



## State of New Jersey

### DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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**SHAWN M. LATOURETTE**  
*Commissioner*

### **Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

October 11, 2023

Via Microsoft Teams

#### **Council Members**

*Present:* Andy Kricun, Amy Tuiniga, Jeffery Pearlman, Kim Gaddy, Krishna Garlic, Micheal Morgan, Robert Laumbach, Terrance Bankston, Tyrese Gould-Jacinto, William Casey

*Absent:* Chole Desir, Denalerie Johnson-Faniel, Galia Shokry, Jackie Park-Albaum, Katharina Miguel, Melissa Miles, Chief Vincent Mann

**OEJ Staff:** Nadia Akbar, Muskan Shrivastava, Myla Ramirez, AnnaMaria Penaherrera, Christina Gonzalve, Kandyce Perry

**DEP Guests:** Janine Barr, Jeanne Herb

#### **Call to Order**

Kim welcomes everyone and officially starts the meeting.

#### **Approval of Minutes – September 13, 2023**

Motion to accept the minutes from Krishna. Seconded by Jeff. All in favor, no opposed.

#### **Brownfields Recommendations Document**

- This document was created to present recommendations for the brownfield redevelopment process from EJAC to DEP Office of Brownfields and Community Revitalization. OEJ will be presenting this document as a final recommendation.
- Minor changes to the document are proposed regarding typos and brownfields definition.
  - There is emphasis that brownfields are not simply vacant lots, but also contain hazardous media
- Motion to adopt the document with changes that will be sent out via email from Andy. Seconded by Amy. All in favor, no opposed.

#### **Fiscal Year 2024 Work Plan**

- The previous meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup> generated new ideas for the workplan. Those ideas are now incorporated into the Draft 2024 Work Plan.
- Working Groups will have discussions in their respective meeting about which projects are continuing, choose new projects, and feasibility.
- At the next EJAC meeting on December 13<sup>th</sup>, a final draft of the workplan will be presented and voted on.
- January 1<sup>st</sup> will be the start date of the 2024 Work Plan.

#### Air (Updates given by Jeff)

- The Air Working Group will be continuing the Community Air Monitoring project in 2024
  - The goal of this program is to start running in 2024 and be supplemental to programs by the DEP and transportation management.
  - There is hope that in the next calendar year, the program will undergo a pilot in one or two locations.
  - An idea for providing libraries with materials to drive support and demand for this program was proposed.
- Proposed idea from the previous meeting: Look at the recommendations from the Clean Air Council 2022 report on fugitive dust and 2023 report on air toxics to create an activity for the Air WG to help implement one or more of those recommendations.
  - This may be able to be the basis for the cumulative impact law to reduce additional burdens and address existing ones.
  - Andy and Amy suggest taking a presumptive approach by requiring facilities to prove they are not polluting, rather than relying on citizens to report violations.
    - Andy acknowledges this would require a change in legislation
    - Amy mentions the importance of the precautionary principle.

#### Land (Updates given by Ty)

- The Brownfields document has been accepted with changes. The next step is the dissemination of information to those who are being affected by brownfields.
  - New ideas for the upcoming year may include issues such as recreation.
- Current Urban agriculture and waterfront access projects will continue into 2024 and be worked on at the same time.
- In previous community engagement sessions, residents have brought up the issue of restricted waterfront and beach access in overburdened communities. This may be of interest for EJAC and the working group.
  - This may have an intersection with ECC.
    - Kandyce and Kim encourage all members to think about intersections of projects between working groups.
- New idea: increasing education and awareness regarding solid waste management practices
  - Create opportunities to increase public participation in the hearings that are required when a facility wants to amend their waste management plans. Communities are not always aware these meetings are taking place, so there needs to be ways to notify them.
  - Educate the community on how to dispose of things such as light bulbs, batteries, computers.
  - Explore the intersections with air and food.
    - Exploring composting, food recovery, food digestors, and reducing waste.

## EEC (Updates given by Christina)

- The working group is continuing to work on the EJ seminars which will help activists navigate DEP systems
- New ideas proposed in the September meeting include creating a fact sheet library for resources and regulations.

## EJAC Retreat

- Tentative 10:30am start time to accommodate for long travel times.
- Will be in south Jersey in Salem, where there will be an EJAC meetings, lunch, and activities lead by Tyrese such as a nature walk and crafts.
- Itinerary is still being developed.
- A survey will be sent out about dietary restrictions and if they would like to travel with DEP staff. Communications will be sent out soon.

## Watershed NJ: Presentation and Request for Feedback

- What it is: Transparent data tools related to watershed planning for internal DEP and external stakeholders related to water quality
- The tool will be used to support community work and water quality improvements
- Stakeholders for this tool are needed in the EJ communities to determine uses and what these tools can look like. This tool is still in the development stage.
- Purpose: One stop shop for anyone in the state for watershed management decisions and improve watershed planning
  - A web-based platform to support comprehensive watershed management statewide
- Three modules
  - Watershed Health Assessment
  - Water Quality Stressor Tool
  - Improvement Opportunity Snapshot/tool
- EJ vision: Serve as a centralized and comprehensive resource in consideration of an/or existing data
- Specific Questions for EJAC
  - How do you think EJ concerns should be incorporated into regional watershed management?
  - What components of EJ Map do you think would be helpful to include in Watershed NJ?
  - Beyond EJ Map, what data do you think is needed to incorporate into Watershed NJ?
- EJAC feedback
  - Does this have any intersections with fish and wildlife because of endangered species? Does that include water access restrictions?
    - Answer: Endangered species may not be relevant to this project as Watershed Nj focuses on water quality. The Watershed Health Assessment module may flag this.
- Would like feedback within the two weeks
- Presentation and slides will be forwarded

## Open Discussion

- Events

- **TCTAC Launch:** *Monday, Oct. 30 from 5:30-7:00 PM via Zoom:* [Register for our NY/NJ TCTAC webinar](#) to learn what technical assistance resources are available, what funding opportunities and trainings are coming up, and what our vision is for building power across the region
- **Hudson County Community Engagement Session:** *Tuesday, Oct. 17 from 6:00-7:30 PM (in person and Zoom: Jose Marti Freshman Academy, 800 Summit Ave, Union City, NJ 07087. [Registration](#). [Flyer \(English\)](#). [Flyer \(Spanish\)](#).*
- **Clean Air Northeast Partner's Meeting:** *Oct. 17-18: [Information and Registration](#).*
- **Clean Water Action Autumn Toast to a Healthy Environment:** *Saturday, Oct. 14, 1:00-4:00 PM: [Information](#)*
- Ty -- Weatherization and energy assistance – Not everyone is educated on how to save electricity and natural resources. Ty will be bringing this issue to the DCA to coordinate education