and what does not work with the current Policy and what should DEP consider in a new EJ Policy. Several EJAB members noted that a new policy should continue to focus on improving public participation and engagement because there are still improvements that could and should be made regarding public participation during

the permit application review process. Allison Acevedo discussed a timeline for revising the policy which includes a planning phase, outreach and engagement phase, drafting and finalization phase, and implementation phase. Completion of the EJ Policy is anticipated within the next 18 months. Any additional thoughts can be sent to Allison Acevedo via email.

Adjournment:

Chairman Adam Cutler adjourned the meeting at 12:10 PM.

(No motion and no second were requested by the Chairman.)