

PLASTICS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, August 2, 2022, 9:00 a.m.

Meeting #5 - Minutes

Until further notice, Council meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams.
The meeting agenda provides the planned action items of the Council to the extent known at the time of sending.

I. Roll Call (5 min)

Members Present

Nandini Checko
Jeanne Cretella
Judith Enck
Tim Fekete
Janine MacGregor
Melissa Miles
Loel Muetter
Amanda Nesheiwat
Mary Ellen Peppard
Beth Ravit
Gary Sondermeyer
John Weber

Members Absent

Christine Cassidy
Charles Malaniak
Gary McElyea
Cindy Zipf

Additional Staff Present

Kari Martin (Clean Ocean Action)
Lauren Lamin (New Jersey Business Action Center)
JoAnn Gemenden (New Jersey Clean Communities Council)
Seth Hackman (DEP)
Julia Rossi (DEP)
Alan Talarsky (DOH)

II. Opening Remarks from Chair (5 min)

Gary welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that he will begin drafting a shell document for the year one report. Gary will use the NJ Climate Change Alliance report as a base template and Bayshore will provide a graphic designer.

III. July Meeting Minutes Certification

Motion to certify minutes from July meeting moved by Judith Enck, and seconded by Loel Muetter, passed unanimously.

IV. State Agency Report (25 min)

a. DEP report

Calls and emails to the DEP have slowed down considerably, and the two main concerns from the public is that reusable bags are piling up, and grocery stores are not putting plastic film recycling bins out.

The DEP sent out letter to the Department of Agriculture and Rutgers to correct a misinterpretation about what plastic bags are allowable. The DEP also received an OPRA request for the Council Minutes which is under review.

b. NJBAC and NJCCC report

NJCCC is assessing metrics of engagement/number of posts/ads on their outreach. They provide grant funding to non-profits and will, in the future, request that they gather metrics as well. They have 4-6 weeks to finish grant requests for this. They also want to re-launch their 'Skip the Straw' campaign. They are also working with food banks since their grace periods are ending soon. NJCCC has ordered 120k bags for food banks, which is the maximum amount for distribution at one time due to storage concerns.

NJCCC will be running Fall reusable bag giveaway programs but are reserving a supply of bags for food banks. NJCCC will also do more social media for the donation of reusable bags. Libraries in Burlington County are collecting and donating bags, and NJCCC is writing articles about the donation of bags, and providing guidance on their proper cleaning. Something to consider for the future is the end-of life disposal of reusable bags. Bag pileup due to e-commerce is being evaluated, and the NJ Food Council notes that there are logistical and legal challenges associated with bag reuse. NJCCC suggested outreach to county recycling coordinators toward determining what entities are collecting plastic film, since many grocery stores have removed collection bins.

NJBAC was not in attendance to provide a report to the Council.

c. DOH report

DOH is tracking straw enforcement on a spreadsheet. They are receiving two main complaints: restaurants not maintaining a supply of plastic straws, and restaurants distributing plastic straws

without request. Businesses must have plastic straws to provide based on ADA requirements. The goal of inspections from Health is education over heavy enforcement. DOH is developing an expanded education platform through a meeting scheduled for August 14th.

V. Old Business (60 min)

a. Updates from Committee/ Discussion of Workplan (30 min)

i. Education, Assessment, and Compliance (John Weber) (5 min)

The Committee met on the 19th and is looking to complete its work on metrics to be recommended to the PAC by the Committee's September meeting. Clean Ocean Action beach sweep data is solid and consistent, and the Committee considered normalizing this data based on participation. The Committee is also seeking more data from a county/municipal level, data from the regulated community (such as bags purchased previously), and industry members on the Committee are looking into it. NJCCC is not sure what towns can provide, but there might be towns that do pickups and have data. Sustainable Jersey does not have a litter action, but that could be developed for the future. One possible source of data is the Litterati app, which hosts solo cleanups.

ii. Environment and Public Health (Beth Ravit) (5 min)

A draft review of research on effects of microplastics is uploaded in shared folder. Many papers that list microplastics as a major concern use estimates of doses of plastics that are not found in the environment currently and thus are not scientifically credible. Microfibers may be the largest source of plastics in the environment, and a key point source is wastewater treatment plants. Next, the Committee will be looking into human health effects. They are sending papers through the DOH to check relevancy, and their next meeting is August 16.

iii. Plastic Reduction and Recycling (Judith Enck) (5 min)

This Committee will be emphasizing plastic reduction over recycling, with many policy recommendations in the works. They will use the report template to start to write up policy recommendations. Due to availability issues, they will not meet in August, but will meet in September.

b. First Year Report (Gary Sondermeyer) (15 min)

i. Recommendations

ii. Discussion

Gary will send out the outline again, which includes an example of how to present our recommendations. The Council must keep target audience for report in mind while writing. While, by statute, Council reports go to the Governor and Legislature, they are also public documents so the target audience is multi-faceted. The full body of the report can be more specific, but an executive summary can be a helpful vehicle for the general public and as a broad overview of our process and recommendations. Recommendations should be listed in order of priority.

c. Broad Council Schedule (15 min)

- i. Committee and Council Dates
- ii. Workplan dates
- iii. Speaker dates
- iv. Discussion

The Coordination team will work on a draft schedule of expert presenters, and Chair Cindy Zipf requested thoughts on speakers from each Committee Chair to be submitted by August 19 in order to get scheduling in motion and to avoid overlap.

VI. New Business (10 min)

a. Voting vs. Consensus

The Council will try to seek consensus for recommendations. If there is something controversial, the Council will discuss and adjust language to accurately reflect member positions. If significant disagreements over policy positions remain, a process for presenting dissenting opinions in the PAC report will be provided.

VII. Suggestions for next Agenda (5 min)

There were three topics recommended for the next Council meeting. These included the following

1. Ethics; DEP staff will invite the DEP ethics officer to attend and address Council questions,
2. Open Public Records Act and how it affects the Council.
3. The creation of a Master schedule for expert presentations.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:30 moved by Judith Enck, seconded by John Weber, passed unanimously.

Member Attendance

Members	April 4, 2022	May 5, 2022	June 7, 2022	July 5, 2022	August 2, 2022	Sept. 6, 2022
Christine Cassidy	Y	N	N	N	N	
Nandini Checko	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Jeanne Cretella	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	
Judith Enck	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Tim Fekete	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Janine MacGregor	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	
Charles Malaniak	Y	Y	N	N	N	
Gary McElyea	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	
Melissa Miles	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	
Loel Muetter	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Amanda Nesheiwat	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Mary Ellen Peppard	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Beth Ravit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Gary Sondermeyer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
John Weber	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Cindy Zipf	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	