



# State of New Jersey

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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**SHEILA Y. OLIVER**

*Lt. Governor*

**SHAWN M. LATOURETTE**

*Acting Commissioner*

## Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2021

Via Microsoft Teams

### Council Members

**Present:** Andy Kricun, Amy Tuininga, Meredith Taylor, Nancy Griffeth, Jeffrey Perlman, Kim Gaddy, Leilani Holgado, Phyllis Reich, Melissa Miles, Jackie Park Albaum

**Absent:** Ted Carrington, Gantry Fox, Kelly Francis, Monique Griffith, Joann Held

**OEJ Staff:** Riche Outlaw, Nadia Akbar

**DOH Representative:** Barbara Goun, Christa Fontecchio

**DEP Guests:** Deputy Commissioner Olivia Glenn, Carrie Sargeant, Colleen Oropeza, Anthony Findley, Frank McLaughlin, Ashish Joshi, Christine Schell, Mandy Futey, Brad Bollen, William Lindner, Brandon Carreno, Vivi Gogo

**EJIC Representatives and State Agency Guests:** Charu Vaidya, Chris Hillman, Crystal Pruitt, Juliet Herndon, Leotis Sanders, Ashwini Sivaganesh, Melanie Walter, Elizabeth Limbrick, Juan Flores-Serrano

### Call to Order

Kim Gaddy opened the meeting at 10:02 am. Resignation announcement of Shanique Biles. Amy Tuininga moved to approve the February 10, 2021 minutes. Jackie Park Albaum seconded the motion.

### Deputy Commissioner Olivia Glenn

Governor Murphy nominated Shawn LaTourette as Commissioner of NJDEP. Invitations will be sent to attend a press event at Liberty State Park where the new Mississippi flag will be raised. Stakeholder meetings regarding the EJ rule are continuing with the fifth one scheduled for May 5, 2021 to hear comments on the Impact Statement process. Another stakeholder meeting will be scheduled the week of June 21, 2021. Hoping to have the rules promulgated in early 2022. Meetings have been held with every department and key agency in NJ on how to advance environmental justice across government and integrate equity considerations in decision-making. An initial department assessment of NJDEP is expected to be complete in June. Findings and recommendations will be shared.

### **Land Working Group**

New co-chairs Jackie Park Albaum and Amy Tuininga will focus on four very important topics this year: Urban Agriculture, Brownfields, Urban Forestry and Solar Siting. More volunteers for this working group are needed and would be appreciated.

### **Air Working Group**

An overview regarding the General Conformity Rule was given to the Air Working Group by Angela Skowronek. The rule is a Clean Air Act requirement that applies to all federal actions that are taken in designated nonattainment or maintenance areas. Examples of how conformity can be demonstrated were presented. Brad Bollen provided an update on the “What’s in my Community?” app. Brad also offered to provide training to EJAC and community groups as needed. Comments to SIP 101 memo should be sent to Judy Ranz, the point person for finalizing the document. A virtual public hearing regarding the first rule under NJPACT, Advanced Clean Trucks Program, is scheduled for May 20, 2021 at 9:00am. Comments are currently being accepted.

### **Water Working Group**

Andy Kricun announced that the moratorium on water shut-offs was extended to June 30<sup>th</sup>. Low-income water assistance continues to be at the forefront in order to reduce the likelihood of water shutoffs. The workgroup continues to advocate that NJ get its fair share of water infrastructure funding. Lead service lines should be eliminated and awareness of the dangers of lead in drinking water should continue until such lines are replaced. Combined sewage flooding continues to be a concern and the workgroup is hoping to help minimize burdens on EJ communities and advocates for more protections to long term CSO plans.

Crystal Pruitt (Deputy Director, Office of Clean Energy Equity) addressed the BPU moratorium shut off and encouraged communities to sign up for programs already in existence. BPU is also conducting stakeholder meetings about comprehensive revisions to NJ’s solar energy incentives program. At least one meeting will be dedicated to discussing solar equity and inclusion and is planned for April 28, 2021. An overview of the Community Solar Successor Program will be provided along with an update on the Board’s solar policy goals.

### **EEC Working Group**

Meredith Taylor reported that an EJ primer is underway. The primer will provide a basic grounding of environmental justice advocacy and happenings in NJ. The primer is envisioned to include, among other information, a glossary of terms, an EJ timeline, a portal for the community to provide suggestions/concerns as well as helpful resource links. A draft to EJAC is forthcoming.

### **Ad Hoc Working Group**

Nancy Griffeth provided some points to consider regarding the last stakeholder EJ rulemaking meeting relating to compelling public interest. A showing of compelling public interest should



require a facility to demonstrate that it must be located in that particular overburdened community and cannot be located anywhere else. A compelling public interest should not merely be such actions as providing jobs, planting trees, making the facility attractive or other proposed ancillary benefits of the facility; public health should be the priority. A facility should also be required to show that there is an absolute need for its services in that region.

**New business:**

NJ Student Climate Advocates reached out to EJAC offering assistance with environmental justice matters. Leilani Holgado suggested that a representative from the organization attend the next EJAC meeting to give an overview of their current projects and share ideas for involvement.

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:57am.

**Next Meeting**

June 9, 2021 at 10am virtually via Microsoft Teams

