

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

Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2016

The meeting was convened at 10:35 at the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) by the Working Group Co-Chair, Allison Rich.

Attending in person: Allison Rich (MD Environmental Health Network), Pat Harcourt (UMCES), Kris Hoellen (National Aquarium), Joelle Novey (Interfaith Power and Light/IPL), Rachel Brustein (IPL), Tad Aburn (MDE), Mark Shaffer (MDE), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Liz Entwisle (MDE), Brian Hug (MDE), Jessica Herpel (MDE), John Fiastro (MEA), Kaymie Owen (MEA), Colleen Turner (MDOT), Dave Costello (IEER).

Attending by phone: Steve Arabia (NRG), Lori Arguelles (Ferguson Foundation), Richard Reinhardt (MD Chamber of Commerce), Sara Luell (DHCD).

Public attendance: Grant Samms, Washington College Center for Environment & Society, attended the meeting.

Welcome and opening remarks. Allison Rich introduced herself and Steve Arabia as ECO's new co-chairs and noted that the former chair, Lori Arguelles, will continue to serve as ECO's liaison to the Commission. Attending members introduced themselves.

UMCES Funding Update. Allison reported that the Commission's Steering Committee recommended seven proposals submitted by the Commission's working groups for funding, including two ECO proposals: 1) editing the Commission's 2016 report; and 2) developing a user-friendly Commission website. A Mitigation Working Group (MWG) equity proposal to enhance tools for assessing climate policies and impacts on vulnerable and overburdened communities in Maryland was also recommended for funding. Final funding decisions by UMCES are pending.

Update on Equity Listening Sessions. Allison and Lori reported on their work, together with Lisa Nissley, to coordinate ECO outreach with the Environmental Justice Commission (EJC). Two EJC listening sessions are planned for Fall 2016 in the Brandywine community in Prince George's County and the Eastern Shore (location to be decided), to be followed up by more in-depth sessions in Spring 2017. EJC has requested ECO's support in planning and staffing these sessions, which will be designed to reach people where they are, i.e. through existing meetings and forums around the state. Tad Aburn reported that MDE is also doing outreach to vulnerable communities, e.g. in proximity to the Baltimore Port and the Wagner Power Plant, on air quality and other issues. Allison expressed her hope that the MWG equity proposal could help support to the listening sessions if it gets funded by UMCES. John Fiastro noted that the people who show up at these meetings are the ones who are already interested and asked how to improve the balance and diversity in feedback. Allison said this is exactly what ECO wants to change from last year's meetings. To this end, ECO and EJC have compiled lists of people and groups who have already come forward in Brandywine and the Eastern Shore. Allison will be asking ECO

members to identify what part of the outreach effort they will work on. Kris Hoellen suggested meeting with community leaders to discuss how best to design outreach efforts and meeting formats. Allison suggested inviting Kristen Baja from the City of Baltimore's Office of Sustainability to speak to ECO about innovative town hall models they have created to do climate outreach, and noted that Annapolis has also done innovative work that could be shared with ECO. There was discussion about the "Ask Me Anything" (AMA) outreach model and a shared view that the Fall 2016 sessions should be used to build relationships with the targeted communities and fine tune what their concerns are through listening, as well as to report on what the Commission is and is doing.

ECO Recommendations for 2016 Commission Report. Brian Hug reported that the report is due to the General Assembly on November 15. The Commission has asked the working groups to finalize their recommendations for inclusion in the report in early October for the Commission's consideration at its October 14 meeting. Recommendations should include what the working groups want the Commission to take action on, i.e. discuss, vote on, approve, disapprove, or accomplish in 2017. Tad noted that the report is a status report so should include what ECO has accomplished in 2016 as well as be forward looking, e.g. "we are making progress in equity outreach by doing ... but need more resources to do ... in 2017". Allison noted that the report will include updates by State agencies on their programs' progress toward achieving goals in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan and said she would like to use this content to inform the public in outreach. She said ECO's recommendations will include doing enhanced outreach including through listening sessions, and best practices for report design, e.g. translation and interactive maps. Colleen Turner suggested a bullet item that the first two listening sessions will be used as models for additional outreach. Pat Harcourt, Kris Hoellen, Colleen Turner and Dave Costello volunteered to work with the co-chairs to refine the recommendations.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps. There being no further business, Allison adjourned the meeting a few minutes past noon. ECO's next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 19 at 10:30 at MDE.