

Minutes of the Sixtieth Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: September 12, 2023

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

PLACE: Virtual Meeting

Members Present

Aloysius Nelson, Chair Sigma Pi Phi (the Boulé)
Yolanda Adams Board of Education Member, Kenosha Unified School District
Huda Alkaff Founder & Director, Wisconsin Green Muslims
Donna Brown-Martin.....Commissioner, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission;
Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation;
Liaison to Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning
Annabell Bustillos..... Bilingual Outreach Advocate, BeLeaf Survivors
Brad Holz.....Board Member, Independence First
N. Lynnette McNeely.....Legal Redress Chair, Waukesha County NAACP
Theresa Schuerman..... Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach

Members Excused

Ella Dunbar Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee
Keith Martin..... Engineering Specialist – Advanced 2, WisDOT
Andrea Mendez Barrutia.....Chapter Director for the new Techqueria Milwaukee Chapter
Gina Sanchez Juarez Director of Financial Stability, La Casa de Esperanza
GeorgeAnn Stinson..... President, African American Chamber of Commerce

Members Unexcused

Gina Green-Harris.....Director, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health Center for
Community Engagement and Health Partnerships in Milwaukee
Jackie Schellinger Indian Community Representative, Retired Judge

Guests and Staff Present

Dennis Grzezinski..... Law Office of Dennis Grzezinski
Christopher Hiebert.....Chief Transportation Engineer, SEWRPC
Eric Lynde.....Chief Special Projects Planner, SEWRPC
Benjamin McKay Interim Executive Director, SEWRPC
Nakeisha Payne..... Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC
Karyn Rotker..... Legal Action of Wisconsin
Jennifer Sarnecki..... Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
Bruce Wiggins Interested Citizen

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Nelson called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) to order at 5:00 p.m., conducted a brief roll call, and welcomed those in attendance. Mr. Nelson noted that Pastor Ernest Ni’A resigned from the EJTF due to extensive commitments associated with being pastor. Mr. Nelson reintroduced Ms. Bustillos as a new member representing Racine County, who attended the EJTF meeting

in June, but the introduction may not have been audible given the activity in the room during that portion of the meeting. Ms. Bustillos noted that she looks forward to participating and representing Racine County.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 13, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

Approval of the June 13, 2023, minutes (available [here](#)) was postponed due to a lack of a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any public comments. Ms. Rotker indicated that she has a new position as an attorney with Legal Action of Wisconsin and is attending the meetings to listen and learn, which will likely be a different role than in her previous position.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH REPORT

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Payne provided an update on the activities conducted by the Public Involvement and Outreach (PIO) team (available [here](#)) between April and August 2023. The following discussion occurred after Ms. Payne's update:

1. Ms. Brown-Martin recommended PIO's involvement in discussions concerning Milwaukee County's Paratransit Task Force, which could include participating in discussions and sharing summaries of the Task Force's work in partner newsletters, such as IndependenceFirst, to highlight analyses being conducted.
2. In response to a question from Ms. Alkaff regarding how the public is informed about the EJTF, Ms. Payne stated that a one-page handout (available [here](#)) is provided and discussed during presentations where appropriate.
3. Ms. McNeely requested information regarding the information shared through social media and recommended that information be shared in small, consumable amounts to encourage participation. In response to a question from Ms. McNeely regarding increased participation from social media posts, Ms. Payne noted that there is a goal to post material each weekday and that the number of followers has increased slightly. She encouraged EJTF members to follow the Commission on social media. Mr. McKay shared that a recent virtual outreach process for the Bluemound Corridor Transit Enhancement Project (available [here](#)) included a YouTube video as part of the self-guided outreach program.
4. Ms. Alkaff inquired if the Commission's outreach includes print articles and Ms. Payne noted that Commission staff provide regular project updates and share information from other partner organizations, such as the Milwaukee County Transit System. Mr. McKay noted that the Commission issues press releases and paid advertising during updates to VISION 2050 and other planning efforts.
5. In response to a question from Ms. Adams regarding the listing of EJTF members in the Commission's 2022 Annual Report (available [here](#)), Ms. Payne indicated that members' names could be listed in the future. Mr. Lynde noted that Commission staff will discuss adding rosters to the Annual Report and noted that in the past all committee rosters, including the EJTF, were provided in the Annual Report but these listings were removed for brevity and replaced with links to individual committee webpages.

REVIEW INITIAL MATERIALS FOR 2024 REVIEW AND UPDATE OF VISION 2050

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Mr. Lynde, Mr. McKay, and Mr. Hiebert provided a presentation on the 2024 Review and Update of VISION 2050 (available [here](#)). VISION 2050 is the Region's long-range land use and transportation plan, and the Commission is required to conduct an interim review and update every four years, with the next major update anticipated to be initiated in 2026. The following discussion occurred during the presentation:

1. In response to a question from Ms. Alkaff regarding why the recommendations in VISION 2050 were not followed as shown on Slide 10, Land Use Implementation, Mr. McKay noted that the slide refers to two recommendations. One recommendation indicates that most new residential lots should be created within sewer service areas. About 84 percent of residential lots created by subdivision since 2010 have been in sewer service areas. The second recommendation states that new single-family lots in sewer service areas should be 10,000 square feet or less in size. About 12 percent of lots created by subdivision in sewer service areas since 2010 have met this recommendation. Mr. McKay noted that there is a recognized need throughout the Region for more affordable starter homes and there may be future improvements in implementing this recommendation.
2. Mr. Nelson asked if additional housing recommended for the Foxconn development was implemented. Mr. McKay noted that within the Region, including Racine County, single-family residential development has increased somewhat since 2016; however, the Region is still experiencing a shortage. He also noted that there has been an increase in multifamily residential development in the Region during the last 10 years.
3. In response to a question from Ms. McNeely regarding single-family housing shortages, Mr. McKay indicated that there is an overall shortage of single-family housing, with an ongoing lack of affordable housing stock. Ms. McNeely noted that there seems to be a greater emphasis on Low-Income Housing Tax Credit housing programs from the government and what role the Commission can have in promoting more affordable single-family housing. Mr. McKay indicated that staff are actively working with a number of counties to educate the public and elected officials about the needs for both single-family and multifamily housing that is affordable to a wide range of household incomes.
4. Ms. McNeely asked how the reduction in vehicle-miles of travel (VMT) impacted the analysis and if this reduction is a result of increased remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Hiebert stated that remote work is more significant than it was prior to the pandemic and noted that approximately 20 percent of job classes in the Region could be done remotely, based on an initial analysis by Commission staff. He indicated that a household travel survey will be conducted next year and should provide data that expands our understanding of the impacts of remote work, informing the next major update of the long-range plan.
5. In response to a question from Mr. Grzezinski regarding VMT trends on slide 23, Mr. Hiebert noted that the total VMT estimate for 2022 is very similar to 2005, although freeway mainline volumes are higher in 2022, while VMT on surface arterials are less in 2022 than 2005.

UPDATE ON U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION GRANT

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Ms. Sarnecki reviewed a presentation on the Metropolitan Milwaukee Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program and the initial outreach goals (available [here](#)). In response to a question

from Ms. McNeely regarding if community solar is part of this initiative, Ms. Sarnecki indicated that it is part of the City of Milwaukee's Climate and Equity Plan and will be vetted as a strategy through the planning process for the Metropolitan Milwaukee Climate Action Plan. Ms. McNeely provided additional information in the chat regarding the Justice40 Initiative referenced in the presentation, noting that the Justice40 Initiative (available [here](#)) is a requirement of Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. The Justice40 Initiative is a government effort to deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from certain federal investments to disadvantaged communities.

REVIEW OF EJTF ACTION ITEM LIST

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Sarnecki reviewed the current action item list, which was linked within the agenda (available [here](#)).

OVERVIEW OF COMPOSITION OF APPLICANTS FOR RECENTLY FILLED COMMISSION POSITIONS

At Mr. Nelson's request, Mr. McKay provided a summary of recent applicants for one Commission position. The land survey assistant position had two white male applicants and was filled by a white male.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any announcements and correspondence. In response to a question from Ms. Alkaff regarding the new Executive Director, Mr. McKay noted that Stephanie Hacker's biography was shared at the previous meeting and that Ms. Hacker had a conflict with this meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATES

Mr. Nelson indicated that the next meeting is Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. and the meeting is planned to be held in person and virtually. He asked the group for location suggestions. Ms. McNeely requested information on Commission staff research related to lead in laterals and drinking water, including health impacts of lead exposure to individuals that reside in locations that have experienced historical disinvestment, and related impacts to accomplishing regional goals. Mr. McKay indicated that Commission staff developed a white paper on the topic (available [here](#)) and presented at a previous EJTF meeting, including service line issues and negative outcomes related to lead in water. He noted that lead could be discussed in VISION 2050 plan recommendations as appropriate moving forward, and conversations can be continued with agencies at the forefront of this issue, including public health departments and local municipalities. Mr. Nelson asked if there are grants available to address lead issues. Mr. McKay responded that staff could explore further and verify what is in the white paper. Ms. McNeely provided supplementary information in the chat, including the City of Milwaukee Water Works lead service line replacement program website (available [here](#)) and summary sheet (available [here](#)).

[Secretary's Note: The white paper developed by Commission staff includes a brief summary of funding programs established by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). In addition, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has made about \$15 billion available nationally for lead service line replacement. This money will come through the national Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Wisconsin Safe Drinking Water

Loan Program. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has indicated that about 49 percent of these funds will be provided to communities as grants or principal forgiveness loans and 51 percent will be available to communities for low-interest loans. More information on funding lead service line replacement can be found on USEPA's page (available [here](#)) and WDNR's page (available [here](#).)]

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nelson adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and noted that the minutes from the June 13, 2023, meeting will be approved at a future meeting when there is a quorum.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sarnecki
Recording Secretary
