

**MEETING NOTES**  
**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**December 15, 2015**

**Smyrna Area Rest Stop**  
**Smyrna, Delaware**

**Members Present:** Anthony Jay Julis, Pamela Meitner, LaVaida Owens-White, William Pelham, Marvin Thomas, Joseph Farrell

**Members Absent:** Robert Frederick, Harold Truxon, Jason Adkins

**DNREC:** James Brunswick, Patrick Emory, Nicole Bixby, Christina Wirtz

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

Mr. Pelham called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

**II. Meeting Protocol Review**

Each Member read a point of the Council's protocol.

**III. Review/Approval of Meeting Notes**

*MOTION was made by Ms. Pamela Meitner to approve the October 20, 2015 meeting notes and a second was made by Mr. Anthony Jay Julis. All in favor and the motion carried.*

**IV. Community Environmental Project Fund Report**

James presented a PowerPoint to report updates on the 2012 projects. \$304,182 was approved in 2012. The first update was provided on the middle school which was an outdoor classroom. They used our funds to match federal grant funding. Our funds can't be used as a match for other grants. Bob Zimmerman also thought there was a conflict of interest and it sat for a year without approval. Watershed stewardship found other money to replace the funds from our grant. All of the projects shown were approved by the Secretary.

**The Delaware Ornithological** project is still in progress. Weather has been a factor in the delay of completion of the project. Mr. Pelham inquired if these projects were only 2012 projects or if there were 2013 and 2014 in the presentation also. James stated these projects are completed except Delaware Ornithological, but some were finished in 2014. Ms. Meitner inquired if the company sends in any report once the project is complete. James stated that there is an interim report and a final report sent in from the company. Ms. Meitner stated that they would like to see final reports as they come in. James stated that they are large documents, but he can bring them in to meetings. Mr. Pelham asked if James could provide some photos to the Council at the completion of the project also.

Mr. Thomas stated that if we are allowing communities to use these funds that were affected by the penalty, there should be something going out to the community to report on what is being put back into the community with each project. James advised that we need to create a portal for the communities to see. Mr. Emory advised he would like to see a press release announcing the five grants that are approved for this year once the approval is done and the projects are approved. Ms. Owens-White agreed that the community doesn't perceive this council as having that much interaction with the community projects. James did advise that we ask the grantees to acknowledge the CEPF in any publications. Ms. Meitner stated that she would like to see the obligation on the entity to acknowledge the contribution from the State of Delaware CEPF. Any press releases should come from the Secretary once he has approved the projects and just mention CIAC and legislative initiatives.

**Delaware Museum of Natural History** Project photos were shown.

**Claymont Phase III** dust study updates were provided. The community collected the data and compared it to our data. In some cases they could show more particulate matter than the Wilmington/Belfont monitoring sites. A slide showing trends was presented.

**Delaware Nature Society-Young Patterson Tax Ditch** slides were presented. The project made some recreational use of the site and developed some trails and used 120 hours of community service, entrance gates and 90% of invasive were removed and the project stayed below budget.

**Delaware Ornithological Service Fort Dupont Reforestation Project** planted 150 trees and shrubs and put fencing around the trees to protect them from the deer. Pictures were shown of the project.

**Delaware Nature Society** connecting air and water for public education measured the amount of pollution that comes from the air and settles into the water. The project used a solar powered monitor to show the relationship. Over 500 visitors attended the workshops and 1,769 students and 5,142 visitors attended the site throughout the project. Pictures were shown of the project.

**Delaware Wildlands** wetlands creation and enhancements at Betts Farm property was a project that restored 8 acres of wetlands from a farm. Pictures were shown of the project.

**New Castle Community Corrections** (a New Castle Community based recycling program) purchased and installed a baler and pole house for storage. They accepted recycling from the Women's treatment facility and it has now become a model in the state correctional world.

**Delaware City for Horticulture** project was reduced due to the Secretary's recommendation. Some Cypress trees were cut due to budget decrease.

**Friends of Wilmington Parks** connected Delaware's children with nature. This project was one of our most successful projects with parks to do science based projects. The

project works with a group of science teachers with the Department of Education and uses this project as part of their curriculum. Summer camps are also using this project. Mr. Thomas inquired if anyone has identified schools that are going to use this program. James advised that there were kids from the Albert Palmer and Bancroft on the East Side. Mr. Thomas inquired if the Neighborhood House could participate with this project and James advised yes.

**Katie Helm Park** in Dagsboro project extended the walkway to the pavilion. This has assisted in walkways throughout the entire park.

**Delaware Greenways Historic Penn Farm** partnered with William Penn High School and the culinary arts program. They grow the vegetables for the culinary arts program. They learn to cook, grow food and harvest the food. This project made this farm sustainable (conserving water, runoff, cleared invasive and installed a bathroom).

All of the 2014 projects are all wrapping up and 2015 projects are about to be underway.

## **V. Community Ombudsman Report**

### **A. Title VI/Environmental Justice Framework**

James explained that DNREC is working on strengthening the Title VI compliance by adding in Environmental Justice into the plan. There will be some follow up conversations on what role CIAC will have in the plan. James advised Samantha Beers from EPA would like to come speak to CIAC in the future. Ms. Meitner inquired as to the schedule for grants for the next year. James advised there is not a schedule yet. There are a couple of penalties so there will be funding. Ms. Meitner inquired what the track line was previously, but inquired if there will be the ability to work with a summer growing period. Ms. Meitner was under the impression that the funding cycle began in January. Mr. Emory advised there would be a schedule at the February meeting. James advised that what interrupted the cycle this time was waiting for money to accumulate. James went on to explain Title VI to the council members. Mr. Thomas asked if James could advise the individual coming to address the council that the council is only advisors to DNREC. James advised that the public involvement plan allows for community outreach in the early planning stage. James handed out a copy of data sources for indicators of stressed communities. The department doesn't have the tool to challenge the discrimination of a particular area. This mapping tool pulls this information for the challenge if needed reflecting environmental stressors. Ms. Meitner inquired as to where the council fits in after the mapping is done. James advised if an individual made a complaint, the map would be able to make the argument or break the argument. The council's role would be part of the complaint process. James reviewed the requirements for the EPA 202 guidelines as well as handed out Public Involvement Plans from Long Island. Mr. Thomas suggested that whoever is putting this together and representing this council to not reflect this council for more than this council is able to do.

## **B. Morningside Village**

James advised that there was a forensic audit done for the accounts of the Homeowners Association and found there were some thefts. The individuals are being prosecuted. Elections of new officers are to be done in January and being overseen by the Department of Elections. The Secretary is looking for money for a temporary operator and minor upkeep on the system. James advised there are at least 24 other communities that are in similar situations and there needs to be an entity created to handle these issues.

## **C. Delaware Concerned Residents for Environmental Justice Conference**

James attended the conference and one of their issues is chemical safety through executive order. One of the issues in chemical safety is Dollar Stores. It's an environmental justice issue and the organization goes around and purchases products. The community will sit down with the store and try to negotiate carrying a different type of product or stop carrying it completely. Mr. Pelham inquired as to why they were targeting dollar stores. James advised most of these dollar stores are located in low income communities.

## **VI. Open Forum**

Mr. Pelham asked if James could recommend an air quality study done and meet with Ali with follow up.

Ms. Meitner asked Mr. Pelham if we could change the December 20, 2016 meeting date. Mr. Thomas inquired if there were any remaining issues between the department and the applicants. James advised the contracts have been done. Mr. Thomas also asked if there was any follow up on the agreement the department made with Peninsula Compost. James advised there is still material onsite and he will follow up with an email.

Mr. Emory advised that the Governor's office is on a big push to fill all of the seats on CIAC. Gary Emory turned in his letter of resignation. Mr. Emory advised that the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary are reviewing the roles and meeting structure of CIAC and it is reflecting that it doesn't allow community involvement during the day. There may be a possibility of transitioning into evening meeting hours. Mr. Pelham advised maybe the council could do a test. Ms. Meitner asked that no tests be done on evening hours during the winter months.

## **VII. *The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.***

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicole Bixby  
Administrative Specialist II, DNREC, State of Delaware

*The notes of this meeting are not intended to be a verbatim record of the topics that were presented or discussed. They are for the use of the Community Involvement Advisory Council members and the public in supplementing their personal notes and recall of presentations.*