

Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) Working Group
of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC)

November 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was convened at 10:30 at the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) by the Working Group Chair, Allison Rich.

Attending in person: Allison Rich (MD Environmental Health Network/MEHN), Rebecca Ruggles (MEHN), Pat Harcourt (UMCES), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Liz Entwisle (MDE), Jessica Herpel (MDE), Kaymie Owen (MEA), John Coleman (MDP).

Attending by phone: Kris Hoellen (National Aquarium), Dave Costello (IEER).

Public attendance: Grant Samms, Washington College Center for Environment & Society (by phone).

Welcome and Introductions. At Allison's request, attendees shared what they want to communicate about climate in 2017 as they introduced themselves. Grant Samms spoke about people's concern on the Eastern Shore about flooding, extreme weather events and its impact on tourist dollars.

UMCES Funding Update. Allison and Liz Entwisle reported that funding is likely to be approved for two of ECO's proposals, MCCC web development and 2016 report editing support. Liz explained that after UMCES rejected ECO's original web proposal, ECO and MDE revised it and worked with Dave Nemazie to answer questions and concerns of UMCES' review committee.

2017 Listening Sessions. Allison reported that the MCCC reached out to the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities (CEJSC) and the Children's Environmental Health & Protection Advisory Council (CEHPAC) to provide input on identifying locations for public meetings and enhanced outreach, focusing on communities vulnerable to climate change and communities overburdened by pollution related to greenhouse gas emissions. Allison targeted January to begin planning for this and other public outreach for Spring 2017. Lisa proposed an early January phone call to brainstorm on a work plan for outreach that could be brought to the full ECO workgroup in its January meeting.

Finalization of MCCC 2016 Report/Public Outreach Brainstorming. Lisa Nissley reported that the report was in final stages and would be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly and posted on the MDE website and MCCC webpage in the next few days, quickly followed by a short MDE press release. She added that in January there would be more opportunity to discuss post-production design, translation into Spanish and further press releases, and encouraged ECO members to reach out to their organizations and networks to do op eds. Allison said ECO would like to work with MDE after the first press release to produce a social media messaging/communication toolkit for ECO members to use. Kaymie Owen said press releases get picked up less these days but that the text can be used in other platforms such as LinkedIn,

Twitter and Facebook. John Coleman added that Constant Contact was another useful communication platform. Lisa suggested targeting the first week of December to work together to do a media blitz to stakeholders in ECO members' networks as a follow up to MDE's press release. Kaymie offered to develop draft Twitter text and other materials and share with ECO and with Lisa, who would share with MCCC Chair and MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles and Adaptation Response Working Group Chair and DNR Secretary Mark Belton. Lisa offered to work with the MCCC to get the messaging to its members and working group members to push out through their constituencies and networks. Kris Hoellen noted that the Aquarium still uses press releases a lot and Allison suggested doing a larger pre-Session MCCC press release in January.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps. Members agreed to work through one-on-one conversations in the next few weeks and not to have a meeting of the full ECO working group in December. There being no further business, Allison adjourned the meeting at 12:00.