

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD**

November 12, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT in person:

Vice Chair Dr. Horace Strand
Lisa DePaoli
Tom Torres

MEMBERS PRESENT, Teams

Chair Adam Cutler
Jennifer Baka
Heather Bedi
Jerome Shabazz
Bobby Hughes
Sophia Lee
Jackie Omotalade
Mia Ray
Ramon Johnson
Rafiyqa Muhammad
Rashida Lovely
Curtis Jones

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Vice Chair Dr. Horace Strand
Lisa DePaoli
Tom Torres

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kelly Megonnel
Trent Machamer
Rob Dubas

DEP STAFF PRESENT IN PERSON:

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Teams:

Fernando Treviño
Mariana Fletcher
Justin Dula
Emily Green
Elsbeth Koehle
Jordi Comas
Dong Yoon Kim

Maria Ocasio
Eli Downie
John Roper
Casey Damicantonio
Lena Smith

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Adam Cutler called the meeting to order at 9:04a.m. Chair Cutler announced that the session was going to be recorded and provided the appropriate disclaimer. Chair Cutler also took roll call and agreed that quorum was met. This meeting was only held virtually via Teams.

DEP UPDATES:

John Roper joined the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) as the 2025/2026 Governor's Science and Technology Fellow. Andrea Fields has transitioned from OEJ to the Southcentral Regional Office as the Local Government Liaison. Dong Yoon Kim moved to a new position within OEJ as the Southeast Regional Coordinator. Dong Yoon was the Special Projects Coordinator for OEJ.

OEJ 2025 Permitting Statistics:

Director Mariana Fletcher read the following disclaimer:

“Permits in EJ Areas count has been added with updates in DEP's record management system eFACTS that rolled out recently. This update is believed to be as accurate as possible, given some issues inherent in the eFACTS system due to the system's age and when data is entered into the system by program staff. True project location is often not added until after permits are finalized, so the eFACTS team has come up with a work around to try to use street address to get interim mappable project location for the OEJ team to use. This process is not as accurate as the final latitude and longitude entered upon permit approval, so there is some additional manual work done by OEJ in reviewing permit addresses that are “unknown.” These unknown addresses are not captured in the numbers in this report. This update rectifies the issues of many permits from previous years not being mapped correctly which leads to the increased numbers for 2025 from 2024.”

And then reviewed OEJ's third-quarter permitting statistics for 2025.

Regional Office	Permits in EJ Areas *	Enhanced Public Participation (EPP) Trigger Permits
Southcentral	387	1
Southeast	246	4
Northeast	159	3
Northcentral	105	1
Southwest	403	1
Northwest	215	1
Total	1,515	11
Regional Office	Opt-In Requests	Opted-In (EPP)
Southcentral	2	2
Southeast	5	5
Northeast	4	2
Northcentral	0	0
Southwest	3	1
Northwest	1	0
Total	15	10

Proactive Community Engagement Statistics:

Director Fletcher presented proactive community engagement statistics for the third quarter of 2025. In 2025, the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) has met with 193 community-based organizations and held 176 meetings with individual stakeholders and community leaders. OEJ has hosted 50 events and attended 86 partner events, while also delivering 39 presentations.

Questions:

Chair Cutler asked for clarification about eFACTS updates and Opt-In Requests.

GUEST PRESENTATION:

Kelly Megonnel, Director of Dauphin County Department of Solid Waste Management and Recycling, and Rob Dubas, Program Coordinator for Keep PA Beautiful, were the first presenters. Kelly explained how the City of Harrisburg is a focus for large illegal dumping cleanup projects.

Kelly talked about potential focus areas and recommendations for Dauphin County. Rob Dubas spoke about the initiatives of his organization. He also explained the factors and problems that lead to illegal dumping. Rob Dubas went on to explain other programs and resources within Keep PA Beautiful to help combat illegal dumping.

Chair Cutler opened for questions and discussion. Chair Cutler suggested Kelly and Rob close out their session with final remarks.

Chair Cutler opened the floor for general questions.

DEP RECOMMENDATION REQUESTS:

On the recommendations discussed in the previous meeting, introduced by Director Fletcher, Chair Cutler offered to revisit the formation of a PennEnviroScreen Working Group, the formation of an Enhanced Public Participation Working Group, and a proposal to create a Strategic Issues Working Group.

Under the discussion of the formation of a PennEnviroScreen Working Group, Chair Cutler suggested a working group chaired by an EJAB member who would serve as the working group secretary with an additional 6-8 board members and additional external members. Chair Cutler noted that EJAB will formalize this group and send the information back to DEP.

Chair Cutler motioned to bring forward the formal recommendation to create a PennEnviroScreen Working Group. Chair Cutler moved to approve the draft recommendation and send to OEJ in response to request 2025-01. Jerome Shabazz seconded the motion. Heather Bedi asked if the board should consider term limits for the working group. Chair Cutler noted that he is not against the idea of term limits and welcomed an amendment to the draft recommendation. Jordi Comas recommended that term limits be associated with the update cycles of PennEnviroScreen. Chair Cutler proposed to add that into the Proposal. Jen Baka and Ramon Johnson agreed to the amendment. Chair Cutler called a vote for the proposal. There were no oppositions and no abstentions to the vote. Chair Cutler noted that the motion carried.

Under the discussion of the formation of an Enhanced Public Participation Working Group, Chair Cutler suggested that EJAB review the Enhanced Public Participation checklist and framework. Director Fletcher noted that this should aid in measuring the efficacy of Enhanced Public Participation. What metrics should be considered and evaluated are targets that EJAB can bring to DEP. Rafiqqa Muhammad asked for clarification about Enhanced Public Participation checklist working group and general public participation. Deputy Secretary Fernando Treviño clarified the distinction. Chair Cutler also offered additional information and recommendations regarding general public participation.

Jerome Shabazz opened a motion to agree on a process that would work for everyone on the board. Rafiqqa Muhammad seconded. Chair Cutler opened for discussion. Heather Bedi also agreed with the motion and suggested interim meetings for the working groups. Heather Bedi wants to focus on expertise within the board to move progress within the DEP Recommendations. Rashida Lovely suggested a formal timeline.

Chair Cutler and Jerome Shabazz shared the Draft Proposal for EJAB Strategic Issues Working Group. Chair Cutler opened for a motion to accept the Proposal and opened for a vote. There was one abstention and no objections. and the motion carried. This proposal suggests a formal framework for how the Board will look at policy questions from the public that the Board can review and determine how to engage and bring to DEP's attention.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Director Fletcher and Chair Cutler opened the floor to public comments. There were none.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE:

Information about the 2026 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence was presented by Casey Damicantonio, Administrative Assistant for DEP's Policy Office. Casey explained the requirements for the 2026 Awards, past examples of awarded projects, and how the project proposals are evaluated. Casey noted applications are open now through January 16, 2026, at 5pm.

WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS:

Vice Chair Dr. Horace Strand will be retiring from the board at the end of this year. Chair Cutler called to vote a new Vice Chair starting January 1, 2026. Jackie Omotalade and Rashida Lovely both

expressed interest in holding that position. Chair Cutler suggested pushing the election until the next official meeting due to some members absences on this call. Heather Bedi requested that candidates create a small vision proposal for other members to review before voting. Sophia Lee, Curtis Jones, and Jenn Baka also agreed.

Chair Cutler opened the floor to review the bylaws to better reflect how the board works under the Executive Order. Chair Cutler called for volunteers who would be interested in reviewing and amending the board bylaws.

Chair Cutler proposed to review the EJAB meeting dates for 2026. Director Fletcher provided the proposed dates.

Sophia Lee suggested that we accept the meeting minutes from May. No members noted any necessary corrections. Curtis Jones motioned to accept the minutes and amend any necessary grammatical corrections at a later time, if needed. Sophia Lee seconded. Chair Cutler motioned for a vote and there were no opposed nor abstained votes. Chair Cutler noted that the meeting minutes were accepted.

Sophia Lee proposed that future meetings start at 9:30am. Deputy Secretary Treviño said that should be fine and he will double-check those dates.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Cutler adjourned the meeting at 11:47am.