

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC) Meeting
June 24, 9:50 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Maryland Department of the Environment
Potomac Conference Room
1800 Washington Blvd., Baltimore 21230**

In Attendance:

- Commissioners: Stephan Levitsky, Andrew Fellows, Benoy Thomas, Larry Polsky, Lisa Nissley, Vernice Miller-Travis, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, John Quinn
- Participants: Kristen Weiss, Crystal Lemieux, Stephanie Cobb Williams, Vanessa Barksdale, Ben Campbell, Megan Ulrich

Introductions

Business Outreach

Lisa Nissley said that text on environmental justice (EJ) has been added to MDE air permits and is in the process of being added to MDE land and water permits.

Academic Community

Lisa said that an internship opportunity was created, but most of the applicants had an environmental focus and were not as experienced in communications. That, coupled with the fact that there is a new workgroup focusing on cumulative impact, caused the Department to hire someone that could help with that effort and put the community outreach position on hold. She said that new attempts will be made in the fall to attract an intern. The new focus will be on attracting a communications graduate student with an interest in environmental matters.

Lisa said that since the Commission is holding off with legislative work until after the elections, it is a good time to talk about the Cumulative Impacts Workgroup. She explained the premise of the Workgroup, stating that SB 706 in the past legislative session proposed the use of cumulative impacts in permitting. She closed by stating that the Workgroup is going to try to lay a foundation for future policies concerning cumulative impacts.

Andy Fellows asked if anyone knows how many Commission members are going to the Workgroup meeting.

Lisa said that she is not sure, but that everyone is invited to attend and several members have been asked to serve in an official capacity.

County Outreach

Megan said a document was created that outlined what the Commission has done on EJ and highlighted ways for the local government to become involved in EJ. Calvin emailed the document to counties that have a Department of the Environment or Department of Sustainability.

Title VI

Andy asked if there are any questions regarding Title VI.

Vernice Miller-Travis said that the Commission should try to set up a conversation with all civil rights coordinators at once, instead of communicating with a single coordinator at a time.

Lisa said that progress is being made to include all civil rights coordinators in the same conversation and that the letter to fair practice officers had been finalized to be sent this week.

CEHPAC

Andy asked if the joint CEHPAC/CEJSC member was appointed yet.

Lisa said that DHMH has the authority to appoint the CEHPAC/CEJSC member and that they have yet to do so.

Other Business

Andy asked if the Commission will produce an annual report.

Lisa said that there will be an annual report. She then said that the report is in template form, but that work is being done to the body of the report. Lisa listed several things that are included in the body of the report and then asked if there should be anything else included.

Andy mentioned the Commission's visit to Domino Sugar.

Lisa said that the visit would be a good addition to the report.

Andy said that the Commission should discuss the upcoming retreat.

Lisa said that she was able to secure a meeting place in the United States Geological Service Building at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). She then said

that Dr. Freeman Habrowski, the president of UMBC, originally planned to come to the retreat, but had to cancel and is sending one of his staff members in his place.

Andy asked what the date of the retreat is.

Lisa said that the date of the retreat is July 22, 2014. The schedule for the retreat has not been finalized yet, but typically it is from 9:30 to 3:30 or 4pm. She said that MDE has been working with MACRO, which has trained MDE staff to appropriately communicate with one another and that MACRO will be attending the retreat to briefly train the Commission. Lisa said that everyone on the Commission will be receiving an email from MACRO.

Vernice asked if the MACRO employees have any experience in cultural diversity.

Lisa said that they are aware of cultural differences and espouse tolerance in their training.

Andy asked if there is any staff at UMBC that has experience in environmental justice and could speak at the retreat. Lisa said she would check into that.

Ben said that one of his recent professors focused on environmental justice and that she belongs to a research group that also has an EJ focus. Vanessa said that there are some people in the sociology department that may have EJ experience. Both offered to share names with Lisa.

Lisa asked if there is anything else anyone wants to address regarding the retreat.

Vernice said that it might be a good idea to include someone at the retreat that would be able to discuss urban water in Baltimore City. She then mentioned a particular group that has released interesting GIS maps related to EJ in the past.

Lisa said that she is looking into having someone speak on that topic.

Andy noted that there were not enough people present at the meeting to have a quorum to vote on the minutes. He then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

Next CEJSC Meeting: July 22nd, 2014