



November 14, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Called to order at 12:47 PM at the Mayo Park Environmental Education and Community Center

Board Members Present:

Anstead, Jeffrey
Barber III, William
Carter, Veronica
Cole, Jamie
Esteva, Angela
Haven-O'Donnell, Randee
Hernandez-Pelletier, C. Mercedes
Johnson, Dr. James Chair
Johnson-Thompson, Dr. Marian Vice-Chair
Lobdell, Dr. Danelle
Marsh-Robinson, Marilyn
Muhammad, Naeema
Owle, Joseph
Rice, Sarah
Sadler, Rev. Rodney
Yang, Dr. Yu

Board Members Absent:

Susan Jakes

Presenters:

Marcus Williams, DEQ - IT presentation
Toby Vinson, DEQ - Hurricane Relief Efforts
Karen Higgins, DEQ – Cumulative Impacts
Ray Stewart, DEQ – Wood Pellets
Ed Mussler, DEQ – Coal Ash

Sign-in sheets are attached to the meeting minutes for the public record. Sign-in sheets were presented at the front door for the public to sign in upon arrival or at the time of departure, at the persons will.

IT Presentation

Marcus Williams discussed the issues of advisory board members becoming locked out of their state email accounts. Mr. Williams informed members that a new password must be set every three months. It was also highlighted that there are two separate websites which can be accessed; the Outlook email website and the NCID website. Mr. Williams can be reached at 919-707-9148 with any concerns regarding an email account or NCID. Should further assistance be needed, contact Sarah Rice at 919-707-8287 or Renee Kramer at 919-707-8292 to open an IT Ticket so your concern is tracked and Marcus doesn't lose sight of your problem.

Hurricane Recovery

Toby Vinson of the Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources (DEMLR) in DEQ gave a presentation showing some of the environmental impacts from Hurricane Florence. These included flooding of roads, farms and towns, breaches in waste management systems and the Sutton Coal ash pond. Ms. Carter asked a question about what monitoring has been done on water quality and food consumption warnings. Mr. Vinson and Secretary Regan of DEQ informed the Board that sampling is being conducted and food advisories have gone out through Division of Marine Fisheries and Department of Health and Human Resources. North Carolina has three main things happening in response to the Hurricane; creation of the Office of recovery and resilience, Executive Order 80 on climate change, and infrastructure improvements. Board members expressed concern that DEQ has not been informing the public on these items and what has been occurring in response to the hurricane. Secretary Regan asked the board to help us find new outlets to reach more people on what DEQ has been doing post storm.

Board members also expressed concern about hog and poultry farms flooding, resulting in dead animals and waste dispersed in the water. Ed Mussler, DEQ – Solid Waste responded that chickens are mostly composted on site and that the hog farms have had far lower mortality rates after Hurricane Floyd because of many being moved out of the flood plains. Secretary Regan discussed that there is a buyout program through the Governor's Office that will continue to reduce the number of farms in flood plains.

Presentations

DEQ staff gave three presentations on the three subcommittees developed by the Department. Those three topics were cumulative impacts, wood pellet industries, and coal ash. Presentations are included as an attachment to the meeting minutes.

Cumulative Impacts, presented by Karen Higgins of the Division of Water Resources looks at cumulative impact analyses. Ms. Carter noted that the health and community piece was missing from the current analysis. The definition the Department uses for cumulative impacts was brought up as another concern. Current definition being "environmental impacts resulting from incremental effects of an activity when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities regardless of what entities undertake such other actions. From DEQ Rule 15A NCAC 01C .0103. This was put on hold to discuss more at a later time.

The wood pellet presentation was given by Ray Stewart of the Division of Air Quality, who discussed the current presence of the industry in North Carolina and what regulations we have.

A coal ash presentation was given by Ed Mussler of the Division of Waste Management. Mr. Mussler described the start of environmental justice in Warren County was because of waste going into a landfill. Solid waste Statutes are the only in North Carolina that allow consideration of socioeconomic and demographic data for a new landfill.

Public Comments

An hour of time was set aside for members of the public to come in and give comments to the Board. Chairman Johnson and Vice-chair Johnson-Thompson collected written comments. There was some concern expressed that there was inadequate notice given to community members to have them come out and speak. There were two notices published regarding the meeting. In the future, DEQ will try to increase the advance notice of meetings to encourage more public comments and community member attendance.

Board structure

Chairman Johnson requested that in future meetings, logistical issues not be addressed during the meetings, but at other times as to allow for more time for productive discussions at board meetings. It was also requested to send out slides in advance and present series of questions at the end of presentations on what they can do to help DEQ. It was also requested that all the dates be set for the 2019 meetings at the beginning of the year and to send out the locations earlier.

Ms. Jamie Cole and Mr. William Barber III presented a proposal to create 4 subcommittees within the Board. Those would be cumulative impacts, climate change, clean and equitable transition and clean water. A phone call will be scheduled for the week of November 19 to finalize the subcommittee structure. The July meeting minutes will be reviewed by members before the call and will be approved on the phone call. (Minutes were approved on this call and subcommittee structure approved, with the slight change of including clean air in the clean water subcommittee. Board members expressed the importance of both clean air and water and the desire to combine them into one subcommittee.)

Ms. Cole brought forward a resolution with requests pertaining to Hog Farms and the Swine permit. This resolution was passed out to members but determined that it would be discussed more later.

Next Meeting

The board decided that the next meeting should be held in the Wilmington area. This meeting will be in February, with the exact date to be determined by a Doodle Poll.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:00 PM