

Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities  
9:30 a.m-11:30 am  
Tuesday, January 24, 2017  
11 Bladden Street  
Annapolis, Maryland

**In Attendance**

- Commissioners: Duane Johnson, Mike Pedone, Steve Levitsky, Janet Moye Cornick, Dick Fairbanks(Phone), Larry Brown(Phone), Rebecca Rehr
- Participants: Vernice Miller-Travis, Angelo Bianca, Theresa Tasse, Grace McClain, Richard Allen, Andrew Fellows, Tamara Toles O'layhl, Stephanie Cobb Williams (Phone), Jeaneen Maxwell (Phone), Doreen Paster, Gwen DuBois

**Introductions**

Vernice Miller-Travis started the meeting by welcoming everybody and inviting everyone to introduce themselves. All persons in attendance introduced themselves along with their positions.

Secretary Ben Grumbles talked about a few initiatives/priorities that MDE will be working on for 2017

- Consistent engagement and support for the Commission.
- Working on a policy in reference to Title VI for departments at MDE.
- Finalize the Consent Decree with Baltimore City.
- Continue to reduce lead exposure in Maryland.
- Provide more assistance in making citizens aware of the dangers of Radon in the State of Maryland.

**Update on New Members**

Duane Johnson gave an update on the Commission's new membership indicating that at this point the Commission is fully staffed. Duane said that he will be emailing the updated membership to everyone.

**Update on the Partnership with the Climate Commission**

Rebecca Rehr said discussion on Environmental Justice is scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. The discussion on March 16<sup>th</sup> will be around defining EJ communities and agreeing on communities to do outreach.

Vernice recommended that Duane send out a calendar invite for the March 16<sup>th</sup> to the Commissioners.

**Environmental Justice: Food Deserts & Equity**

Rebecca said the Environmental Justice legislative team and the Environmental Health Network have decided to focus on food desert legislation and lead blood level legislation.

Rebecca said they are working on relationship building with the Black Caucus and they are hosting a luncheon on March 1<sup>st</sup> from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Rebecca said the Black Caucus is very interested in food deserts.

Rebecca proposed that the Commission change their February meeting to a conference call to allow more people to attend the March 1<sup>st</sup> luncheon. A vote was taken and it was voted to have the February meeting as a conference call.

Angelo Bianca shared his concerns about the February meeting being a conference call and how that may affect the introductions of the new Commissioners.

The Commissioners suggested that the new Commissioners arrive to the luncheon an hour earlier.

Rebecca said in the past the Commission weighed in on certain EJ legislation and was wondering if the Commission wanted to weigh in on any issues that may have EJ implications.

### **Annual Report Update**

Vernice said that Duane has done his portion of the report and she will edit the minutes that she has and get them to Duane so that the report can be finalized.

### **Updates on Work Plan Studies**

- **Baltimore City**
  - Rebecca said the case study is with the Office of Planning and The Office of Sustainability which meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month which she will begin to attend.
  - Rebecca said the case study that will be written up will most likely be the methodology and success stories of the Office of Planning and the Office of Sustainability. It is suggested that we include it in CEJSC report next year.
- **Eastern Shore**
  - Steve Levitsky said he tried to contact Dr. Miller on the Eastern Shore but was unsuccessful. He will try to get her to the next CEJSC meeting.
  - Steve is working on getting some video done on communities of interest on the Eastern Shore.
- **Brandywine**
  - Vernice is suggesting that Brandywine stakeholders come together and present what's going on in Brandywine and where they are in resolving those concerns at the March meeting.

Vernice said she will send Duane the article concerning EPA Environmental Compliance within Title VI and he will send it to the Commission.

Vernice asked Stephanie Cobb Williams to structure how the Commission should have the conversation with the community of Brandywine concerning the Title VI complaint.

### **Plan for Commission for 2017**

- Increasing the Commission engagement with the Legislators.

- Work hand in hand with the Maryland Department of the Environment.
- Continue to work with MDE on getting a Chair for the Commission.
- Continue to partnerships with other State agencies and Baltimore City.
- Continue to complete tasks as outlined in previous minutes.
- Continue conversation with Maryland Association of County Officials (MACo) and Maryland Municipal League (MML).

### **Public Comments**

Tamara Toles of the Maryland Environmental Health Network said CEJSC should think broadly about how outreach happens.

Ms. Toles said the Metropolitan Council of Governments is about to release an environmental tool kit that is for all of the jurisdictions so there won't be a need to start from scratch when there is something targeted to elected officials.

### **Meeting Adjourned**