MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD
August 12, 2026

Call to Order
Chair Adam Cutler called the meeting to order and advised the session was going to be recorded while providing the disclaimer. Chair Cutler also took roll call, and quorum was established. Chair Cutler led introductions and provided ground rules and etiquette for the meeting.

Attendance:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Adam Cutler, Chair
- Rashida Lovely, Vice Chair
- Bobby Hughes
- Jerome Shabazz
- Sophia Lee
- Maurice Sampson
- Heather Plumridge
- Rafiyqa Muhammad
- Mia Ray

Approval of the Minutes:
After review of the May meeting minutes, there was a name correction noted. Maurice Sampson made a motion to approve the May meeting minutes. Jerome Shabazz seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously

Public Comment:
Chuck Lacy, resident, raised concerns about incinerators in Chester County, specifically Reworld. Mr. Lacy raised questions about the newly updated standards and whether the facility will be required to meet those standards.

Zulene Mayfield, CRCQL (Chester Residents Concerned for Quality of Life) Chair, described many years of concerns with the Reworld/Covanta incinerator and stated that this is the largest incinerator in the nation. She has asked for a meeting between leadership of DEP and CRQL regarding Reworld concerns. Mayfield pointed out that EJ stakeholder engagement has not always been consistent and urged for further engagement among all DEP staff.

Dr. Nolan Fontaine, Chester resident and youth coordinator for CRCQL, described the experiences of people living in Chester who suffer from asthma and chronic obstructed pulmonary disorder He asked for more education focus and resources to inform and educate residents and youth. He stated that information about projects is hard to find and there should be more transparency. Fontaine expressed concern over high turnover of regional staff.

Thomas Nixon, resident of Chester and member of CRCQL, asked about the purpose of EJAB and OEJ. He made assertions that that industry and polluters are given more consideration than to people in EJ areas or communities. Nixon suggested that OEJ should do more to hold polluters accountable and to advocate “on behalf of” the people in Chester.

Election of the Chair

The process was led by Vice Chair Rashida Lovely. Adam Cutler presented his candidacy for reelection as Chair. No other candidate requested to participate. Member Sophia Lee presented a motion to reelect Cutler and ask for a vote. Member Jerome Shabazz seconded Lee's motion. The Board voted unanimously to reelect Cutler.

Updates from DEP / OEJ

Special Deputy Secretary Fernando Treviño provided updates to the members on the recent activities of the Office of Environmental Justice,

Discussion

Members of the committee requested further details on community engagement, what groups OEJ is coordinating with, and types of proactive engagement activities. Some requested to see a detailed list of proactive engagement for approval. Mr. Treviño recommended engaging with the regional coordinators for collaboration and reminded members that approval is not required and recommended engaging with the regional coordinators for collaboration

Governor's Office Presentation on Data Center Development

Sam Robinson, Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff, provided an update to EJAB about the development of data centers and recent actions by the Governor and his staff. Mr. Robinson explained that this issue has moved very quickly because the industry and permit seekers have been very active. This has led to reconsiderations of best policy approaches.

Robinson shared a brief history of the Governor's development of the GRID standards, the corresponding legislative proposals, and the legislative activity. Governor Shapiro moved forward with implementing GRID without legislation.

Mr. Robinson provided a summary of high-profile data center projects throughout the state as well as issues and concerns, water usage, character of the communities, energy price changes, and concerns over the costs and benefits to specific places and the Commonwealth overall. The Commonwealth has created a Data Center Permit Tracking Tool to include EJ areas.

Discussion:

Members expressed support for the GRID standards and asked questions of Mr. Robinson about consideration of cumulative impacts and community involvement in projects. Members also expressed an interest in consideration of a moratorium, prohibiting the use of non disclosure agreements, and community benefits agreements. Additionally, concerns were raised by members about lack of community involvement in projects. Additional discussion about specific projects and the use of Abandoned Mine Lands for Data Center location and cooling solutions. Mr. Robinson responded to questions and concerns, providing clarity about the permitting requirements and the Commonwealth's authority and role in the development of data centers.

Subcommittee / Planning Discussion

Illegal Dumping:

Members discussed illegal dumping, DEP's authority, resources available to the public, and opportunities for EJAB members to make an impact.

Cumulative Impacts:

Members discussed cumulative impacts limitations and opportunities for moving forward legislation.

EJAB's Role

Members discussed EJAB's continued role as an advisory board and brainstormed protocols for general public engagement. Members shared their interest in ways to be a conduit for public concerns.

DEP Grants

Louie Krak, Grants Innovation Officer, shared about his new role to increase exposure of DEP grants and develop a feedback loop for improvement. He tied this work to opportunities for EJ stakeholders to provide input into EJ considerations in grants, and informed the members of specific grants prioritized in EJ areas.

Old Business and New Business

Time used for further discussion of DEP grants.

Adjourn