

Minutes of the
Environmental Justice Advisory Board
May 4, 2010

Call to Order: The quarterly meeting of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) was held in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Delaware Room, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA.

The meeting convened at 8:35 am with Arthur Frank presiding as Chair.

Members in attendance:

Erlinda Aguiar
Eli Brill
Mario Browne
Nora Carreras
Dr. Arthur Frank
Jason Rissler
Mary Vuccola
Dr. Mark White

Members absent (excused):

Laureen Boles
Hazem Hijazi
Dr. Clea Patrick Hollis
Ann Morrison

Non-members:

Tammey Adams
Rob Altenburg
Marylou Barton
Holly Cairns
Susan Wilson
Alice Wright
Jerry Fields, PPL Representative
Residents representing Eddystone Borough

Welcome and Introductions:

The Chair, Arthur Frank, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves and mentioned their affiliation. Mr. Frank mentioned that Rev. Rocky Brown is currently running for political office and due to a conflict of interest, he will be resigning from the Board.

Office of Environmental Advocate Regional Staff Reports:

Arthur Frank requested highlights on the three regional Office of Environmental Advocate (OEA) reports and commented on how much the regional advocates actually do.

Holly Cairns mentioned that Dunkard Creek is still a very hot issue in the southwest region and northern West Virginia. She also mentioned that she receives calls every day from frustrated citizens regarding the Marcellus Shale extraction tax.

Alice Wright mentioned the recent EPA Liberty RadEx exercise she attended where a "dirty" bomb exploded at a location in downtown Philadelphia. Many state, federal and local agencies were represented by the 1,000 people attending this exercise. She also gave an update on the upcoming Chester Conference this summer. Eli Brill asked Ms. Wright about the Tookany Creek sewage release in Cheltenham Township in Chester County. She promised to gather further information for him from the DEP regional office.

Nora Carreras mentioned that the Community Environmental Project agreement for the Harrisburg Incinerator has been finalized. During the negotiations with the Harrisburg Authority, it was decided that some of the funds will be donated to the Borough of Steelton since the borough has very high asthma rates. She also mentioned the permit was approved for Hazleton Creek Properties which was discussed at the last board meeting.

Citizen's Advisory Council Update:

Arthur Frank introduced Susan Wilson, Executive Director of the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC), who mentioned that the first section of their Transition Statement is ready and was sent to the gubernatorial candidates. She also discussed the joint report on Marcellus Shale that has been completed with DCNR's Citizens Advisory Council. This issue will be discussed at greater length during the upcoming joint meeting this summer between the two councils.

There was a discussion on the policies regulating the Marcellus Shale industry. It was suggested that someone from the Bureau of Oil & Gas Management attend the next board meeting to discuss this issue.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Eli Brill to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2010, meeting. It was seconded by Erlinda Aguiar. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

Revisions to the EJ Workgroup Report – Part I:

Arthur Frank discussed the revisions needed to the EJ Workgroup Report. After ten years, the same basic issue of what is an EJ community has not been settled. The working EJ definition can only be used for policy, not for regulation or statute. The Board agreed that the concept of the definition is simple, but wanted to know how to put the concept into regulations or statutes. Eli Brill suggested that demographics and health of community should trigger a closer review of permit applications during the review process.

Update on City of Chester EJ Issues and Upcoming Conference:

Reverend Horace Strand discussed various EJ issues within the City of Chester and what EJAB can do to assist the community. He also addressed the Board in reference to the upcoming summer conference in the City of Chester. The environmental conference will be held on July 27-28 at Widener University in Chester.

Eddystone Residents for Positive Change:

Mr. Dan Arrison, on behalf of Eddystone Residents for Positive Change, gave a power point presentation to the Board outlining the environmental injustice in the Borough of Eddystone. Camden Iron & Metal is a metal recycling/auto shredder facility that wants to expand into the Borough along the industrial highway corridor. The metal recycling facility is known to release arsenic, lead, cadmium, nickel, and particulate matter _{2.5} into the air. Those chemicals may cause asthma and cancer and the Borough already has a high rate of both. The potential 63-acre site for the metal recycling facility is next to a residential area. The Eddystone Residents for Positive Change came to speak before EJAB so that the Board could be their voice to legislators and DEP regarding this issue.

After the presentation, Eli Brill suggested that the Board receive information from DEP outlining what Camden Iron & Metal submitted to the department.

Revisions to the EJ Workgroup Report – Part II:

Arthur Frank initiated another discussion on the EJ Workgroup Report. The fact that the Oil and Gas program was not included in the workgroup report when it was created was discussed in detail. It was also suggested that general permits be added to the trigger permits within eFACTS and the Public Participation Policy.

Mr. Brill suggested that the Board update the EJ Workgroup Report and include regional examples of EJ issues. Mr. Frank suggested that an assessment be done in regards to what has been met and what has not been met within the Report. The assessment will be handled by Arthur Frank, Eli Brill and Susan Wilson. The Board will then divide the Report into sections and members will team up to revise the necessary sections.

Public Comment Period:

The Chair opened the floor for public comments. There were no public comments presented.

New/Unfinished Business, Questions and Comment Period:

Nora Carreras mentioned many of the Board members' terms are up for reappointment. She asked that members inform her if they wish to continue on the Board.

Arthur Frank made a suggestion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Dr. Mark White to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Jason Rissler. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

