Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities (CEJSC)

November 15, 2016 9:30 am-11:30 am

Maryland Department of the Environment

Aeris Conference Room

1800 Washington Blvd Baltimore, MD 21230

Meeting Minutes

**In Attendance**

* Commissioners: Duane Johnson, Vernice Miller-Travis, Rebecca Rehr, Subha Chandar, Clarence Lam, Steve Levitsky, Lesliam Quiros-Alcala
* Kamita Gray

**Introduction**

Vernice Miller-Travis asked everyone in the meeting to introduce themselves.

**Meeting with MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles Update**

Vernice said she and Andrew Fellows met with the Secretary to talk about CEJSC and it’s important to the administration.

Vernice said she was encouraged to hear the Secretary say that in terms of environmental initiatives already started in Maryland, nothing will change. The Secretary said he thought CEJSC plays a very important role.

Vernice addressed the Commission membership and particularly the vacancy of the chairperson of the Commission with the Secretary. She suggested involving CEJSC in selecting the next chairperson of the Commission.

Secretary said he looks forward to continued engagement with CEJSC and will try to make additional meetings.

**Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup Meeting Update**

Several Commissioners that attended the meeting and gave a brief update on what they thought about the meeting. Rebecca Rehr gave a brief synoposis of what the Cheasapeake Bay Program does.

Rebecca said the Diversity Workgroup is looking at what their workforce looks like and what their workforce is doing. There were breakout sessions to discuss long and short term goals of the workgroup.

**Maryland Climate Change Commission**

The Climate Commission has asked CEJSC to make written recommendations as to where to do outreach as it pertains to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act in underserved communities.

Rebecca Rehr talked about the draft letter she completed for the Climate Change Commission. She said that the letter won’t go in the Climate Change Commission final report but will be on their website. The fact that the letter won’t go into their Annual Report was based on timing of the request from the Climate Change Commission.

Vernice said CEJSC wants to help recommend two communities for outreach. CEJSC will need someone to be involved in the Climate Change working group to help them be as successful as possible with the outreach initiative.

Rebecca said as the Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) working group moves forward, CEJSC should make a formal request to ECO to keep CEJSC in the loop of things.

**Community Outreach Update**

* **Eastern Shore:** Steve Levitsky said he did some additional research on the climate change issue and found a dissertation done by a PH student from UMD that spoke about some issues in lower Somerset County. Steve said he wants to get the student attend the next CEJSC meeting to talk about her findings.
* **Brandywine:** Vernice said one of the problems in Brandywine is the lack of communication between the PSC and State agencies. Vernice said EPA is looking at an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process to try to resolve the complaint issues in Brandywine.
* **Baltimore City:** Rebecca said she went to a meeting at the Office of Sustainability for Baltimore City to get input on their plans. Rebecca said she thinks they are beginning to get outreach directly from a government entity. She said she will write up a report to be used for a government model for future government led community outreach.

**Public Comments**

Kamita Gray asked that CEJSC not white wash the EJ issues and cumulative impact in Prince George County with a 68% African American population. She would like CEJSC to take a broader look at what is happening across the county in respect to permitting, facility operations and disproportionate impact on underserved communities.

**Meeting Adjourned**