



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2023

Cohanzick Nature Reserve

10:00am – 2:30pm

Council Members

Present: Amy Tuiniga, Jeffrey Perlman, Kim Gaddy, Mike Morgan, Robert Laumbach, Terrance Bankston, Tyrese Gould-Jacinto, William Casey, Chloe Desir, Chief Vincent Mann

Absent: Denalerie Johnson-Faniel, Jackie Park-Albaum, Andy Kricun, Melissa Miles, Galia Shokry, Krishna Garlic

OEJ Staff: Nadia Akbar, Rehanna Azimi, Christina Gonzalve, Anna Maria Penaherrera, Kandyce Perry, Myla Ramirez, Muskan Shrivastava

EJAC Retreat

EJAC members met in person at the Cohanzick Nature Reserve in Bridgeton, New Jersey hosted by EJAC member Tyrese Gould-Jacinto.

The day started with new member orientation where members reviewed information in a binder provided by the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) that included EJAC membership profiles, EJAC member biographies, EJAC members' contact information, OEJ staff biographies and contact information, Environmental Justice Rules flowchart, etc. New members shared reflections on their participation on the council within the past few months. Members who have served longer tenure shared their experiences, along with words of wisdom to the new members.

The day continued with an interactive educational activity led by John Volpa, Director of Education for Pineland Adventures and Founder and Chair of the Friends of the Black Run Preserve. This included a nature walk that informed about the local ecology of the property.

After an Indigenous foods-based lunch, EJAC transitioned into a full council meeting to discuss priorities for the 2024 Workplan. Members participated in breakout groups with their working groups and their respective OEJ staff facilitator.

- **Air:** In the next year, the working group will develop a framework for community air monitoring projects that overburdened communities (OBCs) may request from their local transportation management associations (TMAs) and will continue discussions to better

understand and brainstorm potential solutions to issues such as emergency communication, odors, and scrap yards, that have been of ongoing concern to EJ communities.

- Water: The working group discussed evaluating ways to increase green infrastructure in overburdened communities by identifying barriers and providing recommendations for improvement and identifying resources to increase public participation during the MS4 and LTC permit process. It will also continue to brainstorm ideas for the \$1 million watershed grant for overburdened communities.
- Land: In 2024, the working group will communicate strategies to facilitate creative and adaptive uses for brownfields and continue to amplify existing guidance on brownfield clean up and adaptation. It will also assist the DEP in identifying barriers to waterfront access in EJ communities and help promote OBC participation in a \$11.25 million grant opportunity from the Inflation Reduction Act for Urban and Community Forestry.
- EEC: The working group will work with the DEP to implement a series of seminars for EJ advocates and residents to learn how to navigate DEP systems and draft an EJ primer, tentatively titled “EJ and You,” for NJDEP to publish as a resource designed to provide basic information about EJ

The 2024 Meeting Calendar was reviewed and members were invited to discuss any conflicts with the proposed meeting calendar.

Adjourned at 2:30pm.