

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC) Meeting**

**March 27, 2012 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.
Annapolis, MD**

In Attendance:

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, John Kotoski, Arabia Davis, Rebecca Rehr, Dick Fairbanks, Robin Underwood, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, and Robert Sklar.
- Participants: James Willett, Robert Jackson

Introductions: The meeting began with introductions of participants.

Other Business:

The meeting was called to order at 8:55 a.m. Lisa Nissley opened the meeting by discussing the SMART Techniques draft document. The idea behind this document was to track projects that the Commission was working on. It was suggested at this meeting that the document could be used to submit projects to the Commission before they were approved to be taken on. Using the document as a means for submitting potential projects to the Commission could make it more proactive as opposed to reactive. Arabia Davis suggested that for this purpose the Commissioner would attach specific details to the SMART techniques document for a comprehensive analysis by the Commission. Lisa suggested that the Commission could use this document for a month or so and then re-evaluate it to determine if it needed to be restructured. The Commission briefly went over the SMART techniques acronym and its uses for the Commission.

Lisa said that the internal workgroup memo would be completed and reviewed soon. There has been good progress on the guidance documents. The business one-pager is far along and the stakeholder one-pagers can be circulated soon.

The agency conference call has been scheduled for the second Monday of each month in the afternoon at 2 p.m. Lisa suggested that the first call would take place in May because of the hectic schedule the departments face during Session. This would mean that Agencies communicate every two weeks for Commission-related purposes starting in May. The agency representatives of the Commission, Arabia Davis of MDP, Robin Underwood of MDOT, Caroline Varney-Alvarado of DHCD, Lisa Nissley of MDE, and Bob Sklar of DBED agreed that this time would work.

Arabia mentioned that the idea of incorporating EJ into the clearinghouse was well-received. She gave information on clearinghouse processes with respect to local government. Arabia also said that Linda is open to communicating with the Commission to pursue incorporating EJ into the process.

Lisa said that the Commission was working on getting the Lieutenant Governor to speak at an event. Currently the work is on getting a date that the Lieutenant Governor can attend, which is going to happen at DBED sometime in May. Bob Sklar requested that DBED receive a copy of anything that goes to the Lieutenants Office to ensure that communications on any issues are well known between all parties.

Rebecca briefed the Commission on her progress for outreach to the academic community. The Commission will have a lunch meeting with Dr. Sacoby Wilson at the Dean's Suite in the School for Public Health at University of Maryland College Park on Friday, April 27th at 1 p.m. It is an opportunity to connect the Commissioners with academics and serves as an informative meeting. She will send a short biography on Dr. Wilson to the Commission. Lisa and Rebecca suggested that the academic library agenda item was not a monthly issue to be discussed and that Rebecca would work on it and update the Commission as necessary. James will help Rebecca with the academic syllabus item.

Robin Underwood updated the Commission on the Title VI issues. She asked each department to send her the contact information for their department's fair practice officer. For an update, Robin mentioned that MDOT trained 100 managers, executives, and supervisors about Title VI to educate their workers. At the request of the Commission she will circulate these training documents to the Commission. Robin also mentioned a Supreme Court case ruling that allows home-owners and businesses to utilize the courts before exhausting agency functions, and provided three relevant articles: "States Question Lack of Clarity On EPA Bid to Improve Civil Rights Efforts" and "States Outline Broad Concerns Over Expected Future Budget Cuts for EPA" from *Inside EPA*, and "U.S. Top Court Backs Landowners, limits power of EPA" from the *Reuters* news website.

Lisa briefed the Commission on some bills that had moved in the Senate or House, and suggested that Commissioners inform her about any bills they were concerned by. The legislative tracker is still going out regularly. House Bill 439, the Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act, passed third reader and is assigned to Budget & Taxation in the Senate. There was a discussion of what this bill does, which is that it targets medically underserved zones for resource concentration. Lisa asked if there were other bills of interest. There was some discussion on the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act, House Bill 441. John Kotoski asked about the fracking bills. The severance tax bill, fee study, and presumption of contamination bill passed the house. The House Environmental Matters Committee did not pass any bill that was regarding anything the Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative Commission would be looking at this Session.

The Commission then moved to hear any other business that was not on the agenda.

Rebecca discussed an abstract she wrote about the effectiveness of a Commission that makes recommendations to the Governor, as opposed to community-based Commission. The report examined Commission annual reports, and bills that the Commission or Commissioners testified on to examine the impact on their passage. The overarching goal is to examine ways for the Commission to move forward as a group and determine where it can be improved for effectiveness.

Robin asked if the Commission was still working on the CSX IMC projects. The Commission has questions they would like Robin to ask of MDOT. She asked them to get those to her. Robin also mentioned that she would be circulating the MDOT webpage link that has information on many aspects of the project. Currently the CSX IMC projects are in the NEPA phase and that six public meetings have been held in areas near proposed sites, and no site has been chosen as of yet.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35.

The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for April 24th 9:30 a.m. at Baltimore, MD.