

Communication and Outreach (ECO) Work Group

AGENDA AND MEETING NOTES

Present: Jody Couser, co-chair, John Kumm, co-chair, Kirsten Jackson (MSDE), Lynne Faulkner, Trystan Sill (DNR), Brittany Brothers, Jim Joyner (MDOT), Dannielle Lipinski, Steve Levitsky. Paul Berman, Stacy Roth

MDE Staff: Suzanne Dorsey, Christopher Beck, Susan Casey, Lisa Jones, Erick Thunell, Kim Drake

Welcome and Intro of Charmaine Brown, new MCCC co-chair (Jody Couser)

Charmaine is newly appointed by MCCC Chair Ben Grumbles as a third co-chair of the Commission, in a new role for overseeing Climate Justice issues in Commission work. ECO reached out to Charmaine for help in making connections going into 2021. All the people on this list have roles and responsibility for the environmental domain.

Stakeholders Recommendations for 2021 Convenings (Charmaine Brown)

Charmaine spoke to her document – she has compiled a living list of contacts for ECO to work with to fulfill its commitments of outreach in the 2021 Work Plan. “There is disparity in absolutely every domain,” said Charmaine. “There is an equity mandate everywhere i.e., quality education, food security, home safety – implications for the work we do. How can we collaborate?”

“Equity is hard. We have a lot to learn. We will listen effectively, not talk at these groups.” Charmaine said to listen with our hearts – lean in, ask yourself, what is there to learn here? Charmaine recommends we take 10 minutes to ask diversity/equity questions before we meet with community. This will help us meet “with a different lens.”

Jody Couser asked the group if they knew of any existing meetings we could participate in? (Beyond MACo and MML) Charmaine said yes, she will see about opportunities and the group was asked to do the same. Think about special holidays to celebrate and leverage with other organizations. And there are Port of Baltimore communities we can meet with. These are relationships Tad Aburn, Director, Air and Radiation Administration at MDE, and our MDOT partners have cultivated over the years in making Port improvements that benefit the nearby communities.

Discussion of our 2021 Work Plan (Chris Beck)

[2020 Work Plan](#) – We will track our progress. We’ll need to finalize the plan.

[ECO's recommendations in the MCCC Annual Report](#) - page 26



How do we work with K-12 Schools? (Kirsten Jackson)

Kirsten briefed the group. Since 2015, all grades have been engaging in climate change. Elementary, Middle, High school have different curriculum. So, teachers are well equipped already.

Climate Change in the curriculum – the State is currently working on an implementation plan for an Environmental Literacy Standard (ELit Standards.) It's multi-disciplinary – climate change is in science class, social studies, STEAM, health, nutrition, physical education.

Question is, how can MCCC be a resource for teachers? Kirsten suggested MCCC/ECO can help support K-12 environmental curricula using #4 in the Work Plan.

Internship/apprenticeship opportunities - (MDE has a robust internship program – maybe there can be some intersection with MSDE.)

Membership 2021 (Susan Casey)

Anyone wish to leave ECO? Let us know

Remember to file annual Ethics Report - contact Young.Smith@maryland.gov for help

Three ECO vacancies: Dept of Ag, Dept of Health, Dept of Energy

Public Comment/Other Business - Jeff Silva, Montgomery County, suggested that the Science and Technology working group send ECO information that can be packaged for the public.

Paul Berman, Montgomery County, said there have seen some significant obstacles over the years and there is a long way to go in terms of Climate Justice. But the Commission and the private sector are beginning to engage. "I'm more optimistic."

Vontasha Sims, Charles County, from the nonprofit "Black by Nature," talked about the Morgantown power plant dumping waste into their creek at Indian Head. She urged the government to regulate big polluters and the legislature pass laws to hold companies and polluters accountable for clean water for southern Marylanders.

Next meeting will be April 21, 2021 from 2-3 p.m. (Third Wednesday of every other month.)

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