

Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities (CEJSC)
June 23, 2015, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Maryland Department of the Environment
Patuxent Conference Room
1800 Washington Blvd., Baltimore 21230

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Rebecca Rehr, Dick Fairbanks, Arabia Davis, John Quinn
- Participants: Megan Ulrich, Jeaneen Logan, Kasarachi Omo-Osagie, Debra Corrgia, Rabecka Koons, Betsey Atkinson, Horacio Tablada, Mary Beth Tung, Jennifer Hains, Delterese George

Introductions

Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves. Horacio Tablada and Mary Beth Tung introduced themselves as the recently appointed Deputy Secretaries of MDE. They both expressed an interest in working with the Commission moving forward.

CEHPAC Follow Up

The Commission held a joint meeting with the Children's Environmental Health Protection Advisory Council in May. There was a discussion about signing on to the Council's letter of comment about the Marcellus Shale Drilling Regulations. The Commission decided not to join the letter because the focus was much more focused on children's issues rather than EJ related issues. Rebecca mentioned that during public listening sessions on the issue there was a large social justice component. She suggested that the Commission write a letter that discusses EJ related issues and suggestions the state consider the Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health (MIAEH) recommendations community involvement and outreach. The letter would not suggest the Commission is for or against fracking, but would suggest the report has information is useful and valuable.

Vernice agreed we should supply a letter and lifts up the MIAEH report. Dick also agrees so long it doesn't reach a conclusion on fracking. Rebecca confirmed the report identified vulnerable areas where it may have been helpful to have increased community participation. The letter would support that. It was agreed that Rebecca will draft a letter for the member's review.

It was mentioned that our special topic meeting in December might be a second joint meeting with CEHPAC.

Legislative Outreach

Merrick, Rebecca, and Lisa have discussed ideas for moving forward. One is that rather than meeting in Annapolis for each meeting during the legislative session, which many find difficult,

the Commission would schedule the January meeting in Annapolis to have a small open house for legislators, a visit to the legislative Chambers, and meet and greets with legislators. Perhaps even a briefing if appropriate. If weather interfered, the meeting could be rescheduled for February. Vernice said it is easier for her to make meetings in Annapolis than in Baltimore.

There is still an interest in somehow participating in the LBC Convention in November. Rebecca reported she has reached out to Delegate Fraiser-Helgado and they are working on a date.

Arabia shared that she has discussed Environmental Justice with the Deputy Secretary at MDP. She would like to have Lisa and the Co-Chairs meet with the Executive Office at MDP to share information about EJ. In addition, there are issues MDP would like the Commission to look at EJ in agricultural communities, including considering EBDs as a possible outreach to farmers and creating an EJ 101 on agriculture. Arabia would also like to work on getting the Commission to present to the Planning Directors Roundtable.

Retreat ideas

Lisa asked for ideas for the retreat agenda. Commissioners suggested:

- MCCC
- Urban Forest
- Fisheries
- Overarching issues
- Hearing from each Departments about how the Commission might be involved in related issues
- Rebecca will have the MS letter ready for review
- Structured conversation on goals

Other News & Announcements

Rebecca shared that the Sierra Club was in touch about the Energy Answers Project. They have asked for an update on the project and asked if the CEJSC can intervene in the permitting process. Rebecca told them this is not the role of the Commission. Horacio explained it is not a waste to energy facility. Vernice said she needs an update on what is going on.

Vernice announced that the next NEJAC is September 9th and 10th in Arlington, VA. She is planning a BBQ at her home for NEJAC members. She will be sending invitations.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40am. The next meeting of the Commission will be the Commissioner's Retreat on Tuesday, July 22nd at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Details to follow.