

Virginia Council on Environmental Justice (VCEJ) Notes

Department of Wildlife Resources, 7870 Villa Park Dr. #400, Richmond, VA 23228

Tuesday, September 13th, 2022, 10:00am – 5:35pm

Attendance:

- **Present In-Person Council Members:**
 - Taysha DeVaughan, Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards
 - Kathryn MacCormick, Dominion Energy (left early)
 - Andres Alvarez, Acadia Services
 - Kendyl Crawford, VA Interfaith Power & Light and Virginia Conservation Network
 - Dr. Janet Phoenix, George Washington University
 - Aliya Farooq, VA Interfaith Power & Light (arrived late)
 - Rev. Dr. Faith Harris, VA Interfaith Power & Light
- **Staff In-Person:**
 - Danielle Simms, DEQ
 - Gwendolin McCrea, DEQ
 - Jeff Steers, DEQ
 - Stacey Farinholt, DCR
 - Angela Davis, DCR
 - Carrie Hearne, VA Energy
 - Edward Cronin, VA Energy
- **Excused Absences Council Members:**
 - Karen Campblin, ktcPLAN – unable to attend due to personal emergency
 - Lydia Lawrence, Fairfax NAACP – participating virtually due to work
 - Rev. Dr. Mike Ellerbrock, Virginia Tech and Minister, Catholic Diocese of Richmond – participating virtually due to work
 - Clarence Tong, Arrival – unable to attend due to a work emergency
 - Harrison Wallace, Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund – unable to attend, work emergency
- **Unexcused Absences Council Members:**
 - Fernando Mercado Violand
 - Tom Benevento, New Community Project
 - Dr. Theresa L. Burriss, Radford University
 - Ronald Howell, Jr., Virginia State University
 - Lillian “Ebonie” Alexander, Black Family Land Trust
 - John Boyd, National Black Farmers Association
 - Meryem Karad
- **Staff Virtually:**
 - Grace Holmes, DEQ
 - Chad Martin, DEQ

DID NOT HAVE QUORUM

Council Notes:

10:03am Welcome, Chair Taysha DeVaughan

10:05am May and July Meeting Minutes Approval and Today's Agenda Approval, Chair Taysha DeVaughan

- Unable to approve minutes due to lack of quorum

10:10am Emerging Issues Subcommittee Update and Discussion, Subcommittee Chair Dr. Janet Phoenix

- The subcommittee met on August 29, their goal was to circle back with some of the communities the council has worked with in the past and to share information with members of the subcommittee about issues that council members needed to know about
- This agenda item is to recap the presentations at the August meeting
- The subcommittee will be submitting draft recommendations for the Environmental Justice (EJ) Council report
- Moving forward each subcommittee member will be tasked with being a community liaison, they will be taking mini-field trips (as long as only 1 or 2 members going to visit a community, this will not violate ethics principles, but will give the council a way to have a deeper dive and to have direct engagement with communities)
- The subcommittee wants to identify cross cutting issues for the council to address
- **Maritime Heritage Communities in Suffolk and Chesapeake (community along Nansemond River), Presentation by Katie MacCormick**
 - Wants to see what the council can do to move things forward
 - The community faces threats of climate change in this low-lying area
 - Underserved community, at times unable to connect with utility services and other services
 - A lot of development is taking place without regard to community health and desires
 - Other issues include septic systems and stormwater management, mosquito treatment, traffic and air pollution, access to clean water (wells), legacy pollution issues (oil tank), maintaining character and the historical feel
 - Many of these communities have fisherman and watermen with the associated issues if the environment is not taken care of and fisheries have low yields
 - Makes a lot of sense for the community to engage with the state
 - The council's next step is talking to Ms. Grace Holmes (DEQ) to see what gaps are still there, try to build a coalition
 - Maritime Heritage Community Report on Conversation with Mary Hill, Report by Janet Phoenix

- Many community members have left and sold their homes because they were told that they could not put in a bathroom/make improvement due to local code (but developers were able to build houses with amenities)
 - New developments have also caused problems, concrete slabs have created additional drainage problems, starting to see significant erosion issues (seeing caskets pop out in cemetery)
 - Beginning to see back up of sewage into homes
 - Some questions: Is it possible that the community could get some assistance for floodplain management? Were residents told something different than developers?
 - Council Discussion:
 - How does inaccurate census data contribute to EJ issues?
 - Currently the African American community is falling through the cracks, and they are not being represented in the data, one of the consequences of being a small community is being overlooked, implications are that you are not going to get the opportunities for extra scrutiny for permitting, different areas highlighted for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Justice 40 program
 - Last 2020 census had a lot of flaws because there was not the same robust knocking on doors
 - The council should spend time thinking about how the census is contributing to EJ issues and speaks to the importance of people going on the ground in communities, council members were applauded visiting communities in person
 - Council should look at mapping tools as well especially for November meeting
 - The Commonwealth needs a narrower frame of how you define a community even if it is nested in a larger boundary
 - At the November meeting, council can discuss definitions at federal level vs state and how we can improve them
- **Bristol Community, Report by Janet Phoenix**
 - The community was the subject of an expert panel that made recommendations on the Bristol landfill
 - Decision was made to close the landfill, a number of highly technical issues still exist, and unclear if there is money available to take the expert recommendations
 - An update from Dr. Samuel Weddington (written)
 - Bristol has stopped taking trash at the landfill, the city is trying to find a place for trash
 - City delayed issuing an RFP for trash collection until August (but it is now issued, and the city has not received any bids), no long-term strategy yet to meet expert panel recommendations, currently patching together short-term fixes

- Residents are worried that the city may reopen landfill once air pollution concerns are addressed
- There are community concerns about the city's commitment to take the recommendations of the panel
- The community was told that DEQ is working with city to discuss order
- Court agreement reached between Bristol, TN and Bristol, VA, TN filed the injunction
 - Many benchmarks have not been met (cover landfill) apart from the closing of the landfill
 - City filing motions to extend deadlines due to delays caused by the weather and being unable to find workers
 - Judge says that the city has not treated the situation urgently
- City needs to publicly commit and remediate the disaster
- Input from Faith Harris
 - Not just odor, it is fumes as well
 - Children are having nosebleeds and asthma attacks
 - Community is suffering, some people are losing time on the job because they are unable to maintain health
 - An exacerbating issue is that the city is not communicating with its residents
 - Transparency and openness would help to resolve some of the issues
 - Experts and DEQ knew from the beginning that a quarry landfill was a bad idea
 - Another large issue is where is the city going to find the money to be able to close and remediate the issue
- Jeff Steers, DEQ
 - Working with the city, negotiating consent agreement, he does not believe it is the city's intention to take trash again
 - They have been steadfast at encouraging the recommendations from the expert panel
 - Problem cannot be fixed right away because it is not realistic
 - We all agree that there needs to be transparency and updates to the community and residents
 - Currently negotiating an order, DEQ does not dictate how the city does it, but they do have to have something that is multi-faceted, the city could be doing outreach now, transparency helps everyone
 - DEQ does not have a specific template on how to do a communications plan to a community, but they do have some specific guidance that they have shared in the past on similar issues
 - Janet requests that Jeff Steers share communications guidance with the EJ Council regarding Bristol landfill discussion
 - Jeff Steers will find out timeline for negotiations on Bristol, Taysha suggests potential update from DEQ on status update at the next meeting

- Council Discussion
 - Now the city must pay for both the disposal of trash and the remediation of the landfill
 - Communications and money are the fundamental issues
 - Specific request that the Commonwealth encourage the city to follow the recommendations of the expert panel
 - A written communications plan for the city would be helpful
 - Expert panel report recommended public informational meetings and ongoing communications but that has not happened, city needs to do this ASAP
 - A general plan on how they are going to address has not yet been presented
 - Newspapers are not good at communicating to the public, DCR did a survey recently and found that people use Facebook more than anything (survey focused on the southwest), also have a toolkit for communications for flood management for cities
 - Angela Davis will share toolkit communications/community outreach that DCR floodplain management has developed
 - Potential report topic - what does a multifaceted communications strategy look like for communities
- **Brown Grove Update- Wegmans Distribution Center, Aliya Farooq**
 - Faith and Aliya went to Brown Grove community last week and spoke to residents
 - Great deal of information sent out to council members via email
 - History of brown grove:
 - 1870 – founded by formerly enslaved people
 - 1950 – community was divided into two because of I-95 construction, around that time a large truck shop came into town
 - 1969- municipal airport added, airport still growing
 - 1970s- commercial landfill added (endangering well water, dangerous pedestrian traffic and small roads, lot of truck traffic, roads also flood)
 - 2000s – several families uprooted from their homes to expand airport, but expansion never took place
 - Approximately 220 acres (~21 football fields) have ancestral gravesites, some efforts were made to find the sites after the fact, but unfortunately all the grave markers, including those of the founders of community, were destroyed during the clearing process for Wegmans)
 - Millions of dollars of state money were given to Wegmans to build in this EJ community
 - Community found out through a press conference from Northam
 - Location is across the street from a church, which is the heart of the community
 - Some community members are afraid of retaliation, but some are speaking up anyway

- Wegmans not planning to do anything for the Brown Grove Community
- Will have continuous traffic and floodlights, the facility is in very close proximity to the road
- One of the biggest community concerns is the impacts on wetlands, Wegmans estimated damage to fifteen acres of wetlands, the community estimates about thirty acres of impact, a reassessment was needed
 - The community is concerned that the wrong type of permit was granted, one not compatible with the damage the facility is doing to the wetlands
- Brown Grove is now on VA's register of historic places, hoping to get on national registry as well
- Community was able to make Wegmans agree to not use the road where the church is although the employee entrance is still very close to the church (few hundred feet away)
- Some suggestions that would benefit the community are bike paths, sidewalks and parks, want the Wegmans generators not to be run on diesel which would add to the air pollution
- Will be seven hundred employees working there, which would add to traffic, 24/7/365 operation, a community member suggested Wegmans not operating on Sunday or on holidays to give the community a break
- Two lawsuits are outstanding
 - One involving water permits for wetlands
- Council Discussion
 - Historic designation took place after the construction process started
 - The letter regarding historic designation has not received a response from Wegmans
 - If any improvements do take place (adding sidewalks, very narrow roads with little/no shoulder, etc.), the land should be taken from Wegmans not from residents
 - Everything is in very close proximity (homes, church, Wegmans center)
 - Concerns for safety of cyclists and pedestrians now and with the traffic increases slated to come with the facility
 - Trucks and employees should be coming in the same entrance (away from the community)
 - Concerns about the removal of trees
 - The community is already dealing with constant traffic and disturbance, one community member has said that he currently cannot sleep because of the disturbances already taking place
 - Wegmans picks affluent neighborhoods to serve with their stores, but puts their distribution center in an EJ community
 - There are now concerns about flooding because of the taking of the wetlands
 - Council should invite Department of Forestry program to talk about best practices and their programs to replace trees after construction– would

also be good to hear from Department of Emergency Management and Historical Resources for November

- Facility will be bringing in tax dollars, money could be first used to benefit the Brown Grove community
- Next meeting, we will hear from Harrison on Union Hill
- The Radford Army Munitions plant has been suggested to Janet to investigate
- **The Emerging Issues Subcommittee is also working on draft permit recommendations, the draft permit recommendations from the EJ Council are below:**
 - 1. VA Department of Economic Development should make a presentation to EJ Council when new projects are being proposed or considered that could be sited in EJ communities.
 - Janet has not received comments on this suggestion for permitting
 - 2. DEQ should brief the council when permits are being proposed or considered that could impact EJ communities.
 - Janet has not received comments on this suggestion for permitting
 - 3. DEQ should consider what facilities, businesses or other land uses are within a 5-to-10-mile radius of a proposed permitting operation as part of incorporating EJ review into its decision-making process.
 - Janet has received comments on this suggestion for permitting
 - Cumulative impacts are at the core of EJ, but cannot be considered
 - Questions raised on impacts of considering cumulative impacts on agency staff and how the mile radius was chosen
 - DEQ is currently working on draft permitting guidance that could include early notification and special notifications, etc.,
 - The draft permitting guidance would look at the added activity and disproportionate impact to an area
 - Unfortunately, DEQ cannot not grant a permit for cumulative impacts, they could do extra monitoring and compliance activity once a project has started, which would enhance the permit
 - This guidance is currently under review in the Secretary of Natural Resources office then would go on to town hall for public comment, Jeff cannot speak to how long it will be under review
 - The council should base its EJ council recommendation on the permitting on the document
 - DEQ (Jeff) could present on both guidance document for permit (once it comes out for comment) and PETE program (for permit tracking) at a future meeting
 - Recommendation three must be based on science, evidence, data, and mapping tools instead of arbitrary number of miles
 - The recommendation does not have any strict denial of permit, just a consideration of what is in the area, there should be a process for protecting communities from harm

- Recommendation three needs wordsmithing, Janet will wordsmith permitting recommendation number 3
 - There is a lack of resources for meaningful data for air and water quality, could add a recommendation for baselines and regular data monitoring for both the annual report and for the permitting recommendations
 - An inventory of agencies who do permitting and who make the decisions would be helpful, could also add a recommendation on this for both the annual report and for the permitting recommendations
 - Need to define who (which agencies) the council is speaking to for the draft permitting guidance
 - There is an interagency review process for some projects, which may be a good avenue for multiple state agency permitting projects
 - 4. DEQ, Department of Agriculture and other relevant agencies should detail for the Council their process for considering environmental justice in its permitting process
 - Janet will add clause about “including all agencies that make permitting decisions” to recommendation four
 - EJ council members should send additional feedback on permit recommendations to Janet
- The AG has just released new guidance to meeting procedures for governor’s councils, a concern was raised to DEQ about virtual subcommittee meetings, DEQ is awaiting guidance to give to EJ council therefore no virtual subcommittee meeting time was set for the Emerging Issues Subcommittee

12:30pm Working Lunch - Public Comment Period and Discussion

- No written comments received beforehand
- **Kelly Hengler, Leesville, Executive President, Crittendon, Eclipse and Hobson Civic League**
 - Learned that this coming Wednesday (9/21) will have a rezoning vote in Suffolk, her community wants to stop a heavy industrial zone being located right beside agricultural zone (Port 460)
 - Would like an EPA style community study, because they have the interstate, cypress burrow and ties to Great Dismal Swamp historical heritage
 - Pro-growth and pro-capacity building along their corridors, but never built up to accept the capacity of industrial trucks
 - Community concerned about drainage to Nansemond River
 - Heavily majority minority boroughs where impacts are slated
 - Currently building out road infrastructure
 - Port 460 would create a brand-new industrial zone, which would be in the same area as Lake Mead which feeds Nansemond River
 - The area has never been heavy industrial
 - Residents found a JPA application and residents commented on the permit, asked for a public hearing, but that is outstanding

- DEQ is awaiting a water permit
 - There are over one hundred well owners who are concerned about well water and have signed a petition
- **Chief Rosa Holmes Turner, Rushmere Community Development Corp, Isle of White and Surry County**
 - Several different problems
 - Oyster beds closed due to a kepone issue
 - The community wants to look at water issues since the widening of Route 10, a stormwater basin has had been erected and as a result has had years of stormwater on her property and adjacent properties of neighbors
 - The stormwater basin overflows onto their property, including those of elderly neighbors
 - Rushmere established in 1582, merged with Smithfield in the 1970s
 - The community needs to have issues addressed
 - Have a large number of cancers and MS in her neighborhood, could be associated with environmental issues, toxins in fish
- **Renada Harris, Member, Brown Grove Community (also on Bonica Tapman and Tim Washington)**
 - Thanked the council for visiting and thanked Danielle Simms for outreach (something they had never received previously from DEQ)
 - The state needs to level up from standard of a newspaper listing being adequate for public outreach, when an applicant puts a notice in the paper, it is not meaningful engagement
 - She is not only about Wegmans, but also dealing with other industries coming in
 - There is an economic zone which is in Brown Grove in county plan, feels like the plan is to squeeze out the residents in the community
 - A fence company wants to tear down a house and build a warehouse
 - Industry is decreasing home values, which creates a trickle-down effect, which would wipe out the community in the long term
 - Right now, with Wegmans owning 220 acres, they own 20% of Brown Grove, community has asked for help from Wegmans to curb impact with lights and moving the employee entrance
 - There are major concerns about traffic
 - At the church entrance, marquee has been damaged by traffic, cars have flipped already
 - Will be worsened with seven hundred employees going into the distribution center everyday
 - Community asked for a cumulative impact study to be done, one has not been done by DEQ and EPA, the community does not know what the negative impacts are
 - It is an uphill battle to get streams and wells tested to get a baseline
- **Sheila Joseph, Resident, Fairville Neighborhood, Portsmouth**
 - Talked to a lot of other residents who live in different areas of Portsmouth

- She is a long-term resident and has noticed that the city needs updates for its sewer as it is getting more rain now (lived at the same address for 32 years)
- There was a hurricane in 1999 and it created a huge flooding issue, also Hurricane Mathew damaged home and streets as well
- The community has old pipes
- She has gone out with her son to collect resident information to get information on flooded streets (not just with hurricane, but with normal heavy rainfall as well)
- The flooding is happening in a black and the low-income community
- The city is addressing flooding in downtown and High St, but not in low-income areas
- She is trying to compile photos and a map of where the flooding is happening
- People are negatively impacted by the lack of infrastructure
- She asks for any people with helpful resources to contact her because there is a lot of resources that are needed
- She suggests that infrastructure/IIJA investments be spent on communities like hers
- Her home was flooded in 2016 and now she no longer has access to her first floor, neither FEMA nor the city has helped
- A lot of people are getting resources and she has been in communication with the city
- EJ council should arrange a visit to the Fairville neighborhood in Portsmouth
- **Carolyn White, Chesapeake and Suffolk side of Pughsville**
 - The stories heard earlier indicate that multiple communities are in the same boat and dealing with similar issues
 - She has contacted the local government and mayor as well as having attended both Chesapeake and Suffolk council meetings,
 - At one meeting she was disrespected by being laughed at during the city council meeting for expressing her concerns
 - She has spoken to many elected officials and representatives
 - She feels that Suffolk and Chesapeake are playing games because money is available, the cities also claim that they do not know the boundary lines between them
 - The city was given \$7 million for Suffolk retention pond
 - One of the developers was taken to court (by the city?) to get the lot for the retention pond
 - The city then gave the developer its permit after the city had the lot
 - The city has misused money in the past
 - Her neighborhood is automatically excluded, the city has not been doing black communities for stormwater work until they feel like it and her neighborhood was left out of the census
 - Nothing moves the city until they are scared straight
- **Mary Hill, Resident, Hobson, Portsmouth**

- She could identify with many of other speakers and introduced her mom who is 101 years old
- She is part of the seventh generation in Hobson, moved back in 1999
- The potential of building generational wealth through land is stolen by developers, right now threatening to strip community of wealth and land
- Development is continuing to escalate in Hobson, Pughsville, Chuckatuck, Portsmouth, etc., and she feels like this is a determined effort to eradicate communities
- She wants to give the next generation a birthright, but her community is being flooded out and the city is not repairing shoreline
- The same human rights her mother was fighting for, Mary continues to fight for
- The city tells residents one thing and developers another
- Community does not want to be a line of mention in a history book
- They desperately need infrastructure dollars to solve their flooding issues
- **Angela Harris, Southeast CARE Coalition, Newport News**
 - Thanked Kelly Hengler
 - She applauded air monitors that were installed in Newport News
 - Recommends Dr. Erica Holloman's dissertation on the community (now located in Georgia)
 - Also, Dr. Mary Finley Brook has access to a report
 - Will have a unity meeting on the 15th at the Main Street Library
 - She exclaims urgency and unity of these matters and encourages everyone to pay attention to air monitors in Norfolk and Newport News
 - Council invited to toxic tour in Newport News
 - Raised awareness about Charles City Coalition
- **Council Discussion:**
 - One emerging theme is the inability of community member to engage their decisionmakers/policymakers about issues that are directly affecting them, communities are left with the feeling that they do not matter and are part of the problem
 - May want to add a recommendation into the annual report for a written communication plan for EJ community engagement for cities and counties, the council also could do a similar recommendation for agencies to answer what does community engagement and outreach really look like
 - Zoning and local government issues were left out of the EJ Act, but are serious issues and impediments to justice
 - Council continues to encourage community members to advocate
 - Zoning/local government should be on next (and every meeting agenda)
 - Communities are weary of fighting these issues stemming from racialized policy embedded in code and the way people do business in the state
 - In November meeting, we will work on putting the report recommendations together

- Jeff works with closely with the VA Economic Development (VED) and typically they work with local economic development agencies and the entire process is extremely competitive, really starts with the local government, Jeff can ask VED for someone to come and explain the process
 - A representative came last year, but would be helpful to have them make another presentation, could use Wegmans as a case study to figure out what went wrong
- Carrie Hearne – locality comprehensive planning happens every 2-5 years for communities, variety of different planning districts, communicating between PDCs and VA Association of Counties, talking to them would give the council a nice idea of the process from the local government side

2:00pm Just Transition and Infrastructure Subcommittee Update and Discussion, Subcommittee Chair Clarence Tong

- Clarence unable to make the meeting
- There is a VDOT meeting on Friday, Faith and Clarence will be joining on behalf of the council

2:01pm Agency Updates

- **Department of Energy Updates, Associate Director Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Carrie Hearne and Colleague Ed Krogan-GIS**
 - Mapping Historically Economically Disadvantaged Communities (HEDCs)
 - Historically Economically Disadvantaged Communities (HEDCs) are part of the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA), which passed in 2020
 - Virginia Energy has begun a process to define where these communities are
 - Three-part process: Mapping piece, economic impact analysis and report process
 - Virginia Energy report on the impacts of the VCEA are due Jan 1, 2023
 - HEDCs were found across the state in relation to power plant locations
 - VA Energy recognizes that the census data sets were not perfect, can look at other datasets that may have more accurate data for the gaps, trying to look at methodology to supplement the best they can for missing data
 - Used US census data and American Community Survey (demographics)
 - The four communities that had no census data were part of a chemical plant in Midlothian, Blacksburg, normally areas with no data are universities or prisons, places with people without an income
 - Council Discussion:
 - The state should not be using census tracts, should be using block groups to get more granular data to see who is being impacted, should be an EJ council recommendation
 - The state should include census blocks to produce a “zoomed in” version of the map

- Census data can leave out minority, linguistically isolated, and low-income communities, it is important that communities are not erased
 - Census is best available dataset
- **Department of Conservation and Recreation, Angela Davis, NFIP Coordinator, Division of Dam Safety & Floodplain Management**
 - Community Flood Preparedness Fund
 - Purpose of the fund is to reduce impacts of flooding, including those driven by climate change
 - Money may be used to mitigate future flood damage and help communities (inland and coastal) across the Commonwealth subject to recurrent flooding
 - No less than 25% of the money disbursed from the fund each year shall be used for projects in low-income geographic areas, no maximum on using funds for low-income areas
 - Nature-based solutions are prioritized in the fund
 - Grant fund as opposed to loan
 - Two rounds of funding have just been completed – well over 25% of funding went to low-income areas, third round application just closed in April, awards should be out by end of the month
 - DCR will do new training and engagement for the grant application manual, there is a gap in capacity for localities to apply
 - VDEM has contracted out a company to work with communities to apply for federal grants, it is “cutting edge”
 - VA flood risk standards are going beyond federal level, the state is doing a lot, but enforcement is particularly important
 - DCR will be doing a site visit in Petersburg
 - If a locality needs assistance, a locality should connect with VDEM
 - Resilient VA Revolving Loan Fund
 - Expands opportunities for funding
 - Loan fund for multiple resilience programs
 - Projects are defined as home upgrades, buyouts, gap funding related to buyouts, assistance to low income and moderate-income homeowners to help lower flood risk through structural/nonstructural mitigation projects, loans and grants to persons for hazard mitigation, infrastructure improvement projects
 - Seeded with \$25 million
 - Guidelines to apply will be available early next year
 - VA Flood Awareness Week is the second full week in March, council can invite DCR back for a presentation then
 - Council Discussion:
 - The amount of funding for flooding and resilience that is needed is unquantifiable!

- Council could recommend keeping and allocating additional funds towards these funds
 - A substantial number of claims happen outside of special flooding areas
 - There are ways to prioritize the money that is available though
 - DCR has been working with Buchanan for well over a year now to reduce flooding, Buchanan requested a match waiver and received it
 - VDEM has contracted out a company to work with communities to apply for federal grants, could be a council recommendation for additional state agencies to do as it is “cutting edge”
- **Virginia Energy Plan, Department of Energy Update, Associate Director Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Carrie Hearne**
 - Comments on the Virginia Energy Plan (VEP) are due September 16
 - The presentation slides are available at <https://energy.virginia.gov/energy-efficiency/documents/2022%20VEP%20August%2024%20Informational%20Presentation.pdf>
 - The public can view the webinar given in August at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ubVVJwZ2pY>
 - Virginia Energy Plan principles are to be affordable, innovative, competition, reliability and environmental stewardship
 - Virginia Energy consults with SCC, DEQ, Clean Energy Advisory Board, energy sector, and other stakeholders
 - Virginia Energy shall prepare a comprehensive VEP that identifies actions over a 10-year period consistent with the goal of the Commonwealth Clean Energy Policy to achieve, no later than 2045, a net-zero carbon energy economy for all sectors
 - The plan is due to the governor’s office by October 1
 - Virginia Energy is attempting to create a living plan to make the plan accessible and a reference point going forward
 - Comments can be submitted through a stakeholder’s survey, Virginia townhall (townhall.virginia.gov) or emailed to energyplan@energy.virginia.gov
 - Council Discussion:
 - EJ council will only be able to submit draft comments as we do not have a quorum
 - VA Energy is always open to receive input
 - Taysha will send draft comments on Virginia Energy Plan to Carrie ASAP
- **Department of Environmental Quality Updates, Jeff Steers**
 - DEQ is working on EJ screen/mapping
 - He already talked about permitting updates earlier in the meeting
 - DEQ Hiring Updates
 - n open recruiting for Office of Environmental Justice Manager position, Jeff is currently acting in that role
 - Just hired new communications role

4:00pm Reporting Subcommittee Update and Q&A, Subcommittee Chair Kendyl Crawford

- The updated 2021 report was emailed around on August 26, did not receive any feedback, it is ready to be submitted
- Kendyl send around 2021 report pdf to Taysha
- Kendyl send around mandate list, list of recommendation topics that have been mentioned and outline/list of last year's report by October 14

4:00pm Meeting adjourned, Chair Taysha DeV Vaughan

- **Meeting Next Steps**
 - Katie MacCormick/Emerging Issues Subcommittee talk to Grace Holmes to see what gaps are still there, try to build a coalition around Maritime Heritage Communities in Suffolk and Chesapeake
 - Jeff Steers share communications guidance with the EJ Council regarding Bristol landfill discussion
 - Jeff Steers find out timeline for negotiations on Bristol, Taysha suggests potential update from DEQ on status update at the next meeting
 - Angela Davis will share toolkit communications/community outreach that DCR floodplain management has developed
 - Jeff Steers could present on both guidance document for permit (once it comes out for comment) and PETE program (for permit tracking) at a future meeting
 - Janet Phoenix will wordsmith permitting recommendation number 3
 - Janet Phoenix will add clause about "including all agencies that make permitting decisions" to permitting recommendation 4
 - EJ council members should send additional feedback on permit recommendations to Janet
 - Emerging Issues Subcommittee/EJ council should arrange a visit to the Fairville neighborhood in Portsmouth
 - Jeff Steers can ask VED for someone to come and explain the process
 - Taysha DeV Vaughan will send draft comments on Virginia Energy Plan to Carrie ASAP
 - Kendyl Crawford send around 2021 report pdf to Taysha
 - Kendyl Crawford send around mandate list, list of recommendation topics that have been mentioned and outline/list of last year's report by October 14
- **Agenda Topics to Include for Upcoming Meeting(s)**
 - Mapping tools
 - Improving Important Definitions, Differences in Definitions at Federal vs State Levels
 - Bristol Update from DEQ
 - Department of Forestry program to talk about best practices and their programs to replace trees after construction
 - Department of Emergency Management

- Department of Historical Resources
- Permit tracking program from DEQ
- Zoning/local government should be on next (and every meeting agenda)
- ‘What went wrong with Wegmans’ from VA Economic Development
- Regional Planning Districts and VA Association of Counties