



July 11, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Called to order at 1:15 PM at the Haliwa-Saponi Tribal Government Complex

Board Members Present:

Dr. James Johnson, Chair
Dr. Marian Johnson-Thompson, Vice-Chair
Jeff Anstead
William Barber, III
Veronica Carter
Jamie Cole
Angela Esteva
Dr. Susan Jakes
Dr. Danelle Lobdell
Marilynn Marsh-Robinson
Naeema Muhammad
Sarah Rice
Reverend Dr. Rodney Sadler Jr

Presentations:

HR Forms, Teresa Everett, Temporary Solutions
Self-Introductions
DEQ EJ Overview, Secretary Michael Regan, DEQ
DEQ Initiatives, Assistant Secretary Sheila Holman, DEQ
EJE Board Charter Review, Assistant Secretary Sheila Holman, DEQ
Ethics and Public Records Law, Assistant General Counsel Drew Hargrove, DEQ

Business:

Future Meetings

As required per the Board's charter, the Board will meet four times a year, with the option to call emergency meetings as needed in person or via conference call. Because the July meeting was the first meeting of the Board and was after the beginning of the calendar year, the Board will not be required to meet four times in 2018. For the remainder of 2018, the Board will hold one meeting in November. For 2019, the Board decided to meet in February, May, August, and November.

The Board discussed that the meetings be held in varying communities across the state, with focus on communities facing environmental injustices.

Chairman Johnson requested that the Board send topics they wish to discuss prior to future meetings, and Chairman Johnson and Vice-Chair Johnson-Thompson will ensure those topics are discussed during meetings.

Media Policy

The primary topic discussed in regards to media policy was the issue of whether Board members should speak to media on behalf of the entire Board, or on behalf of themselves in the context of Board activities. Vice-Chair Johnson-Thompson brought up concerns over the potential manipulation of Board Members' words to represent the Board as a whole rather than an individual Board Member.

Board Member Carter mentioned many local news outlets may have connections to Board Members and want to take a personal approach to interviewing Board Members. The Board emphasized the importance of transparency to community members, while respecting that because the Board has many diverse voices, one Board Members' specific opinions or ideas may be conflicting with the Board's consensus.

In order to ensure transparency in the Board's activities, the Board discussed the potential for a post-meeting report. This report would include detailed minutes to recognize each Board Members' individual ideas while summarizing the events of the meeting as a whole. The Board also brought up that such a report would allow community members to understand the events of a Board meeting and would allow the opportunity for the Board to translate complex ideas.

After much discussion, the Board decided to put this issue on hold pending Secretary Regan's input.

Receiving Public Input

Chairman Johnson asked for the Board's input on the mechanism for receiving public comment. Board Member Muhammad suggested the Board do a "roadshow" that gives a personal view of environmental justice communities. In response to a question posed by Board Member Anstead in regards to the time commitment associated with these "roadshow" meetings, Chairman Johnson suggested the Board break into subcommittees to hold these meetings in order to cut down on the time commitment for each Board Member.

Board Member Barber suggested there be a policy put in place to document these subcommittee meetings in order for the individual subcommittees to report back to the entire Board. The Board discussed breaking the subcommittees down by issue. Board Member Carter emphasized the importance of allowing the public to speak to the Board or a delegation of Board Members.

The Board discussed holding each of the four required meetings in different environmental justice communities across the state with a community response component for each meeting. Board Member Sadler suggested a listening tour where the subcommittees, divided by issue, visit parts of the state where the issue is relevant. Following the tour, the Board would publish a statement regarding the state of environmental justice in North Carolina.

Board Member Carter agreed with Board Member Sadler's suggestion, adding that the Board should take tours of adjacent environmental justice communities prior to meetings to gain a community perspective specific to the area where the meeting is held.

The Board discussed the importance of documenting the meetings in order to remain objective while reporting back to their respective communities. The Board also emphasized that the community response component of the meetings would likely be a listening session. This would allow Board Members to bring what they hear from communities at subcommittee meetings back to the entire Board.

End Product

Board Member Carter suggested that the end product of the Board may not need to be a written form as just listening from communities across the state will make a more well-rounded Board. In order to remain objective, Board Member Barber mentioned it may be necessary to have a video, audio or written form of the meeting to reduce the reliance on each Board Member's personal memory of the meeting.

Chairman Johnson agreed that a written annual report may be necessary for the Board. Board Member Cole mentioned that a written report would also allow the Board to act as an intermediary to translate complicated or technical ideas to their communities. The Board agreed with Chairman Johnson and decided to complete a written annual report.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:17 PM