

# Maryland Commission on Climate Change

## **Education, Communication and Outreach Working Group**

**August 16, 2017 | 10:00AM - 11:30AM | Conference Call**

### Minutes

*Attendance:* John Kumm, Allison Rich, Debbie Herr Cornwell (for John Coleman), Kris Hollen, Grant Samms, Colleen Turner, Donna Balado, Lori Arguelles, Pat Harcourt, Kaymie Owens, David Costello, Steve Pattison (EcoLogix), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Luke Wisniewski (MDE), and Jess Herpel (MDE).

#### **10:00AM Meeting Begins**

##### **1. Welcome and Introductions – ECO Co-Chairs – 5 minutes**

Allison began with an overview of the recommendation process, noting that we are looking to be inclusive and get as much feedback as possible. Jess and Allison went over upcoming report timeline.

##### **2. Recommendations for the MCCC 2017 Report – ECO Members – 60 minutes**

- Pat Harcourt noted that we can make recommendations that don't necessarily have to be action items for the coming year; things that this ECO group intends to do
- Allison suggested that there be a process developed/in place for press releases surrounding the Report or other Commission activity
- David Costello suggested that we may want to include accomplishments thus far and what's ongoing.
  - Kris mentioned that we could possibly have metrics related to evaluation of the group's success and outreach.
- Pat called attention to the language of the legislation, specifically noting the portion on developing partnerships and that while ECO may not have the capacity to engage in education, there are those already in place with this capacity that could be further engaged (education done by partners, informed by ECO). Most Maryland citizens are not aware of the more technical items such as the 40 by 30 Plan, the GGRA, or RGGI. Within our partnerships, that may be an area of communication that we need to pay more attention to (to improve the knowledge with which our partners communicate to and provide feedback from stakeholders).
  - Allison agreed, noting that there hasn't been a formalized outreach effort, though the Tool Box being developed starts building for it.
  - Lori agreed that 40 by 30 is something that is not on everyone's radar, and questioned how to translate this idea into action
- Donna Balado noted that under process and strategy, a few bullets are directly connected to the Chesapeake Bay, and Project Green Classrooms; it may be more efficient/compelling to call them out specifically
- Pat suggested that we should expand the message being communicated - that communicating only what the commission is and what it does is not fulfilling the charge to communicate the urgency of climate change, as noted in the legislation. She proposed that a more appropriate message may be that a response to climate change is an urgent priority and while we are addressing it, we need to do too much more.

- Allison agreed, noting that communications should reflect the nature of the science and the urgency of the situation that is occurring, highlighting what the state is doing but not allowing this to overshadow further actions that need to be taken.
- Donna noted that this effort must develop and instill a sense of urgency in the people themselves
- Kris agreed that this was important, but suggested that perhaps structurally, if it's the charge of what we're supposed to do, then it should not be included within the recommendations. Rather, the recommendations should be focused towards achieving this result.
- Pat agreed it may serve well as guidance.
- Allison suggested as a new point that we determine what process needs to be put into place in order to respond in a timely manner and communicate to the public; how can processes be streamlined in terms of who in the Commission needs to approve things and how do we want to move forward.
- Lisa noted that the organization of the document speaks to the law, because the headers address some of these items which are our charge. Additionally she stated that, from a practicality standpoint, it may be useful to put some thought into which items should be in the recommendations for the coming year, and what should be considered more long-term, in regards to capacity.
  - Jess noted that one way to consider this could be that the recommendations be more general, and the work plan could address specifics
- Colleen proposed an alternative organization to lay out what we've accomplished (previous recommendations), what we still need to accomplish, and priorities for 2018.
  - Donna Balado agreed, noting that this structure offers the Commission more ability to review.
  - Lisa stated this came up at another meeting, that we may want to acknowledge that certain things were considered, and are held in high regard, but this is what we have capacity to focus on.

### **3. Other Business – 10 minutes**

No other business was brought forward

### **4. Wrap-Up/Next Steps – ECO Co-Chairs – 15 minutes**

It was determined that a shared Google document would be set up by Jess Herpel to accommodate further (more specific) comments from the ECO Working Group members regarding the recommendations. The intention of compiling the bulk of comments before the 8/24 Steering Committee meeting was noted, with the understanding that final recommendations are due the first week of September.

**11:00AM Meeting Adjourned**