

# MARYLAND COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Location: Virtual

Date: 10/05/21

Time: 11am-11pm

## Meeting Minutes

**In Attendance:** Secretary Grumbles, Camille Burke, Senator Patterson, Subha Chandar, Joseph Griffiths, John Papagni, Janet Cornick, Lesliam Quiros-Alcala, Paula Dannenfeldt, Paulette Hammond, Voncia Molock  
Linda Boyd, Josh Foster, B. Thomas Burton, Molly Brown, Phillip Wilson, Ramon Palencia Calvo, Hanna Donart, Diana Conway, Hope Clark, Devon Dodson, Lisa Nissley, Kimberlee Drake, Richard Allen

- Welcome & Remarks

Camille Burke welcomed the group and thanked everyone who was able to participate in the drive over the bridge to tour parts of the Eastern Shore in August. The group was able to see properties that are impacted by chicken operations in the area. It was great to be together and see a beautiful part of the state.


Secretary Grumbles greeted the Commission and thanked everyone for joining the meeting, which has an important agenda. He shared that he recently joined the Governor at a meeting of the Bay Program in Virginia Beach and there was a lot of discussion around the Bay, climate, EJ, and sustainability. He is happy to see an EJ lens to this issue.

- Staff Reports:

Staff shared that Voncia Molock is planning a second visit to the shore so members can see chicken operations. Anyone interested should reach out to her. This will happen on October 15th.

The Commission is working on a date for a joint meeting with CEHPAC in December.

- Implementation of SB 674/HB 1204 - Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities – Reform - Devon Dodson reported that the new law went into effect on October 1st. He has previously shared the document that shows the membership change. Some members will no longer fit into this breakdown, but current members serve until new members are appointed. With the Commission's permission, Devon can draft a letter from the Chair to the Governor's Appointments



Office. We may also consider a letter to the President and the Speaker as well. The Commission asked for a letter to the Governor's Appointments Office to begin.

Devon Dodson also shared that Delegate Boyce and Senator Patterson are committed to working with the Speaker and President to be sure we have continuity and maintain momentum.

Members asked how interested people can be appointed. There are two paths - contacting the Governor's Appointments Office to express interest or contacting the Senate President or House Speaker. Finally, Devon Dodson shared that Robert Hackman has resigned from the Commission because he acknowledged there was no longer an appropriate spot for him.

August Eastern Shore Visit Camille Burke shared how nice the visit to the Eastern Shore was and thanked everyone who planned the visit including our hosts **Monica Brooks** and Barbara Paca and staff at the Water's Edge Museum. We learned so much about CAFOs, wells, water, and odors. Secretary Grumbles shared that it was a great opportunity to see where neighbors had concerns about large poultry nearby. He really enjoyed the visit to Oxford. Barbara Paca's museum is very focused on EJ and economic opportunities and we learned so much.


**Voncia Molock** thought the visit was great and she loved the beautiful museum. She reiterated the invitation to see some poultry farms later this month. Please email her at [voncia.molock@purdue.com](mailto:voncia.molock@purdue.com) if you are interested.

MDE Internal EJ Workgroup Secretary Grumbles and Devon Dodson reported on the internal workgroup. The plan can be found here:

[https://mde.maryland.gov/Documents/MDE\\_EJ\\_Env%20Justice%20Policy\\_Final\\_Dec2020.pdf](https://mde.maryland.gov/Documents/MDE_EJ_Env%20Justice%20Policy_Final_Dec2020.pdf)

As you can see we have met many of these deliverables. Devon Dodson was named the EJ officer. Denise Keehner and Stephanie Cobb Williams are serving as co-chairs of the internal workgroup. MDE staff looked at EJ Screen and the UMD EJ Screen and decided to create their own. It is similar, but the IT team is about to combine MDE specific data. Recently IT shared it with the internal team. We will be thinking about how to share this with staff and train them to understand the how and why of the database.

Angelo Bianca is leading a subgroup on compliance, monitoring, and enforcement. They are looking at issues around routine inspections, compliance, timely responses, corrective actions, and SEPs.



The final area is communications and the Communications Director is leading that effort. Looking at how to make the website more user friendly, what needs to be archived, and how we should continually update.

Camille Burke asked if there is a way to link this to data the Maryland Department of Health has on public health. Devon Dodson shared that they are working with Subha's team. She also asked if before any sort of roll out, could we do a focus group on the tool.

By chat, Veronika Carella suggested that MDA data be included.

- Discussion of Action Items and Recommendations for 2021 CEJSC Annual Report


Devon Dodson explained that this is an update of the recommendations from last year. The status is noted and there are two new recommendations based on the conversation we have had over the years. The Commission asked if there is the potential for training for state agencies. Everyone agreed, but noted that there are different needs at each agency.

With regard to definitions, the commissioners suggested a menu of definitions and context about EJ. Who could be tasked with local review? We need to make this attainable. Cumulative impacts are the next big issue for EJ. We are seeing this mentioned again and again. We are all hoping there will be some Federal leadership on the issue.

Next steps - Staff will update the recommendations and share with the Commission for final comments.

- Public Comment taken from the chat box

Richard Allen -DNR-11:24 AM Please also consider visiting our MD DNR Oxford Lab, a joint federal-state of MD premier Chesapeake Bay Research facility. I could help to arrange such a visit, if you like. richard.allen@maryland.gov or 410-562-6827



Veronika Carella, MD CEHC Leg Director shared the following: Requesting CEJSC agenda item next meeting. Please include the issue of protecting public health, air, soil and groundwater/wells as a sustainable communities issue [per CEJSC statute: Section 1-701(h) Duties (2) ] specifically please include the topic "Review and analyze the impact of current State Laws and policies on the issue of environmental justice and sustainable communities specifically the issue of what pesticides are allowed for use" in Maryland.

Hope Clark shared this article:

<https://climate-xchange.org/2021/09/03/report-an-assessment-of-environmental-justice-policy-in-u-s-climate-alliance-states/>. She also asked if the Commission is open to looking at legislation that is being prepared to be introduced in this session, and making comments on their thoughts about the legislation. Camille Burke answered yes, you can share with Devon.