

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

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners & Designees:

Scot Spencer, Vernice Miller-Travis, Stephen Pattison (Designee for Kendl Philbrick) & Dorothy Morrison, Carlita Lindsey (Designee for Audrey Scott), Kelly Pfeifer, Douglas Edwards, Rosa Burnstein, Clifford Mitchell

Other Participants:

Nan Lyon, Dawnn McCleary, Nadine Jackson-Bey, Shahatra Allen, Paul Oberle, Roger Taylor, Carmen Morosan, George Oleru, Bill Paul, Ed Dexter

Environmental Justice Updates

- Scot, Rosa, and Vernice participated on a panel at the National Brownfields Conference in Denver, Colorado. Vernice addressed the EJ aspect and Rosa addressed the Community aspect. Scot gave a brief summary of the conference. One focus of the conference was social equality.
- Scot informed the Commission about a meeting with the Ford Foundation held in New York that he attended. He had the opportunity to talk with the Program Officer to discuss funding opportunities. One suggestion was for Maryland to work with the Ford Foundation to secure awards grants.
- Cliff provided information about a Bank of America Award event. The event awards community-based grants to communities. He suggested that the Commission look into applying for this grant next year, to assist the chosen community that the Commission plans to work with.
- Ed Dexter gave an update on the Odenton Rubble Landfill. The applicant is currently working on a design plan that needs to be approved. Once the design is approved, a public hearing will be announced. The State permit does not allow access on side roads; the County issue will need to be resolved even with the permit.

Vernice asked about the State's Recycling Program and why the State does not have the authority to oversee the Counties. She would like to see a mandatory recycling program that would assist in the current landfill problems that the State has. Steve and Ed addressed the question and gave information on how each County has met their recycling goals. Ed also discussed MDE's Solid Waste & Recycling outreach activities at schools. There is more detail on the MDE website- a list of the recycling coordinators for each county can be found on the MDE website. Steve announced the, "Recycling Day" activity that is scheduled for Friday, November 18th at MDE where students create a recycling project to be judged. This is an annual event that MDE has embraced. Carmen suggested that the focus should be on resources for education and community outreach before considering a mandatory recycling program.

ACTION ITEM: Kelly will look up bills, in the past, that have been introduced to make recycling mandatory. She will provide an update at the January 2006 meeting.

Subcommittees Updates

Environmental Health Workgroup (EHW)

Cliff updated the Commission on the discussions that EHW has had with the Washington Village/ Pigtown community regarding a pilot project to develop and create health indicators. The pilot project will allow the community to apply for community-based grants that would assist in improving the community.

Bill Stack shared information about the Watershed 263 project that could be an asset to the EHW work on indicators in the Washington Pigtown project. Bill also mentioned that Watershed 263 has created a set of indicators that could be useful. Bill and Cliff will talk later and keep the Commission updated on the outcome. Carmen also shared information with Cliff about the Park Heights Community project that involved quality of life indicators. This tool would be instrumental to the State as well as the EHW project.

Cliff acknowledged that the Washington Pigtown community already has a lot of projects going on and the community leaders would like to ensure that the information is beneficial to the community once the pilot and project is completed.

Legislative and Policy Review Workgroup

- Kelly gave a brief update on the Community Standing Bill. She will review the bill once it is introduced. This bill will assist with the Commission's sustainable communities aspect. She will update the Commission on this bill at the next meeting.

It was suggested that we allow collaboration among the different workgroups, especially when related issues are being addressed. For example, collaboration between the Community Involvement workgroup and the Legislative workgroup; or the Community Involvement workgroup and the Environmental Health workgroup. They could maintain their status as individual groups, yet work together on certain initiatives.

The Subcommittee welcomes others to participate in the workgroups; outside participants are encouraged to join.

MDE Participation Guide

Scot suggested that the guide needs to be more community-friendly and easy to use. The Guide will be sent to the Commission again to review; comments are due to Dorothy no later than November 28th.

It was noted the wonderful job that Shahatra did with pulling the information together for the Guide as well as the graphic design.

Vice Chair Election

The Vice-Chair role is to run meetings in the absence of the Chair, to speak on behalf of the Commission and attend meetings and activities involving Commissioners participation. The following vice-chairs were appointed:

1st Vice-Chair – Andrew Fellows

2nd Vice-Chair – Vernice Miller-Travis

2006 Meeting Schedule

Meetings will be held the 4th Wednesday of every month (November's meeting will be held the 3rd Wednesday due to the Holiday):

January 25th
February 22nd
March 22nd
April 26
May 24
July 26
September 27
October 25
November 15

Meeting locations have not been confirmed yet. It was discussed that Commission meetings will be held in Annapolis during the General Assembly, January – April. Nadine will call to confirm the availability of conference rooms.

Outreach

Steve and Dorothy met with Adela Acosta, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, to discuss the work of the Commission and MDE environmental justice functions. Adela agreed to attend some of the Commission meetings, when available.

Nan suggested that an Environmental Health Director attend Commission meetings to get involved in the work of the commission. This would be an asset when dealing with local government.

Upcoming Events

Dorothy invited Commission members to attend the upcoming, All State Bi-Annual, meeting that will be held on December 7th and 8th at MDE. See attached sheet for Agenda items.

Scot shared information on the December 5-10th Lead Coalition event. Scot will forward the invite to everyone via email; this is a free event. This is a 5-day series focusing on ways to eliminating lead by 2010.