



Minutes of the Environmental Justice Task
Force
Community Engagement Subcommittee Meeting
April 7, 2020

Zoom Conference Call

Subcommittee members present:

Emily Pinckney, Subcommittee Co-Chair
Megan MacClellan, Subcommittee Co-Chair
Bridgette Valdez-Kogle
Shirlee Tan
Julia Havens
Stephanie Celt
Bill Bennion
Alexandra Doty

David Mendoza
Mike Chang
Farah Mohamed
Rowena Pineda
Sinang Lee
Micaela Araguz Razo
Myra Hernandez
David Ortiz

Task Force staff present:

Elise Rasmussen, Manager

Guests and other participants:

Kate Griffith, Utilities and Transportation
Commission
Sunrise O'Mahoney, Watershed Alliance
of SW WA
Heather Tischbein, Friends of Clark
County
Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Katie Brotten, Snohomish County Case
Management & Equity and Inclusion Task
Force
Rodrigo Renteria, CWU assistant
professor and Commissioner for Hispanic
affairs

Megan MacClellan, Subcommittee Co-Chair, called the public meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

1. INTRODUCTIONS & COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Members introduced themselves and the group reviewed today's agenda and adopted community agreements (on file).

2. ROUNDTABLE

The Subcommittee discussed how they have had to adjust community engagement strategies and considerations due to the COVID pandemic.

Sinang Lee, Member, spoke about the responsibility we have to understand and value community wisdom, including getting information to communities that are not often reached. She also discussed the work of community health advocates in partnership with Public Health Seattle King Count to do peer-to-peer outreach work during the Stay at Home order using the Zoom web platform. They are working to encourage community advocates and compensate them for their virtual work. She also mentioned that the health department is working to improve on holding time and space for simultaneous interpretation to address language access needs.

Emily Pickney, Subcommittee Co-Chair, spoke about working with youth and various communities during this time to give step-by-step demonstrations via Zoom for the Point Defiance Zoo.

Mike Chang, Member, spoke about the challenges that rural communities are facing with unreliable access to internet and technology. He also spoke about the challenges that many tribes are having now that many reservations are closed to those who are not tribal members or tribal staff. He stated that this is the time of year to hunt, gather, and fish for subsistence and meals for the rest of the year, so many tribes are making difficult decisions to balance health and safety with cultural staples.

Micaela Razo, Member, spoke about how the Latino Community Fund is working with a national organization to fund small businesses in Yakima. She also mentioned that local organizations who do not traditionally do environmental justice and health work are shifting their focus to these areas, as well as gathering food and other supplies for the Latinx community in the Yakima Valley.

3. REPORTING BACK – EJ TASK FORCE MEETING

Megan MacClellan, Subcommittee Co-Chair, debriefed the Task Force meeting and walked through the Guidance document (on file) and shared that there were no immediate concerns from Task Force members regarding the preliminary recommendation that every agency should have a community engagement plan. The Subcommittee also discussed comments that came from community during the April 2nd Task Force meeting.

4. NEXT STEPS – CLARIFYING GOALS FOR OUR WORK

Megan MacClellan, Subcommittee Co-Chair, shared the writing timeline document (on file). Subcommittee members are expected to read through the entire guidance document and revise their assigned sections by April 20th. The Subcommittee will then do a peer review of the document to date, after which the Subcommittee Co-Chairs and staff will review and synthesize our work in May. The goal is to have several rounds of feedback and a draft revisions.

5. Q & A SESSION

The group discussed the larger goals of their work. Members discussed the following in reference to how they can improve the guidance document:

- More language on the principles and values of Community Engagement
 - Refer to the Department of Health and New York City's Health Department for precedent language that helps bridge agency work.
 - The Subcommittee can also refer to the Environmental Justice Task Force's Operating Principles (on file).
- Including the benefits and drawbacks to having agencies tailor their own community engagement plans. If there is a gold standard, that means there might be a path toward unification on how to do community engagement. This document might benefit from an explicit mention about how communities or other entities can keep government transparent and accountable.

- Aligning with the Mapping Subcommittee’s list of agency activities so we can build on the mechanisms that already exist that require agency accountability (e.g. the EPA’s procedural safeguards checklist).
- Ways in which this document can be catered to community and community advocacy work.

6. APRIL HOMEWORK BREAKDOWN

The Subcommittee reviewed the expectations and writing style the upcoming homework.

7. NEXT STEPS & GOOD OF THE ORDER

The Subcommittee Co-Chairs thanked the group and community members for attending the meeting, and said they would follow up with next steps in the coming weeks.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Megan MacClellan, Subcommittee Co-Chair, adjourned the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

GOVERNOR’S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HEALTH DISPARITIES

First Name Last Name, Co-Chair

First Name Last Name, Co-Chair

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