

Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF)  
Minutes  
Meeting of Task Force  
January 16, 2009

ATTENDING

Task Force Members: Sybil Ackerman, Leroy Jackson, Jr, Ben Duncan, Robin Collin, Julie Samples, Jonathan Ostar, Khalid Wahab, Terry Witt, Will Collin Everette Rice. Absent: Jack Johnson (Excused), Ray Caballero (Excused).

State Agencies: Department of Environmental Quality, Department of State Lands, Water Resources Department, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Department of Human Services, Department of Agriculture, Public Utility Commission, Department of Forestry, State Fire Marshal, Oregon Department of Transportation, Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division, Oregon State Marine Board, Oregon Department of Energy.

Department of Justice: Larry Knudsen.

Staff: Jessica Hamilton, Governor's Natural Resources Office; Ann Butte, Assistant.

A quorum of the Task Force Members being in attendance, the meeting was called to order at 10:07 am.

RESOLUTIONS

- 1) The Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) approved the methods for finalizing the annual report. The group gave the working group chair permission to make the changes discussed at the meeting.
- 2) Members of the Interagency working group will query EJTF agency citizen advocates about their reactions to the Department of Environmental Quality's internal efforts to engage its staff in environmental justice topics (EJ), and the agency's external efforts to engage the public on EJ.
- 3) The Education and Outreach working group will move forward with developing an Environmental Justice Bills of Rights. Among other things, the document will present an EJ vision for Oregonians, mention the EJ issues identified in the 1998 task force recommendations, and identify the EJTF as a venue/portal for people to talk about EJ topics.
- 4) With Robin's temporary term as Chair fulfilled, Will was chosen as the new Chair of the EJTF. Khalid will remain Vice-Chair and Robin will serve as meeting facilitator.

ADDITIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- 1) Legal Issues – Department of Justice (DOJ) counsel Larry Knudsen discussed:
  - a. DOJ's role working with agencies
  - b. Ways DOJ can be of assistance to the EJTF
  - c. Interpreting SB 420 and obligations of state agencies

- d. Sharing of information by the agencies with the EJTF
  - e. Fundraising
  - f. Enforcement of SB 420
  - g. Administrative
    - Ex: Quorum is 7 of 12 members; consensus can be encouraged but cannot be required. No proxies are allowed but people can participate via phone
- 2) EJ and Land Use Planning - There is no specific requirement for state and local planners to consider environmental justice issues. A suggestion was made that such a requirement be proposed to the Land Conservation and Development Commission.
  - 3) Interaction with Tribes – The EJTF could work with tribal ‘cluster working groups’ such as a) Natural Resources, and b) Public Safety and Economic Development.
  - 4) Climate change – The potential negative effects that climate change policies could have on low-income citizens was raised.
  - 5) Environmental Protection Agency – Running Grass from EPA offered EPA’s EJ training services, announced an upcoming state EJ grant opportunity, and announced a future Environmental Law Institute training. The timeline for updating the Performance Partnership Agreements (PPA) between EPA and DEQ was discussed.
  - 6) Public Comment –
    - a. Lisa Arkin of Oregon Toxics Alliance encouraged support of an Oregon bill that addresses toxic pesticides and their effects on school children.
    - b. Jeff Bissonette of the Citizen Utility Board represents residential rate payers and works on developing sound climate change policies.

## WORKING GROUPS

- 1) **Interagency** (Khalid) –
  - a. A ‘tool kit’ for agencies for implementing environmental justice should be developed after the EJTF has defined the range of issues for consideration.
  - b. DEQ presented their two web EJ sites (internal and public). Khalid recommended that these become templates for other agencies. DEQ is also conducting an EJ training for managers.
  - c. It was suggested that agency ‘core competencies’ for managers be updated to reflect environmental justice considerations.
- 2) **Annual Report** (Jon)
  - a. Jon presented a draft version of the EJTF annual report. He requested review of agency sections for accuracy (due 23<sup>rd</sup>).
  - b. There was discussion about EJ issue identification, and the extent to which climate change should be highlighted.
  - c. The report will contain an appendix, which focuses largely on urban EJ issues. The report should mention that further information is needed on rural and tribal issues.
- 3) **Education & Outreach** (Sybil)

- a. Sybil reviewed her memo which proposed ideas for moving forward in the area of education and outreach (note: it was determined later that this memo would not guide the future plans of the working group).
- b. The TF discussed ways to interact with people and communities in order to learn firsthand about the issues of concern to them.
- c. A Bill of Rights would serve as a broad vision, identifying issues that are important to communities.
- d. While the web can serve as a tool for outreach, it will not serve the needs of all Oregonians interested in these issues. It was decided that a systematic survey would not be used for outreach.

#### SHORT TERM ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) Agencies provide feedback on their section in the annual report by Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> (Jessica to compile).
- 2) Set up conference line for 9am Jan. 30<sup>th</sup> for EJTF to approve report and inform the public that they can call into the meeting as well (Jessica and Ann).
- 3) Make adjustments to annual report based on EJTF feedback (Jon).
- 4) Place annual report and minutes on the Governor's EJ web site (Jessica).
- 5) Look into listening function via the web for the public (Jessica talk to ODOE).
- 6) Forward Lisa Arkin's public comment to EJTF members (Jessica).
- 7) Draft a Bill of Rights (Sybil and work group).
- 8) Research Oregon's land use planning system and how EJ might be addressed through this system (Will).
- 9) Share information about EPA's grant announcement and the ELI training (DEQ).
- 10) Talk with Oregon's Department of Administrative Services about core competencies for agency managers and how EJ might be considered in the future (Nina with DEQ).
- 11) Poll members to establish a regular meeting schedule for the EJTF (Jessica).

#### RECOMMENDED FUTURE ACTIONS

- 1) EJTF can engage in future updating of the PPA between EPA and DEQ.

#### BIKE RACK

- 1) Consider revising SB 420 through the legislative process (Sybil).
- 2) Memo to the Governor on the effects of climate change policies on EJ constituencies (Terry, Robin, Will).

#### NEXT MEETING

Conference call January 30, 9am – 10 am.

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00pm.