

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

**Tuesday, October 22, 2013  
Montgomery Park, Baltimore, MD**

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Vernice Miller-Travis, Andy Fellows, Benoy Thomas, Dick Fairbanks, Nancy Servatius, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, Andrea K. Taylor, John Quinn, Lisa Nissley
- Participants: Megan Ulrich, Stephanie Cobb Williams, Angelo Bianca, Crystal Heide, Yvette Williams, Rebecca Rehr (via phone)

**Introductions**

Each member and guest introduced themselves and their relationship to the Commission.

Lisa told everyone that Calvin had an unexpected scheduling conflict today and Vernice offered to run the meeting.

**Title VI**

Vernice said that she has been trying to coordinate with Robin on Title VI, but she had not been able to get a hold of Robin. Vernice gave a brief background on Title VI and efforts that EPA is making to implement it.

Lisa said MDE has commented on EPA's Title VI plan.

Vernice said we need to move forward with the Title VI roundtable with representatives of each state agency participating. She suggested late April/early May as a target date. Vernice will give Lisa dates she is available in November to meet with Kathy Kinsey on EJ and Title VI issues.

**County Outreach**

We are potentially presenting at the December Planning Director's Roundtable meeting. Also, Lisa contacted Adam Ortiz about presenting and hosting the December CEJSC meeting. He agreed, but she has not heard back from him about working out details. Lisa asked Vernice and Andy to follow up with Adam. Megan will also follow up with Shirley Posten, Adam's aide, regarding scheduling logistics.

**Business Outreach**

Lisa updated the Commission on the status of incorporating EJ language into existing permit applications paperwork. MDE added draft language to an existing air quality permit application and instructions. Lisa sent the language to John Quinn and is waiting for his feedback on it.

Andy asked if the Commissioners could see the language when it is finalized.

Lisa said she will share the finalized language with the Commissioners.

Rebecca asked if MDE will be sharing the language with other states when it is finalized.

Angelo said that this is a pilot and MDE will need some time to figure out if it is successful.

Vernice said that Connecticut has a whole EJ permitting process that is based in law.

## **CEHPAC**

Nancy said CEHPAC will be keeping an eye on the new Baltimore City School construction and making sure that the construction practices are actually green.

## **Academic Outreach**

Lisa said she had a conversation with Dr. Taylor regarding an intern program at MDE. Lisa and Megan will work to outline the program and discuss it further with Dr. Taylor.

Vernice suggested building a sustainable communities intern at DHCD.

Caroline said that while the CEJSC waits for Dr. Wilson to develop research/academic requirements for an internship, the Commission can move ahead with other opportunities.

Dr. Taylor said that the CEJSC should have the internship requirements out by January for a summer/fall internship. Dr. Taylor said that if the Commission makes an announcement for an internship, then she can send it to her students.

Vernice said that Dr. Wilson's program is expanding while Dr. Taylor's program is established. The Commission can reach out to both programs, but use Dr. Taylor's as an example of how the internship will work.

Caroline asked how the Commission will follow up with the internship idea.

Lisa clarified that there were initially two proposals for academic outreach: one was to create multiple different EJ research topics so that the students could pick from them and do an independent research topic on the issue of their choice; the other proposal was to create EJ internships.

Dr. Taylor said one internship could focus on pesticides. The student could have an advisor at a state agency.

Caroline asked which state agency would house the pesticides intern.

Nancy will talk to Cliff about possibly housing the pesticides Intern at DHMH. The intern could also interact with people at other state agencies and the CEJSC.

Caroline will write up a matrix on the three EJ intern ideas before the next meeting.

Rebecca is also willing to contribute on this effort.

### **Legislative Outreach**

Lisa reminded the Commissioners that the Legislative Black Caucus (LBC) reception is occurring Friday November 1, in Annapolis. She asked which Commissioners are able to attend.

John Quinn, Vernice, Calvin and Lisa will be in attendance.

Lisa said it would be a good idea for the Commission to make calls to the LBC invitees.

Calvin's staff is reaching out to Congressman Cummings.

Andy and Dr. Taylor also volunteered to make calls to LBC members.

Lisa said the invitations were sent and the food order has been placed.

Vernice said that the Commissioners need to make sure to reach out to all the LBC members at the reception. It is a great opportunity to get an EJ champion in the legislature. Vernice asked what issues the CEJSC should raise to the legislators. What does the Commission want them to do? She asked that people think of topics to discuss with the legislators at the LBC reception. She also asked every Commissioner to call their own legislators and ask them to attend the reception.

Lisa will email the LBC list and invitation to all the Commissioners.

Lisa said she is continuing to update the Governor's Legislative Office after each CEJSC meeting.

### **Other News:**

Andy said that the Pesticide Workgroup will be putting out an interim report at the end of December and a final report at the end of July. There is an EJ concern that migrant workers are very exposed to pesticides. There are also potential information gaps on the issue.

Lisa said that since the Pesticide Workgroup is still in progress, it is not likely that any legislation would pass during the 2014 session. The legislature would likely wait until the 2015 legislative session, when the Pesticide Workgroup is complete, to pass anything.

Vernice asked what action the Commission could take on a pesticides bill, would it be a letter of support?

Lisa said previously the CEJSC has outlined EJ issues in the bill and pointed out EJ issues that are not considered in the bill.

Dr. Taylor said that the CEJSC can look at the Pesticides Workgroup report and address EJ issues in that too.

Vernice asked how many migrant workers there are in Maryland.

Andy said it is a large, but mostly invisible population concentrated on the Eastern Shore.

Dick said he doesn't see a lot of farm workers picking corn/soy crops, but the workers are possibly picking other crops.

Andy asked if the Commission could have someone from the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) speak to them regarding the EJ/public health aspects of pesticides.

Lisa said she will work on setting up a call before session. She asked Andy to give her some specific issues to have MDA discuss. Lisa also asked Nancy to follow up and see if CEHPAC may be interested in participating in the call as well.

Caroline said there may also be a sustainable communities aspect to the issue; she will participate on the call.

Caroline also mentioned that the Governor is hosting a Better Choices/Better Sustainability forum on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Dick presented information on Second Sundays in the park at Gwynn Falls/Leakin Park and encouraged everyone to attend. He also shared an article on European energy policies with the Commission.

Andy said that it might be worth it to talk about water/utility costs to communities.

Rebecca said that the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning has been awarded an EJ small grant by the EPA. She will circulate the information for Lisa to pass on to the Commissioners.

Vernice said maybe someone from the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning can come speak to the CEJSC at some point.

Vernice asked if there was a quorum for minutes. Lisa said they are one person short of a quorum.

Vernice asked everyone to give any comments they have on minutes before the next meeting.

### **Adjourn**

**The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2013 at 9:30am at Montgomery Park.**