

MARYLAND COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Location: Virtual

Date: 06/22/21

Time: 10am-12pm

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Secretary Ben Grumbles, Camille Burke, Delegate Regina T. Boyce, Subha Chandar, Joseph Griffiths, Joe Papagni, Phillip Wilson, Robert Hackman, Lesliam Quiros-Alcala, Paulette Hammond, Voncia Molock, Monica Brooks, and Barbara Paca

Members of the Public & Staff: Hannah Schaffer, Dorothy Morrison, Richard Allen, Brandon Wright, Kamita Gray, Ginny Nesslage, Christine Krone, Sherman Hardy, Emily Werik, Morgan Johnson, Veronika Carella, Patrick DeArmey, Hannah Brubach, Horacio Tablada, Devon Dodson, Lisa Nissley, Lisa Jones

- **Introduction by Camille Burke, Chair**


Camille Burke welcomed everyone and shared she will be participating in the MDOT EJ Coordinated Kick Off coming up soon. She will share what the Commission has been working on. The Commission approved the April meeting minutes.

Camille Burke shared that she participated in the recent CEHPAC meeting. She also attended a public meeting about the expansion to include a crematorium at Vaughn Greene Funeral Services in Govans. She was there to learn more about community concerns. Delegate Boyce was also in attendance.

- **Remarks by Secretary Grumbles**

Secretary Grumbles thanked Camille Burke for participating and said MDE is spending extra time with Govans community representatives to really understand their concerns. MDE will officially comment as part of the proposed process.

He went on to welcome everyone to the meeting and said he is proud of the robust membership and participation. He has been sharing this process with EPA and mentioned the work of the EPA EJAC and the White House EJ Advisory Council. The Administration recently announced a



commitment to direct 40 percent of his administration's climate and clean energy investments to disadvantaged communities. Other states are also working on how to dig into how to properly define "underserved" and how to measure and track increased investments. He believes we are having good conversations with the Maryland Commission on Climate Change to have a coordinated approach.

Chairman Camille Burke thanked Secretary Grumbles for mentioning this. Defining is hard and as she and Delegate Boyce mentioned at the Govans meeting, we need to consider cumulative effect as well.

- **Introduction of New Commissioners**

The Governor has made two new appointments to the Commission. Voncia Molock will serve as a business representative and Monica Brooks will serve as a member of an affected community.


Monica Brooks introduced herself as a resident of the Eastern Shore in Wicomico County. She is a parent and a business owner. She began her work as a concerned citizen against CAFO to combat large feeding operations. The ultimate goal is to have clean air and water. She is here to lend a voice as a member of an area that is affected. Also, she grew up in Los Angeles dealing with smog. She is interested in sharing her experience and helping to bring change.

Voncia Molock introduced herself from Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore. She traveled with AT&T for 18 years and has worked at Purdue for 16 years. Recently she took over for Steve Levitsky when he moved on. She has four kids; three of them have graduated from Morgan University. She is married to a seventh-generation farmer, so she really cares about the environment and farming opportunities on the Shore. She is happy to join the Commission and learn how Purdue can help support EJ.

- **Review of Membership Under New Law (SB 674/HB 1204)**

Devon discussed SB 674/HB 1204 which became law without signature due to COVID and goes into effect on October 1, 2021. The bill brings changes to the membership with some additional members and some appointments now being made by the Senate President and Speaker of the House of Delegates. This means the Commission as it exists will be gone and everyone will be newly appointed. Not everyone fits into the Governor's appointments but if interested, they could speak to the President and the Speaker's Offices. This chart compares current and future membership.

SB 674/HB1207 Standing Member (8)	Current Membership Standing Member (8)
Senate, Delegate, Environment, Health, Planning, Commerce, Housing, Transportation	No change to standing members
Appointed by Governor (5)	Appointed by Governor (12)
1 Representative from: Community impacted by EJ issues	At least 2 members of an affected community and at least 1 representative from:
A business organization	A business organization
An environmental organization	An environmental organization
A health expert	A health expert
An academic institution with an EJ institute	The general public with interest or expertise
Appointed Jointly by Speaker & President (6+)	Appointed Jointly by Speaker & President (0)
At least 3 community representatives	n/a
1 representative from: business organization	
An environmental organization	
A health expert	
Appointed by entity (4)	Appointed by entity (0)
MACO representative	n/a
MML representative	n/a
2 AFL-CIO representatives	n/a
Total Members: 23+	Total Members: 20



All members will need to reapply and reappoint. Please share your intentions or interest with Devon Dodson. He will be touching base with the presiding officers to help with coordination.

Camille Burke asked if the academic representative needs to be from Hopkins or UMD? She would like to check if there are other universities that might be doing work that qualifies under the bill. Other members were very interested in this point and suggested work being done at Morgan qualifies.

Monica Brooks is concerned that communities without a listening ear will remain unrepresented. She would like to see people appointed that truly represent the community. Devon Dodson said MDE is committed to helping this with this process to that end. Delegate Boyce agrees and believes the legislature will do this. Also, she would like to see this group stay intact as much as possible.


Phillip Wilson asked if there are changes to the responsibilities of the Commission. Devon Dodson explained there are some, but many are things we are working toward already. Most have to do with the Commission meeting six times each year and having four community listening sessions. These meetings should be in revolving locations. We are to use data sets to support our work and consider Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The CEJSC is to work with the MCCC and the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities. New members will now receive an orientation.

Richard Allen asked if Morgan University is represented? The answer is no, not specifically. He suggested we investigate if their Institute for Urban Research qualify under the law. Barbara Paca suggested we do the same for UMES.

Camille Burke asked that staff create a to do list with timing for these tasks. Please share any research you do and your intention for serving on the Commission before our next meeting.

- **Discussion on Visiting Communities on the Eastern Shore in July**

We are looking at our next meeting date for a tour of the Eastern Shore. A tour is more realistic than a big public meeting due to COVID as are outside meetings. Monica Brooks will look into setting up some stops and we could ultimately meet Barbara Paca at the



Water's Edge Museum for lunch and discussion. Monica thinks it will be a great way to gain real understanding from going and seeing the actual community.

Staff will look into options of sharing this online and will conduct a Doodle Poll about dates if not the 27th.

- **Discussion with Brandywine Community on Outreach**


Kamita Gray shared a [presentation](#) on the work of the BTB Coalition.

Questions and Comments: Devon Dodson thanked Kamita for sharing this point of view and said he has learned a lot from their discussions. He agrees that the Commission and the state agencies will need to do their homework and be prepared to give answers, not just listen.

Monica Brooks thanked Kamita and said the presentation is encouraging. She believes we need all the parties at the table for a discussion or it is hard to have resolution. There are more actions if we work as a team. Devon Dodson reiterated he can be helpful as the EJ officer and if a community has problems they can be in touch with him.

- **Public Comment**

Comment from Veronika Carella - MD CEHC Legislative Director; Requesting CEJSC agenda item for August meeting; "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 the State of Maryland and whether the laws and regulations are sufficient to protect public health and the environment – particularly in areas serviced by groundwater wells.



Please include this outstanding issue of protecting public health, air, soil and groundwater (i.e. wells) as a sustainable communities issue per CEJSC statute: Section 1-701(h) Duties (2).

CEJSC's review will allow for identifying and correcting the current weaknesses in Maryland Law and regulations consistent with Maryland's Health in All Policies (HiAP) initiatives which helped to identify that discretionary pesticide applications that are detrimental to public health and documented to contaminate wells are currently allow for use on residential property under existing Maryland Department of Agriculture Laws, Policies and Regulations.

Repeating last meeting's comment, please investigate why there are currently no regulations in Maryland to guide the Registration & Labeling of Pesticides approved for use in Maryland by the MDA or any other Agency. The regulations (MDA Reg - State Chemist 15.18.02) enacted in 1988 were repealed in 2004. Decisions on what pesticides are allowed do NOT conform with the "HiAP" initiatives - as impact to public health and to ground water are currently not considered. As a resulted, the issues related to protecting public health and groundwater from pesticides (documented to contaminate wells - the source of Maryland drinking wells) are not being addressed anywhere in Maryland.