

**MINUTES OF
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
June 10, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER:

Bob Barkanic, CAC Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 12:32 PM.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert Barkanic, Chairperson

John St. Clair

Trisha Salvia, Vice-Chairperson

Jerome Shabazz

George Ambrose

Thad Stevens

Carol Collier

John Walliser

William Fink

Tim Weston

Katherine Heatherington

DEP STAFF PRESENT:

Ian Irvin, Executive Director

Casey Damicantonio, Policy Office

Joshua Neyhart, Policy Office

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chairman Barkanic solicited additions or corrections to the May 13, 2025, Minutes. Hearing none,

Tim Weston moved to approve the Minutes of the May 13, 2025, meeting with two corrections. George Ambrose seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

DEP UPDATE:

John Ryder, Deputy Secretary of Field Operations was present to give the DEP update with which he focused on DEP staffing. 34 of the 40 new positions DEP was given in 2024 have been filled at the time of the meeting with five more that have been given a conditional offer or are waiting on start dates. Most of those positions are engineers and biologists that will be involved in the permitting process.

Q&A included whether DEP was facing issues with recruiting qualified individuals to which John stated that there are issues finding licensed professionals that stems from the fact that DEP cannot offer salaries on par with the private sector, but people that do come to DEP are attracted by the work/life balance it offers. This led to a question regarding DEP's telework policy, which varies depending on the position. Field staff typically telework full-time while supervisory or management roles will telework part-time, being in the office two or three times a week.

PRESENTATION:

Environmental Updates and Initiatives of Evangelical Environment Network

Kim Anderson, Director of Member Mobilization & Carolyn Heckman, Associate Director of Pennsylvania Policy

The Evangelical Environmental Network brings Evangelical Christians together to work toward a stable climate and a healthy pollution free world. Their policy pillars include protecting God's creation, defending life and sustaining clean careers and prices for families.

Issues that the organization focuses on include PM 2.5, which, they maintained in their presentation, is especially harmful to unborn children. They also maintained that methane pollution is causing negative health impacts across Pennsylvania. The organization also recruits churches and Christian schools to organize tree planting events as part of their sustainability efforts.

Q&A included whether EEN does outreach to other faith-based organizations to which they stated that they do outreach with many churches and environmental organizations for collaboration and education for Evangelical Christians that may be on the fence regarding environmental issues.

Environmental Updates and Initiatives of Susquehanna River Basic Commission

Andrew Dehoff, Executive Director

The SRBC was created in 1971 with the mission to enhance public welfare through management of water resources by averting conflicts and fostering cooperation. The main issues they are focused on today include water use for power generation, public water supply diversions, and the Chesapeake Bay.

The Commission is required to adopt a comprehensive plan, which they do every 20 years, the current plan was adopted in 2021. They also develop a water resources program, which they do every three years, of which they are currently at the midpoint. The priority management areas of the plan and the program include water supply, water quality, flooding and drought and watershed management.

Q&A included how the Department works with the Commission, to which Andrew stated that the DEP Secretary has a spot on the Commission that is typically delegated to the Deputy Secretary for Water. Also, the Executive Director for SRBC is given a seat on the Water Resources Advisory Committee that is facilitated by DEP, so communication between the two is healthy.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Nominations Committee met and recommended that Bob Barkanic and Trisha Salvia serve an additional year as Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

Thad Stevens moved to place those names in nomination. Tim Weston seconded the motion.

Chair Bob Barkanic then opened the floor for further nominations. **Seeing none, Katherine Hetherington moved to close the nominations. Bill Fink seconded the motion.**

Ian Irvin then moved to nominate Bob Barkanic and Trisha Salvia as Chair and Vice Chair, which was unanimously approved.

CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Public Participation Committee

Committee met on Friday to discuss sending a thank you letter to all public commenters as well as potentially sending them resources on the issues they discuss in their comment. The Committee is also looking into creating a guidance document on giving comments to the council for members of the public to reference.

ADJOURNMENT:

George Ambrose moved to adjourn the meeting. Tim Weston seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

The June 10, 2025, meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 2:42pm.