**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities**

**(CEJSC) Meeting**

**9:30 am-11:30 am**

**Tuesday, March 22, 2016**

**Maryland Department of the Environment**

**1800 Washington Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21230**

**In Attendance**

* Commissioners: Rebecca Rehr, Vernice Miller-Travis, Arabia Davis, John Quinn, Dick Fairbanks, Lisa Nissley, Leslie Alcala (on phone), Steve Levitsky (on Phone), Subha Chandar (on phone).
* Participates: Duane Johnson, Lynn Heller, Kristen Mitchell, Andrew Fellow, Angela Bianca, George Aburn, Arjun Makhijani, Stuart Clarke, Chris Hoagland, Luke Wisniewski, Stephanie Cobb Williams, and Laura Rogers.

**Introductions**

Duane Johnson started the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting. Everyone in attendance introduce themselves and their departments.

**CLIMATE AND ENERGY EQUITY REPORT DISCUSSION**

Vernice Miller-Travis Vice Chair of the commission gave an overview of the Executive Summary of the report Ms. Miller introduced all of the stakeholders involved in the report. The question was asked why is this report coming to the CEJSC commission? Ms. Miller said because the Maryland Climate Change Commission has ask for council and advise from CEJSC on recommendations to the Mitigating Work Group (MWG) for the Maryland Climate Change Commission (MCCC) on how to integrate environmental justice and equity into their consideration and especially into the work plan that the Carter Commission and Private Insurance Commission is developing so that they can go forward for the next five years for work that they do to implement Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA). Ms. Miller said she wanted to make sure CEJSC was informed on those recommendations. Dick Fairbank said the report was too long and lengthy, Rebecca Rehr said the Maryland Environmental Health Network is working on a two pager to come out with and that it’s a time line and that it’s a mitigating working group meeting on April 25, 2016 so it was important that we discuss this report at this meeting because the mitigating work group ask for our input prior to the April meeting and we are hoping that today is the beginning of that discussion and that folks in the room can represent CEJSC at that meeting. Ms. Rehr said this is the beginning of that discussion delving into the report and picking out the things CEJSC want to represent to the mitigating work group on April 25 and then regroup about it on April 26 at the CEJSC meeting.

Ms. Miller continued with her briefing talking about reduction in carbon emissions, substantial social inequities in Maryland as it relates to climate change and policies used to address climate change, gaps and opportunities in the GGRA Plan, requiring a cumulative impacts analysis for greenhouse gas reduction programs and policies, supporting meaningful and engagement and outreach to empower communities, addressing disparities in access to greenhouse gas reduction and climate adaptation benefits, addressing disparities in burdens created by greenhouse gas reduction and climate adaptation and policies and finally improving support for vulnerable communities through Maryland’s greenhouse gas reduction and climate adaption programs and policies. All of these items are better explain in the report.

Ms. Miller mentioned the appendices programs that already exist for example Multi Pollutant framework, Mid Agencies and Maryland Department of the Environment. Ms. Miller believes that this is where we going to see real innovation and policies are at the Multi Pollutant framework. Ms. Miller believes that all the communities that come, all the visits that the commission makes to talk about all the burdens that they are baring, the way this is going to be address systemically is through the Multi Pollutant Framework which is a cross product activity which MDE is going to be leading to implement the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act here in Maryland. For example, how could they be address? Include black carbon particulate matter and soot as part of the framework and implement and enforce cumulative policies that would target communities with high social and environmental climate burden. So these are the recommendations that MCCC is recommending that MDE is already going to be involved in and is the lead agency to look at the Multi Pollutant Framework.

It was suggested by Ms. Miller that the strategies in the GGRA could create about 37,000 jobs b y 2020 Dick Fairbank disagreed. The fact of the matter is jobs will be created but how do we get them to the folks that are systemically are under unemployed and the people who transitioning from extracted industries get other jobs. Ms. Miller say we have to make sure that we aren’t displacing people but we are really creating opportunities in this new green economy and it’s only going to happen if we are thoughtful and sit down with our stakeholders and think about how that could happen. There were some discussion about outreach and how we need to began training people about the green economy and energy efficiencies at the elementary level all the way through college and post graduate level. Not to mention the folks who aren’t in the education pipeline and that everyone needs to know that we have these opportunities and by accessing these opportunities we can bring down the burden of cost. **Ms Miller feels this is so important and really set up the underlining theme of this report which is that poor people pay disproportionately much more higher cost for energy and a much higher percentage of their income for energy then does middle class and upper middle class folks.** So that outreach, bringing diverse groups of people who aren’t the usual people who come out to these meetings and hearing and who are part of this conversation the outreach is going to have be different and ramped up and really tailored to getting this conversation to the people who we really need to be in the room with.

Empowered Maryland is a program that help Marylanders pay their utilities bills as of 2015 360,000 people are eligible for this program. Currently it is 3,600 people enrolled. At this pace it will take 100 years to get all of the eligible people enrolled, Ms. Miller said we got to do better and we need to put these benefits out there to the people that really need them. It was some discussion about Maryland Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards and Fuel Switching. Finally, this is how deeply we looked at the opportunities facing these communities. We have tremendous opportunities that we already created and we going to create new opportunities under implementation of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act that the Maryland Climate Change Commission is working on, their developing their work plan for how the GGRC will be implemented. Ms. Miller said what they are suggesting is that they take a deeper look at these opportunities to address environmental justice and inequity in the implementation of the plan. This is just a highlight; you all have a copy of the report.

Rebecca Rehr pointed out that the roll of CEJSC in statutory charge is to analysis the effectiveness of state and local government to address issue of environmental and sustainable communities, the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is again a tremendous effort on the state level but now it’s up to the commission on how to advise and to prioritize the communities that need the most outreach and communities sources. Another charge of the commission is to develop criteria’s to assess what communities in Maryland maybe experiencing EJ issues and recommend options for addressing EJ in those priority areas of the state. Ms. Rehr said that it’s important that the commission ways in on the existing policies, existing work going forward and making sure that no one state agency is held accountable for prioritizing vulnerable communities and environmental justice outreach and implementation. Ms. Rehr said she do want to emphasize that we as a body aren’t recommending a new policy or laws were recommending how the state is prioritizing existing resources and programs to make the biggest differences in the communities that need it most and that’s really where the commission voice is most valuable, for setting the tone so that the conversation and opening up for discussion and prioritization on what we talk about.

Dick Fairbank mentioned that the Fuel Fund of Maryland is a program that everyone can utilize. Dick said mandating renewable energy is creating a bigger problem in the since because the differences between the lower cost of natural gas, solar and wind, energy companies are hurting, like N. Dakota. Dick said the greater the disparity between prices of natural gas and renewable energy the greater burden it would be to support those people who can’t take advantage of renewable energy. Ms. Miller said that’s exactly what we want to see the Climate Change Commission due is to really address those inequities and there are some built in inequities and if you don’t figure out how to address those inequities in a systemic way at a policy level than you just keep repeating the problem over and over again and you just keep leaving folks out or you just keep supporting this inequity and cost and access to cost. Ms. Miller said that’s why we want Climate Change Commission look deeply and that’s why we gave them a road map of places they can look. This report is fairly comprehensive a review of existing clean energy programs, energy efficiencies, food systems and farming. Ms. Miller said we just to took a exhausted look at what we have now and if we can just do some of this, we could start a robust market here in Maryland and we want to create jobs but we want people to be able to access the resources and tools that people are putting on the energy efficiency market place. So we can do two things we create a more stable market and we create avenue for everybody to be able to access what people are putting into that market for sale.

Subha Chandar on the phone ask a question: Is this part of your role plan in presenting presentations like this and are you going do other communities contacts? Ms. Miller said yes, we are starting more of a role out the Maryland Environmental Health Network is going to be part of that role out. On February 20 Ms. Miller gave a briefing for EEFI on the report just in Maryland as an example. Subha ask what are some of the takeaway or feedback of the briefing. Ms. Miller said they love it and gotten so much positive feedback and almost everyone in the room and on the phone line has requested a copy of the report. On April 25 Climate Change Commission will be meeting at MDE between 12 -2 pm in the Aeris room.

George Aburn of MDE ARMA program said that Maryland is obtaining all federal air quality standards first time ever and he mentioned other accomplishments his program has obtained. He said he thought the Climate and Energy Equity report is a great report but thought that it could use some improvement and he thought the Climate Change Commission should have been involved in helping to draft the report. Mr. Aburn was invited to come to CEJSC meetings whenever his calendar allows him and to join in on these conversations.

Rebecca made a request that the commissioners that in the next week or so you really dig into the report because CEJSC will be presenting to the Climate Change Commission mitigating group on behalf of the commission so dig into report and send recommendations that you think need to be prioritize and area of the state that should be prioritize? What mapping tools we should be using to identify in those area? There are several as DHMH roles out the sub county level health data is that something we should be talking about in the content of climate change? There are some real questions that the commission could be important in answering and bringing to the climate commission and this is an ideal moment to begin the engagement between CEJSC and the MCCC. We should really take the advantage of the engagement with MCCC and come forth on the April 25 with some concrete recommendations. It was mention that we get an updated emailing list for CEJSC commissioners to keep this conversation circulating among commissioners. Rebecca said that on April 25 the commission has an opportunity for EJ to weigh in on what’s mitigating work group is doing and that our expertise and knowledge on these issues are going to be really important in fulfilling our charge and improving living conditions for all Marylanders.

Ms. Miller said that when she and Ms. Rehr present these recommendations to the Climate Commission Work Group they are the recommendations of the folks who been working as part of this process not recommendations of CEJSC. Ms. Miller said if you seen things or know of things that are really important and are consistent with conversation CEJSC has had around the table please do share them with Rebecca. Ms. Miller said she wanted make sure that people understood that they aren’t going to put the recommendation on the table as though they are coming from CEJSC. Rebecca said she do think we should be developing recommendations from the CEJSC.

**CEHPAC UPDATE**

May 24th is the Joint meeting with CEJSC.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT OUTREACH**

Andrew Fellow said beginning last year they created a sub-committee to talk about outreach to local government counties and municipalities. Mr. Fellow said they had a great meeting with Les Knapp director of Maryland Counties Association and Counties (MACO) in December. Mr. Knapp had a wiliness to go forward and ask the sub-committee to come up with a resolution or statement on how this fits into CEJSC mission.

Arabia Davis said they spoke with Les Knapp and MACO one of things they want to do is try to engage other MACO representatives, county staffs and other jurisdictions to discuss environmental justice throughout Maryland. Arabia said they were ask to come up with a couple of action items and one of those items was a Mission Statement. Arabia ask the commission to look over the mission statement and give your thoughts so that they can give them to Les and he can present to his representatives. It was decided to invite Les Knapp to the April 26th meeting. Arabia decided to take the lead on inviting Les Knapp to the meeting.

**CUMULATIVE IMPACT UPDATE**

Lisa Nissley said the cumulative impact work group been on hold because of the legislative session. She said that the cumulative impact bill didn’t pass this session. Rebecca said the ongoing cumulative work group process was a major road block in passing the bill. Once the work group saw the bill wasn’t moving as written they amended the bill to become a reporting requirement for MDE by December of 2016. There is currently no date by which the cumulative impact work group will present recommendations or whether MDE will on behalf of the workers. It was suggested to extend an invitation to CEJSC commissioners to attend the cumulative impact meetings.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**