

# Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force

Meeting Minutes

Oregon State University

12:00p.m.-4:35p.m., October 23, 2009

## ATTENDING

Task Force Members: Will Collin, Robin Collin, Ben Duncan, Khalid Wahab, Julie Samples, Sybil Ackerman, Jonathan Ostar, Terry Witt, Marcela Mendoza, Jack Johnson (phone). Excused: Leroy Jackson, Jr., Everette Rice (on phone partially).

State Agencies: Oregon OSHA/Department of Consumer and Business Services, Dept. of Environmental Quality, Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of State Lands, Dept. of Land Conservation and Development, Office of State Fire Marshall, Water Resources Dept., Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, State Fire Marshall, Dept. of Agriculture. Via phone: Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Dept. of Human Services.

Staff: Jessica Keys and Jenna Borberg, Governor's Natural Resources Office.

Public: Lisa Arkin (Oregon Toxics Alliance), Carley Francis (Columbia River Crossing Project), Anissa Teslow Cheek (Student Alliance for Environmental Justice, Oregon State University), Justin Barbot-Wheaton (Student, Willamette University).

A quorum of the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) members being in attendance, the meeting was called to order at 12:05p.m.

## RESOLUTIONS

- 1) It was resolved that the EJTF will participate in a panel at the Black Bag Speakers Series at Portland State University for outreach and education in January or February 2010. The TF will unveil the Annual Report at this event. The TF would like for communities to be invited, as well as representatives from Oregon's Hispanic, Asian, Indian, and Black Affairs commissions. Sybil will take the lead on this and will work with Avel Gordly.
- 2) It was resolved that EJTF members will continue working with agencies to discuss a) ways that EJ can be incorporated into agency efforts, and b) development of custom work plans.

## ADDITIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### 1) Member Update

Dr. Marcela Mendoza, Executive Director of Centro Latino Americano, is a new member to the EJTF. She has joined on assignment of the Commission on Hispanic Affairs. Jack's membership was renewed and Khalid will also pursue reappointment.

### 2) Governor's Letter to the EJTF

Jessica presented an overview of the Governor's letter to the TF. The Governor offered assistance to the TF in their efforts to engage agencies. He is also interested in hearing how EJ ties into the following priority policy areas: health care, climate change, environmental health, and transportation.

### 3) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

a) Will attended a meeting in October on EJ and economic development with the EPA. A regional meeting (likely in Seattle) will discuss the next generation of EJ.

b) Charles Lee of the EPA has met with members of the TF several times to inform him about who the TF is, and to discuss potential funding. Lee has a vision of sustainability and EJ going hand in hand and wants to create an interagency TF among federal agencies. Lee expressed interest in staying engaged with the EJTF.

c) Will informed the EJTF that he provided public comment to the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (a stakeholder advisory body to EPA). His comments were his own however, he highlighted the work and needs of the EJTF.

### 4) Community Mapping Project

Jon announced that \$15,000 has been awarded to support the identification of EJ communities in OR (\$10,000 to Portland State University for mapping EJ communities and \$5,000 to OPAL for community involvement in this process). The maps will help DEQ a) know where EJ communities are located, b) target resources, and c) identify where issues exist. In late September, Jon sent an email to EJTF members with initial demonstration maps to see if they are on the right track and to request additional guidance. With the EPA funding and additional funds, these maps will be developed further and data from the 2010 Census will be added. Khalid, Marcela, Will and Ben volunteered to serve as an advisory group to provide guidance on key issues related to the project over the coming year.

### 5) Columbia River Crossing (CRC)

Jon informed the group that the CRC has temporarily disbanded their EJ working group, but some members have attempted to hold their own meetings. A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been completed and is available on the CRC website; a final EIS is due this Spring. No further action by the EJTF on the topic of the CRC is needed at this time.

### 6) Partnership with DHS

As a result of legislation that passed in 2009, the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) is transitioning to 2 agencies: DHS and Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

Beginning in 2011, the new OHA will focus on health care services. Agency staff are in the process of identifying functions and services that will be best shared between the agencies. The Office of Multicultural Health and the Office of Environmental Public Health are currently in the Public Health division of DHS, and are likely to be under the OHA.

On behalf of the EJTF work group meeting with DHS, Ben discussed ways that the EJTF can collaborate with the new OHA. Environmental justice fits very well within

conversations around social and physical determinants of health. They determined short and long-term goals (*for these goals, see Ben for more information*).

#### 7) Education and Outreach Work Group

Sybil discussed planning the outreach event at Portland State University (PSU). There will be a reception and presentation. The Work Group will also consider potential actions that could take place during the day on PSU's campus (ex: workshop). Discussion also focused on the purpose of the event and invitation list. The 2009 EJTF Annual Report will be one of the items available.

#### 8) Public Comment

Lisa Arkin (Oregon Toxics Alliance) - OTA is working with the organization Centro Latino Americano to raise awareness of environmental concerns over a proposed hog-boiler/wood biomass facility in Eugene. She stated that it will cause air pollution that will primarily impact low income and Latino populations residing nearby. DEQ does not have regulatory authority in Lane County, so OTA has presented concerns to the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority (LRAPA).

#### 9) Agency Custom Work Plans

Goal: At end of year (2009), have each interagency work group write a 1-pager on steps accomplished by agencies, areas to work on in the coming year, and what agencies could accomplish with additional funds. These summaries can inform substance of annual report.

##### (a) DEQ

Jon provided updates on DEQ's efforts around the mapping project, permitting, enforcement, and training (Mikell will travel around the state over the next 3 months to train approximately 700 employees on EJ). Jon suggested that EJTF members include in their conversations with agencies a discussion of the anticipated EJ community maps: how can the data and maps help the agency/how would the agency use them/how would it affect future agency work. After the agencies answer these questions, the next step is to develop the agency outreach and training plan.

##### (b) ODOT

Jon provided updates regarding ODOT's efforts around the Columbia River Crossing, minority contracting and job opportunities. Hal expressed interested in having EJ integrated into project design up front. Hal said he will facilitate providing ODOT project teams information about EJ communities so that they can take into consideration potential impacts.

##### (c) Oregon OSHA

Julie reported that the focus of the discussion was on the nexus between workplace health and safety and EJ, and what data is needed to inform the discussion. David Sparks (Oregon OSHA) provided an overview on enforcement,

consulting, and external education. OR OSHA now focuses inspections on industries considered high risk (ex: logging, agriculture).

(d) DOGAMI

They are conducting Lidar (Light Detection and Ranging) mapping to look at geologically vulnerable areas and are thinking about emergency response. DOGAMI was encouraged to work with the State Fire Marshall's office and Oregon Office of Emergency Management around emergency planning on the community level. Tsunami response and mine permitting were also topics discussed.

(e) State Marine Board

Marine Board deals with boating activities and floating homes. They have a Clean Marina program. At first glance, there does not seem to be clear EJ issues, but further conversations will take place.

There are a few agency meetings still to take place; agency citizen advocates are encouraged to contact their appropriate EJTF member to engage in future conversations.

10) Agency Comments

As was discussed in past meetings, it would be good for the TF to review land use decision-making at the local level.

11) Annual Report

Will lead preparing the 2009 Annual Report, using the 1-pagers from the Interagency Work Groups as the core of the document. Focus should be on a) steps taken by agencies in the last year, b) an identification of areas to work on in the next 12 months, and c) what actions agencies would prioritize if provided additional financial resources. Side boxes could be used to highlight notable agency successes.

12) Community Capacity Building

Robin emphasized the importance of helping communities build capacity so that they can tackle EJ issues. There is likely a range of needs: educational, legal, trainings, economic development, etc.

13) Rosemere Case

Will provided an overview of the Rosemere Case, which has shined a spotlight on EJ and Civil Rights complaints and may result in more Title 6 complaints in the future.

## **SHORT TERM ASSIGNMENTS**

1) Carryover Actions from Previous Meeting:

- (Re)invite DAS to discuss possible next steps for incorporating EJ into the worksheets that Khalid presented (job descriptions, staff reviews, etc.).
  - Update the above mentioned worksheets based on EJTF input
  - Ensure that Dept. of Justice reviews worksheets at appropriate time).

- Ask DAS about their manager training series and whether an EJ training module is feasible. (Will)
- 2) Correspondence with the state's Stimulus team will take place. (Will)
  - 3) Jon and Mikell are seeking input on the mapping project from TF members (Will, Marcela, Khalid and Ben said they will help).
  - 4) The TF should get budget needs to agencies very soon (Jan 2010) so they can start thinking about how this may fit into their programs for the 2011 legislative session.
  - 5) Jon will report back to the EJTF regarding results of the Oregon Conservation Network's annual legislative summit.
  - 6) Jessica will ask that the TF be added to the list of interested parties for the CRC Bridge project.
  - 7) Jon will follow up with Rep. Kotek's office regarding her interest in the CRC and potential impacts to the Hayden Island community.
  - 8) The EJTF needs a Commission on Black Affairs representative that can be present at meetings. Robin will call Everett and Avel Gordly to discuss this concern and Will will write a letter to the Commission. Recognizing that proxies are not possible for the EJTF, Jessica will check whether co-appointments are possible.
  - 9) For the Annual Report, Jon requested that Interagency Work Groups send Will 1-page summaries of discussions and actions to date. The Annual Report will be discussed at the January meeting.
  - 10) Jessica will send an email asking TF member to brainstorm people to be invited to the outreach event planned at PSU.
  - 11) Jessica will ask agencies to provide lists of upcoming public involvement opportunities and public meetings that have an EJ angle. These opportunities could be posted on the EJTF website.
  - 12) Mikell will provide feedback to the EJTF on her EJ trainings of DEQ employees.
  - 13) David will provide EJTF a copy of Oregon OSHA's risk assessment criteria.

### **RECOMMENDED FUTURE ACTIONS**

- 1) Carryovers from Previous Meeting:
  - Develop an EJ education and training module for general agency staff (Will)
  - Develop a list of resources for the EJTF including experts, organizations, and trainers (Will).

- 2) Take actions in response to the Governor's letter to the EJTF.
- 3) Khalid, who works with Kaiser Permanente, mentioned that they are starting to collect health data that could be broken down into race and ethnicity. He offered to partner with Tricia at the Office of Multicultural Health on this project.
- 4) Robin asked that the EJTF work on community capacity building (ex: identify groups to partner with, host a discussion on how to help build organizational capacity on the ground). Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) was suggested as a group that could be invited to EJTF to discuss ways to help non-profits and communities build capacity.
- 5) Will suggested that the TF think about making recommendations for future handling of the issues raised in the Rosemere Case.
- 6) Connect with Lewis and Clark's small business clinic, which serves minority and low income clients.
- 7) Write a letter to LRAPA/DEQ regarding Lisa Arkin's public comment.

#### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Next meeting: January 15

April meeting: OPAL will host (Portland)

#### **ADJOURNEMENT**

Approximately 4:30 pm.