

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL  
June 13, 2023**

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

Bob Barkanic	James Schmid
Jacquelyn Bonomo	Jerome Shabazz
Bill Fink	Thad Stevens
Duane Mowery	Jim Welty
John St. Clair	Tim Weston
Trisha Salvia	

**CAC STAFF PRESENT**

Ezra Thrush, DEP Policy Director

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Shabazz called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2023**

Chairman Shabazz solicited additions or corrections to the Minutes of the May 9, 2023 meeting.

Pertaining to the Act 54 Report, John Walliser requested that the May 9 Minutes be modified to reflect that the CAC supports pertains to the proposed cover letter and main body of the Council's Act 54 Report, and does not include any endorsement of the document's appendices.. With that correction:

**Tim Weston made a motion to approve the corrected Minutes of the May 9, 2023 meeting. Bill Fink seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

**REMARKS AND Q&A**

**Richard Negrin, DEP Acting Secretary**

After brief introductions, Secretary Negrin shared his broad vision for the agency and provided details of the four pillars of that vision: Operational Excellence, Climate Leadership, Cultural Competence, and Environmental Justice.

Q&A encompassed the need for customer service and bipartisan support of low income and regulated communities, the need for environmental justice communities to gather cumulative impact data in order to provide accurate information about what is happening in communities, and tensions between the federal and state environmental justice policies.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

**Anwar Curtis, Special Assistant to the Secretary**

Anwar lives in Harrisburg, is new to DEP, and will be working with students engaged in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) space.

Q&A revolved around public outreach.

**Larry Holley, Office of Waste, Air, Radiation & Remediation**

In the past, DEP has not been reflective of what the community looks like. A five-member diversity, equity, and inclusion steering committee has begun working on employee team building exercises. The committee will meet with the Secretary to talk about language access, grant equity, and environmental justice areas. DEP's FAQ sheets are now translated into Spanish, a food recovery infrastructure grant came about during the pandemic, and a survey was conducted to determine the challenges folks have in applying for grants and access to technology in the community.

Q&A revolved around a DEP program geared specifically toward food waste and simplifying the grant application process.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

**Andrea Fields, Environmental Community Relations Specialist**

Information was provided on the vision of DEP's Environmental Justice Office and the training that is being provided by DEP to bring new team members up to speed.

Q&A revolved around the role of the group in being a facilitator between affected communities and DEP, a project management eight-week training program that has been instituted, outreach to communities on impacts from facilities, and interagency strategies.

**CLIMATE LEADERSHIP**

**Dave Althoff, Director of DEP's Energy Programs Office**

This presentation provided details on Pennsylvania's Climate Action Plan, including climate action for environmental justice communities, addressing inequities while advancing Pennsylvania's climate goals, engagement strategy, turning input into action, and formula/competitive grants and climate pollution reduction grants.

Q&A revolved around the various industrial groups that the Energy Programs Office has connected with and the need for partnerships with the PA Chambers and others.

**CENTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE (COEE)**

**Saleem Chapman, Executive Director**

The goal of the Center of Environmental Excellence is to put ideas into practice, empower innovation and risk taking, focus unwaveringly on mission-critical outcomes, and enable insight-driven learning. COEE offers delivery support, innovation incubation and acceleration, impact evaluation, and data analytics to optimize operations and accelerate results. Leveling up objectives and key results will be done on a quarterly basis.

Q&A revolved around who sets the metrics for success and who ensures that the metrics are honest.

**CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Strategic Issues***

The committee has not met since the last CAC meeting, but plans to meet and reflect on what was heard from the Joanne Kilgour presentation at the May CAC meeting related to hydrogen hub development. When the committee identified hydrogen hubs as the top issue for 2023, there were other issues that the committee has not moved on or identified speakers. The committee will meet in the next several weeks and provide an update at the September CAC meeting.

***Policy and Regulatory Oversight***

The committee has not met since the last CAC meeting.

***Nominations Committee***

The issue will be addressed at the July meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION**

***Executive Director Opening***

A working group has been established from members who have expressed interest in interviewing the candidates. A list of 11 candidates has been received from DEP HR, two of whom are veterans and must be given priority. Chairman Shabazz asked that the members develop a list of questions, and a meeting will be held next week to review the questions and have conversation about the top two candidates.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**With no further business, Jacquelyn Bonomo motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bob Barkanic seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The June 13, 2023 meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 3:20 pm.**