

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice
& Sustainable Communities (CEJSC) Meeting
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland
Wednesday, March 30, 2005**

DRAFT MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members & Designees

Brenda Afzal (Designee for Barbara Sattler), Bob Baily (Designee for Senator Ulysses Currie), Delegate Elizabeth Bobo, Douglas Edwards, Carlita Lindsey (Designee for Audrey Scott), Diane Matuszak, Stephen Pattison (Designee for Kendl Philbrick), & Dorothy Morrison

Commission Participants

Moonyene Jackson-Amis and Roger Taylor

AGENDA ITEMS:

Approval of Minutes

Douglas Edwards made the motion to approve the minutes without accompanying attachments for the January and February meetings. Moonyene Jackson seconded the motion.

Environmental Benefits Districts

Dorothy Morrison gave a brief recap of the EBD initiative— its intended results and community designation strategy followed by a group discussion about the EBD concept and draft community designation survey (distributed to Commissioners for review in January, 2005). The survey was developed to help identify communities faced with environmental burden and economic disinvestments that would benefit from state assistance.

Intended results: on the ground project implementation; coordinated state assistance to communities; and collaborative partnerships to address EJ.

Nomination strategy: work with local governments and community-based organization to identify communities in need of assistance and give consideration to communities that bring legitimate concerns to the attention of the CEJSC.

Suggestions raised by the group regarding the EBD initiative were:

- The need to provide alternative avenues for communities to apply for EBD designation.
- Make mention on the EBD survey that it is not necessary for communities to have all of the characteristics indicated on the questionnaire in order to be designated.
- It would be useful to include a health component in the community characteristics section of the survey.
- Provide more detailed explanation for some of the characteristics included in the survey.
- Prepare a marketing package for the EBD initiative and present to the Maryland Municipal League for endorsement.
- Consider other marketing vehicles include mailings, newspapers, and press releases.

➤ **Action Item:**

Because there were only six Commissioners present at the meeting, Dorothy will send out another request for input on the EBD initiative and draft survey to all commissioners with a response deadline of **April 21, 2005**. Commissioners must make it a point of duty to respond by the deadline in order to complete a marketing package for this very important initiative.

June Retreat

Dorothy mentioned that Scot previously offered the use of the Annie Casey Foundation facility for hosting the retreat. The date stated in the 2005 Work plan for the retreat is June 29, 2005 and may take the form of an evening gathering followed by a full day session the following day. Awaiting confirmation from the Chair on this.

Some items proposed for the June retreat:

- Discussion of relationship between land use planning and EJ.
- Discussion on sustainable communities and how to attain them.
- Guest speakers on key issues of concern to the Commission.
- Finalize proposed bylaws.
- Create a vision statement for the Commission.

April Community Meeting

Commissioners present did not feel that there was enough time to successfully plan a community meeting with invitations to community groups by the April 27th meeting. It was proposed that the Commission hold a regular meeting in April.

CEJSC Bylaws

Some edits to the draft bylaws sent out for review on 3/29/05 were suggested. Dorothy will incorporate those edits and send out the bylaws to Commissioners again for additional comments.

➤ **Action Item:**

Commissioners not present during this meeting should provide their comments to Dorothy by **April 26, 2005.**

Other Items/Updates Discussed

- Diane Matuzak mentioned the need for health professionals and health organizations to make connections with the CEJSC as health issues have an important relationship with environmental justice. It was proposed that guest speakers from the health arena address the commission and vice versa from time to time.
- Brenda Afzal asked for updates on the community indicators project, which the Commission's Community Health Workgroup worked on last year. Dorothy responded that Cliff Mitchell of Johns Hopkins University was looking into grant opportunities that will enable the Commission to pursue the work further. It is important to keep this project alive and there may be some upcoming grant money available to continue this work through the Environmental Public Health Tracking grant. Dorothy will get in contact with Cliff Mitchell and Phil Heard about continuing the Indicators project.
- Steve Pattison reported that over the past couple of months, he and Dorothy Morrison paid visits to various state agency heads to raise awareness about EJ in Maryland and the EBD initiative.
- Suggestions were made about allocating some time during the CEJSC meetings to enable communities to present their EJ issues to the Commission. This could be the first 30 minutes of the meeting followed by an executive session, if permitted. Dorothy will research the rules for public meetings to determine if the Commission can have a closed executive session.
- Commissioners are required to notify Nadine Jackson-Bey or Dorothy Morrison, MDE, at least 48 hour prior to a scheduled CEJSC meeting, if they or their designee plan to be absent for that meeting.

Handouts

- Agenda
- January and February minutes
- EBD Fact Sheet
- EBD Designation Survey
- Working definition of potential EJ community for project implementation purposes
- Draft CEJSC bylaws
- Legislative letter from Delegate Bobo re: H.B. 470: Appeals of Zoning Regulations and Building Permits by Neighborhood Associations

