

Transcript

July 8, 2024, 2:03PM

□ **Birch, Juliet** started transcription

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 0:07

Awesome.

Thanks so much.

All right.

Thanks for being here for the first Interagency Committee meeting of 2024.

I know it's been probably since November since you all met, just as a group, so it's good to good to see you all here.

UM and the first thing that we wanna do is just go around and remind everyone who we are and if there are any members of the public who, you know, watch this back or join in today, they'll know who everybody is.

So if we could each just go around for interagency committee members, introduce yourself and what agency you are representing today and we'll start with some the virtual participants.

So, Karla, I see you first.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 0:58

OK, good morning.

Can everyone hear me?

Well, great, great.

Karla Raimundi she her and I am the representative to the Interagency Committee under the Vermont Environmental Justice Law for the Agency of Natural Resources.

And I will popcorn it, and I have to use that word because I find it very funny, to Amy Redman.

Amy, I see you outside wearing sunglasses.

You have to go next.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 1:30

Karla, thank you.

Karla, you always make me smile.

Thank you.

Good morning, everyone.

Amy Redman.

I use she/her pronouns I do environmental justice and HealthEquity work at the Department of Health and it's so great to see you all.

OK, I'm trying to look at.

Who is here?

Umm, Dave, you're on my screen.

Can I pass it to you?

Good morning.

PD Pelletier, Dave 2:00

Certainly.

Thank you Dave Pelletier with the Agency of Transportation and the policy and Planning unit.

And I'll just umm, note that Michelle Boomhower is here and I'll I'll pass it over to her for her to introduce herself as well.

BM Boomhower, Michele 2:16

Thanks, Dave.

Michelle Boomhower, also with the Agency of Transportation.

And I'm the division director for policy planning and intermodal development, and I will turn it over to Trey Martin.

TM Trey Martin 2:33

And this is Trey Martin and I am here from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

But I'm not on the interagency committee.

I'm on the environmental Justice Advisory Council.

I will pass it to.

Umm. Stephanie.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:51

Good morning, everyone.

Stephanie Smith.

I'm the Hazard Mitigation section chief, representing Vermont Emergency Management, and I'll pass it to Elizabeth.

BJ Elizabeth Schilling 3:01

I'm just talking.
I don't tell you myself.
My Elizabeth shilling.
I'm with the Vermont Public Utility Commission.
She heard that all we're doing?
Yeah, that's awesome.
Right.
I'll popcorn it to Bridget.

Bridget Phillips

Hey everyone.
I'm Bridget Phillips.
I am not representing an agency.
I'm actually with the Department of Environmental Conservation Working Group in A&R and just listening in and she heard and I let's see who hasn't gone yet.
I don't think Rachel Stevens has gone yet.
It's over there.

SR Stevens, Rachel 3:34

Hi everyone.
I'm Rachel Stevens.
I'm an attorney supporting the Agency of Natural Resources and kind of here to observe and answer any legal questions that might come up. Thanks.

BJ Birch, Juliet 3:47

Alright, let's go to Bob.

DB Donohue, Bob 3:50

Hey Bob.
I mean, hello everybody.

I'm Bob Donohue at the Agency of Education in the capacity of school facilities, program manager and I don't know if there's anyone left.

BJ Birch, Juliet 4:02

Uh, Xusana, I don't know if I've gotten an opportunity to meet you before, but it's nice to meet you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 4:08

Would you like to introduce yourself?

DX Davis, Xusana 4:10

You sure would.

Nice meeting you too.

Hi, everybody. Xusana Davis.

I'm here representing the office of Racial Equity.

I'm also on the the other Council, the Advisory Council, and this is my third day back from an extended leave, so I'm happy to be back and if I keep, if I look a little out of it, it's because I'm a little out of it.

So thank you all.

BJ Birch, Juliet 4:32

All right, let's pass it to Carol.

Carol,

Uh, would you like to introduce yourself?

OK.

Jenny, would you like to introduce yourself?

RJ Ronis, Jenny 4:53

Hi guys.

My name is Jenny Ronis.

I'm associate general counsel with the Natural Resources Board and representing them with the on the EJ.

So thank you guys.

BJ Birch, Juliet 5:07

Awesome.

And let's pass it to Abbey.

WA Willard, Abbey 5:10

Hi, good morning everyone.

Abbey Willard, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, also a member of the EJ InterAgency Committee.

BJ Birch, Juliet 5:20

All right, if there's anybody else on the call who'd like to introduce themselves, please do so now.

Alright, OK.

And I'm Juliet Birch.

Umm I am one of the environmental justice coordinators with the civil rights and environmental justice unit at the Agency of Natural Resources.

Thank you guys all for being here today and if there are any community members on the call, please feel free to use the chat.

If you want to indicate you have some written commentary to provide, we'll also have opportunities throughout the agenda for public comment as well.

So that would be a good time to jump in as well.

Umm.

Speaking of the agenda, umm let's first go through our community agreements.

These were agreed upon, consented to in our first joint meeting back in 2023, if I could have 5 volunteers, 1 to read each of these Community agreements out loud, would anyone like to start?

DB Donohue, Bob 6:29

Sure, I'm Bob.

DX Davis, Xusana 6:29

Of course, this is Xusana.

DB Donohue, Bob 6:30

I'll go.

I'll go.

Ohh, OK, go ahead.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 6:34

Thank you.

Umm #1 be present with yourself and one another.

Be present with your body and feelings.

If you need to take a break to take care of yourself, please do be present for one another by listening deeply.

DB **Donohue, Bob** 6:47

OK, I'll take #2 calling in and calling out assume best intent, but attend to impact.

We can stop things that are being said that are hurtful and be curious and creative space for learning tools, including oops. Ouch.

To indicate a pause is needed.

WA **Willard, Abbey** 7:03

I can do #3 expect and accept non closure.

We are unlikely to leave here feeling 100% ready to go or to have everything on our agenda wrapped up, especially if we are committed to moving at the speed of trust.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 7:18

And then I'll take the next 1, #4: center respect.

Be respectful, intentional, and work to build trust and create a safe and inviting space.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 7:30

Alright.

Would anyone like to read #5?

Elizabeth Schilling

Sure, sure.

Verbal and other space.

Mindfully consider the balance taking and making space.

Move up, move back tools to do this.

Include the acronym wait by my talking and vocalizing support for another person's comment without repeating the same points.
Stay apart that have already been made.

Birch, Juliet

Awesome.

Thank you so much and UM it.

Does anyone have anything that they'd like to add to these community agreements for our meeting today?

All right.

I'm not seeing any hands, and let's get some visual consent.

Does everyone consent to these community agreements?

If so, please give a thumbs up or raise your hand using the raise your hand feature.

Awesome.

That's great.

Next, we'll move on to reviewing the agenda for today.

Now, first and foremost, we want to start by approving the November 22nd, 2023 meeting minutes.

Those were the minutes from the last IAC meeting and they have been available on the online resource library for your review.

Could I please have some visual consent or raised hand for those of you who approve those minutes IAC members?

Awesome, I'm getting several.

Great.

All right, so I'm seeing a majority, so that that sounds great.

And now let's move on to the minutes for the day- or the the agenda for the day as you guys can see, I don't, I'm not going to read it aloud, but some highlights for today is that we're going to be talking about these civil rights and environmental justice complaint summaries reports that the covered agencies submitted in March. The Advisory Council did provide a response to those reports in May and we will be reviewing those today and discussing the covered agencies can respond to those recommendations by August 15th, so we'll have a discussion about that.

Umm, another important topic on the agenda will be the environmental benefits spending guidance deliverable as well as the three year look back report that will result from that guidance.

So we'll have a bit of a discussion about that as well.

And for those of you who are members of the environmental benefits, spending Guidance Task Group, if anyone would like to share out when that time comes about how progress is being made in the task group, that would be much appreciated.

Uh, so keep that in mind and some other things to note is that we'll be having a break for public comment at 11:10 as well as 12:15.

So if there are any folks who are on this call who are community members and would like to share, that would be a great time to do so.

Can I see some visual consent to approve this agenda for today?

Awesome.

I've got Bob, I've got Elizabeth.

I've got Abby's great.

We're getting several folks. Awesome.

So with that agenda approved, let's move on to a little ice breaker.

I was thinking about this and I was wondering, would anybody you know I I think that a fun simple icebreaker might be what did you have for dinner last night?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 10:57
I.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 11:07
Last night I had microwavable falafel from Trader Joe's.
It was pretty good.
Umm, a little dry, but I was feeling extremely lazy last night so.
Elizabeth.
What?
What did you have for dinner?

Elizabeth Schilling

We got take out from positive pie.

Nice.

Would you like to pass it along?

Bridget Phillips

Sure.

We did a chicken salad like a Greek chicken salad with artichokes, olives, roasted red Peppers.

And then I had a side of Mac and cheese.

I wanted that too, so we bounced on the screen.

Uh, OK.

How about Bob?

DB Donohue, Bob 11:50

We had BBQ chicken and homemade macaroni salad.

BJ Birch, Juliet 11:54

Nice.

All right.

And let's pass it to Stephanie.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 12:01

I made homemade pizza and we have a salad that was me, Abbey.

WA Willard, Abbey 12:08

We had black bean burgers with cheese and a salad, Michelle.

BM Boomhower, Michele 12:18

We had cold curried rice salad and I'll pass it to Dave.

PD Pelletier, Dave 12:27

Wow, you guys have great food.

I'm coming over.

What times dinner tonight we had not.

Not.

Quite as as exotic as everybody here, but we had uh annies Mac and cheese because it's one of my sons favorite and it was easy and it didn't require a lot of cooking.

And I happily ate it myself.

I'll pass it on to Ohh.

I can't actually see it very well.

I'll pass that on to Bob.

DB **Donohue, Bob** 13:00

I think I went already, but it was BBQ chicken and homemade macaroni salad.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 13:03

Yeah, I'm sorry.

I was still.

I was still like, thirsting over your BBQ chicken.

You had me distracted.

Let me see who else I can pass on to here.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 13:12

I can go.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 13:13

OK, go ahead.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 13:15

If this Xusana, I made shrimp fajitas with people they goddio and guacamole.

I also don't know who I think gone though.

I'll let someone else jump in.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 13:27

I can go.

This is Amy.

We had something called a Glory bowl, and it's just a lot of veggies with beets and carrots, and we had steak tips on top.

It was really yummy.

Ohm.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 13:39

Umm.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 13:40

Who?

Anyone else jump in?

Who hasn't gone?

MA **Maryam Abbasi** 13:46

I can go next.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 13:47

Uh.

MA **Maryam Abbasi** 13:47

This is Maryam Abbasi.

See.

Uh, I was not in a mood to eat like proper dinner last night.

So I had watermelon.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 13:59

That sounds great.

Uh.

Watermelon is a really good choice considering the heat.

UM.

Karla, would you like to share?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 14:06

Yes, I can go next and interestingly, I didn't remember what I had for dinner.

So I just asked my mom who just reminded me.

And it was rice with beans from my grandmother.

I can't believe I forgot. So.

Rice and beans with avocado and.

Corned beef, but not the traditional corned beef.

It's like a Puerto Rican preparation for corned beef with a lot of veggies inside.

That's what I had for dinner.

Thanks Mommy, for reminding me.

Umm.

And Abbey, your turn.

WA Willard, Abbey 14:48

I went.

I did black bean burgers and salad.

RK Raimundi, Karla 14:50

Oh, that's right.

Black bean burgers.

Ohm.

Who else? Michelle.

SR Stevens, Rachel 14:55

I haven't gone this this is Rachel.

I had chicken potato salad and a Maple creamy.

RK Raimundi, Karla 15:01

Ooh.

BJ Birch, Juliet 15:01

Nice.

Yeah.

Have we heard from Jenny yet?

RJ Ronis, Jenny 15:10

Sorry, multitasking.

Yeah, I had pasta Primavera.

It was really tasty.

BJ Birch, Juliet 15:16

Awesome.

That sounds delicious.

UM, I think that we've heard from all of the IAC members on the call.

Uh, if there's anyone else who'd like to share, please feel free to do so.

But if not, we can jump into some updates on the on the implementation of the EJ law.

Alright.

Does anyone have anything else to share?

OK.

We're just going to jump in.

So we have some updates from our last meeting and also a reminder here that these are the deliverables that we're gonna be talking about today.

The civil rights in EJ.

Complaint summaries reports as well as the environmental benefits spending guidance, but some important updates regarding the implementation of the Vermont EJ Law.

Uh, first and foremost, as you'll all recall, the.

Umm, we we've been working to have the deadlines in the original law extended by about two years and so these recalibrated deadlines were included in Act 181 and were recently passed in the legislature.

So, umm, we have a new timeline.

Our team at the civil rights and environmental Justice Unit is currently working on developing a timeline that will allow us to continue chugging along to make progress in implementation while also being more intentional and.

Uh, you know, taking, taking the time that's needed to do things.

Uh.

With with trust and with a real intentions.

So as we develop those new this new timeline, we'll keep you guys up to date.

But for right now, more information will be forthcoming.

Umm.

Another update.

Ohh Abby. Yes.



Willard, Abbey 17:02

Yeah.

I just wanna jump in on on this one, if I might, for for a for a moment.

I I just in the kind of spirit of transparency and communication, I, I will say, our agency wasn't aware that the recalibrated deadlines had been included in Act 181 or that they passed it.

We sort of heard about it in some kind of, like, very kind of out of context way and it's just a little concerning that like we we weren't kind of and and I know it was

during a time of a lot of transition.

But I I just wanna.

Express a desire that like these types of changes or kind of like legislative efforts, are more kind of collectively communicate communicated across the IC and and with the and the advisory Committee as well or Advisory Council.

Just so that we're all kind of like aware and formed can help advocate and like just sort of be in a similar place because I actually reported to my secretary that that we didn't have I mean and we had like a whole internal agency conversation a few months ago and I said we don't have recalibrated deadlines that I'm aware of and I just I I I would have wished to have had more information and knowledge of that process earlier than when we randomly found out and today is the first official time. So I just wanted to voice that that concern.

Thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 18:37

Thank you for sharing, Abbey.

I appreciate that very much.

And Karla, do you have something you'd like to say?

RK Raimundi, Karla 18:46

Yes, I am.

Just wanna acknowledge what Abbey just mentioned.

You know something for us to keep in mind moving forward.

I also would like to mention that the Advisory Council was very much part of this process and Jennifer Byrne provided testimony to the legislature and the testimony was shared in a link.

So just want to share with with all of you that this was very much very intentional process.

God included Advisory Council members to the extent that testimony was provided before the Committee on the recalibration of the deadlines.

BJ Birch, Juliet 19:33

Thank you for letting us know that Carla, in the future we will.

Uh, I'll put it on on our priority list to do better, to communicate more effectively, especially with interagency committee members.

So thank you, Abby, for bringing that to our attention.

We appreciate that.

Does anyone have any other thoughts on the recalibrated deadlines for ACT 154?

Or would we like to continue discussing some of the other updates?

Yes, Rachel.

SR Stevens, Rachel 20:03

I'll just blank that the the deadlines reflect what was consented to at the December 18th meeting.

So you can take a look at the ACT, but they should reflect what was in the I consented to.

I I could put that in the link the link in the chat.

BJ Birch, Juliet 20:20

Yeah.

Thank you for that, Rachel.

There is a document on the uh online resource library that shows the two year extended deadlines that were consented to uh on in the December 18th meeting, as well as the previous deadlines that we were operating under.

Umm.

Does anyone have any other thoughts on that topic?

All right.

So the next update that Ohh go ahead, Stephanie. Yeah.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 20:46

Start Juliet.

Sir, did you say there isn't?

There's an updated chart somewhere that shows the timelines.

Or can we put that in the chat so we can see it?

BJ Birch, Juliet 20:53

Yes, yes.

And we'll also send an email at the end of this meeting with all of these resources as well.

If you guys have any further questions, we can send all kinds of good stuff for you

guys to take a look at.

Does that sound OK?

Awesome.

Alright, so the next update that we have for you all is regarding the core principles of community engagement.

As you know, we held a public comment period from May to June 14th.

Uh, there was about 40 days long and that obviously closed on June 14th and since then we've hosted 2 optional office hours for Advisory Council and Interagency committee members to discuss some of the feedback that we received from community members, as well as to, you know, discuss some of the potential changes that could be made to the document itself.

From here we are currently working on a responsive summary to those public comments that we received and we're working to, you know, make some some minor edits to the document itself.

There's information about that on the online resource library, and if you have any further questions about some of the changes or some of the feedback we've received, you can also reach out to myself or the other.

EJ coordinator Kim Barrett Umm, at this time we're looking to have the document finalized and ready for your vote of approval at the next joint meeting, which is likely to take place towards the end of August.

We're currently working on getting some more advanced meeting dates nailed down, so there will be more information on that soon.

Does anyone have any questions on that item?

OK.

And then the last thing that we'd like to update you on is the mapping tool.

Umm at this time we are working on a request for proposal for a contractor for the mapping tool and that will be ready for release by the end of July should all things go to plan.

So if anyone has any questions or anything that they'd like to share regarding the RFP, please reach out to Kim or myself.

I know that this was a topic of discussion in the last joint meeting, so we've taken your feedback and we're hoping to apply it as best as we can.

Umm.

Does anyone have any questions on any of these updates?

All right.

So in that case, UM, let's just review the you know, the timeline for the civil rights and environmental justice complaint summaries, reports umm.

As you all know, the covered agencies submitted their first complaint reports to the Advisory Council on March 15th of this year, and the Advisory Council then created a response with some recommendations that they sent to the Interagency Committee on May 15th.

So from here until August 15th, the covered agencies and Interagency committee have that time to develop a response.

This response in the law is optional.

It's something that should that is set in the law to only be done in the event that the covered agencies don't accept a recommendation included in the Advisory Council's report.

So let's bear that in mind, but that's something that's upcoming that we are going to be discussing now.

Does anyone have any questions about this timeline?

All right.

WA Willard, Abbey 24:39

Actually, Juliet, I do.

BJ Birch, Juliet 24:39

Sure.

WA Willard, Abbey 24:40

I'm sorry.

This is Abby again.

And and I'm sure we're gonna talk about this bit, but I I had been confused and I and still was unclear if the response by August 15th is an A collective response or an individual agency department response.

BJ Birch, Juliet 24:58

Yeah, that's a great question.

I think that that's something that we can discuss how you guys want to execute that through as we get through this section of the agenda, I think that in the future as you guys continue as the covered agencies continue to hone their your complaint

intake and reporting process, it may be that this is consistently more of an individual agency.

You know response task, but for this first task it may be that you guys want to draft a response as a group so that will be something that you guys can all discuss together today.

Does that sound good?

Awesome.

WA Willard, Abbey 25:42

Thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 25:42

All right.

So yeah, of course.

UM, so we, uh, you you guys have all had the opportunity to review the Advisory Council recommendations that were sent in May, but we're gonna take a moment to review those as well today just so we're all grounded in sort of the expectations that have been set by the Advisory Council.

Umm, so the first thing that we're gonna talk about here is these sort of overarching themes or you know?

Uh recommendations that have been provided.

So UM the first the the four overarching recommendations that the Advisory Council provided were that they would like to see, you know, staff that specifically is set to receive and respond to the complaints they'd like to see standardized intake forms in intake processes for civil rights and environmental justice.

They would like they they have some specific recommendations regarding investigation as well as follow up and resolution and there are also they they discuss in their, in their recommendations a centralized database or repository for these complaints.

So we'll go into detail about each of these and have a little bit of a discussion. Umm. So here we have some details about those four main overarching, umm, recommendations.

But let's go into a little bit of detail.

I'm not going to read these out loud, but if you guys would like to take a moment to read some of this information to yourselves, I have some questions that I'd like for

each of you to reflect upon, so please give me like a thumbs up or a raised hand to indicate that you've read through this and you'd like to, you know, start to talk. All right, I'm seeing some folks are finishing up.

I'll give it a couple more seconds here.

OK.

So some questions that I just have for you guys that I'd love for you to reflect upon are you know, do you think that this kind of this is feasible for your agency, umm and like what, what does your agency currently have to support this kind of recommendation?

Where are your needs?

Where are some of those gaps that you think potentially could be filled in in order to meet this recommendation and to note, I kind of skipped over this before, but I dropped in the chat 2 links to two Microsoft forms, one of them being for the.

For this discussion itself, so while we're having a verbal discussion, I would also appreciate if folks could, you know, take some written notes of their thoughts and initial remarks on this in that form.

That would be super appreciated so that we can so that we can reflect on some of your thoughts after the meeting as well.

Umm, so does anyone have any initial thoughts about the feasibility of these recommendations?

Yes, Stephanie.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 29:31

I guess I have more of a question.

So is the sorry, it's a designated staff, so it's saying there's a specific person within each agency or a couple of people.

Who is that designated staff person?

So the process would be that complaints go through a specific trained individual or a couple of individuals.

Is that correct?

Yes, OK.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 29:55

I mean, I I feel a little confused because I thought like the overarching recommendation and anyone from the Advisory Council is on who wants to like

elaborate.

Maybe that would be helpful if anyone wants to elaborate, but I read the recommendation as creating some kind of unified system.

Umm, where?

Where we didn't have an individualized systems in each agency.

And so I thought the conversation was going to be about as as agencies are we willing to collaborate to develop a unified system and like, what?

What would that time frame be like?

You know, In interim, are we each doing our own thing until we have a unified system, you know with there need to be any types of procedures, rules, story changes in order to do that.

You know, like those are the questions I came out of or I had coming out of reading the recommendation.

But that's where I am.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 30:52

Yeah, and Elizabeth, that's that's part of that's the chief question that I had also I think is the that piece.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 30:52

Yeah, so.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 30:59

If we were doing it there within the teams, but then within our agency, so within public safety, civil rights complaints are required to go through R specifically because it they want it to not be someone who's actually doing the work, who isn't going to handle it necessarily in the way that it should be as an outside entity handling a complaint.

So there's I think there's a conflict potential with someone in internal to the agency handling conflicts versus larger centralized entity that might have a better third party perspective on it than someone who's internal.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 31:36

Yeah, I think that these are all really good thoughts and questions as we move through the the Advisory Council's recommendations, you'll see that the second

recommendation of regarding the intake form does elaborate more on this idea of like a unified like central sort of repository across all agencies.

So, but maybe some Advisory Council members who are on the call could maybe speak to the intention behind that element of these recommendations.

Trey or Mariam, do you guys have any thoughts?

TM **Trey Martin** 32:18

I I will defer to Maryam.

I'm not ready or I wasn't prepared to speak to that just right away today.

Umm, Juliet, I I apologize.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 32:28

No problem.

I know I'm putting you on the spot.

It there's no pressure at all, but if and if it if you guys have any thoughts or would like to speak to this, feel free.

If not, that's also totally OK.

No pressure.

Maryam, do you have any thoughts?

MA **Maryam Abbasi** 32:43

Uh, I'm.

I'm unfortunately in the same boat.

I wasn't ready to speak, but I have read through these.

And maybe, uh, once we start discussing, I'll be able to contribute more.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 32:59

Thank you.

Elizabeth Schilling

I appreciate that since I asked about you while speaking.

I I'll respond and that's fine.

It's totally fine that you all are prepared to speak.

This is an IC meeting like I guess just to share like getting the comments from the Advisory Council that we're about this unified approach versus like I was expecting to

get individual comments on the report that the Commission had submitted.

And so like getting it was fine.

Getting totally different set of comments that I was expecting, but it is a very different conversation, right?

Like we had provided our report.

Uh.

And thought, yeah, that we were gonna get more directed comments like, oh, this is a good approach or like, you know here are some suggestions for improvements and instead like it's talking about setting up a different system across the agencies I think. And so it's just a big it's a big conversation to have and it feels like they're probably are a lot of details to iron out amongst all the agencies.

Yeah, I know my thought.

Birch, Juliet

Yeah, I definitely hear that.

I think this could be a very big task, so I definitely hear that and I think there's the as we again get into this next, you know recommendation from the Advisory Council, maybe we can talk through some approaches or potential obstacles to having a system like that set up.

Yeah.

And I think I was just gonna go ahead.

RK

Raimundi, Karla 34:29

Invite it.

If I may say something really quickly here.

Umm Xusana has her hand raised.

Umm, but I really would like to offer that this is perhaps why to go back to Abyss question I mentioned in our last meeting that perhaps the approach could be to provide general response to what they offered, what the Advisory Council offered and then each agency can provide as part of the response something along the lines of what you mentioned, UM, Elizabeth Dot.

You know you have a system in place and and that you were you're seeking feedback on that.

Umm.

And so perhaps to think through, how do organize this response, we may be looking

at a hybrid response where perhaps some of the agencies that provided more content like the NRB as well that they provided an intake mechanism that they set up on their website can actually speak to what they offered in addition to all of us getting to an agreement regarding what the response will be about this unified repository and like across the board intake mechanism.

BJ Birch, Juliet 36:00

Thank you for that, Karla.

I think that that goes back to what Abbey was talking about about sort of, you know, are we are we having individual agency responses or are we having one overarching so that that can be a part of this discussion as well.

Returning to this question specifically about, you know, staff or personnel who are specifically designated to receive these complaints, does anyone have any thoughts about how feasible this might be for an agency and like what kinds of needs you foresee in order to kind of meet something like this?

Xusana, do you have thoughts?

DX Davis, Xusana 36:40

Umm, not that that's specific questions.

I'm willing to hold my comment until you get the answers you're looking for.

BJ Birch, Juliet 36:46

Please uh I I'm happy to let let's I I'd be happy to hear anything any of your thoughts Xusana.

DX Davis, Xusana 36:55

OK.

Thank you.

I was gonna speak a little bit to the language active part, but it, uh, what I'm hearing is a few different things here.

We're talking about our internal communication, right, the flow of information within IAC and also the flow of information and communication with the Advisory Council.

I am on that Advisory Council, and yet I also cannot speak to the recommendations, partly because I'm just wasn't around.

But but I do.

I do think that this is really the the the art and the science of being community driven, right to give something out and then the responses were getting me look different or maybe different than what we're expecting.

But if we want the work to be community driven, then we're gonna have to flex, and we're gonna have to be able to adapt.

So I am.

I would support doing a sort of hybrid response as was mentioned earlier, if that's what the group chooses to do.

I do think it's worth still seeking feedback on what the IAC has put out, but not at the expense of providing really thoughtful feedback to what we've gotten from the Advisory Council.

And really engaging with it in with serious consideration.

So that said then on the topic of dedicated personnel.

Umm I I I can respect.

I I really respect the comment that was made earlier about wanting to make sure that you have people who can handle complaints who are not the same ones doing the work because it adds legitimacy and credibility to the system.

And I think also that there should be a no wrong door approach so that regardless of where a complainant goes, they end up getting routed to the right place.

So whether that's housed in one specific office or whether that's kind of like there's a place, I don't know how it would be set up.

But I just think that it's important that people can find it regardless of what their entry point is, and that could be something as simple as crosslinking.

On different I mean I don't know, but.

And then the last the last, the original thing I was gonna say was just the language accessibility.

A lot of that is kind of sitting in our office right now and I just wanted to get people in update on the language access situation.

So there are still funds available for vital document translation and also for ongoing translation of other things or maintenance of those vital documents.

Umm.

And that's available.

What we don't have is the fact.

Ohh no.

Is the staff person who's gonna be a central coordinator, and I will put the rest in

chat.

Thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 39:30

Thank you for sharing that Xusana.

I think that that really grounds us again in the some of the important values of EJ work of you know, centering the voices of communities and, you know, centering accessibility as a primary priority.

So I really appreciate that.

Maryam, do you have any thoughts?

MA Maryam Abbasi 39:53

Yes.

Uh, I wanna comment on first point.

Uh, my question was that is there a mechanism to communicate with the public that they they we are going to like set up a mechanism where they can file a complaint, be from social media?

I don't know how many people would visit your website, maybe putting some digital or printed ads on some grocery stores or some marketing around it.

If you have like any thoughts around that so that people know that they're there is a mechanism where they can, you know, file a complaint from these, uh, the via phone, email or or the list you have mentioned over here.

BJ Birch, Juliet 40:39

Are there any interagency committee members who'd like to respond to that thought about having a complaint mechanisms be better, more marketed, or more visible to members of the public?

Carla.

RK Raimundi, Karla 40:58

Thank you Maryam Umm and based on the conversations that were had when.

Umm, when the Advisory Council met to come up with this response to the reports, I think that was definitely.

A central piece that there is a mechanism that's public facing.

I'm available in different languages supported by UM technology that it could be

opened up in mobile.

Sources so I I am.

I'm just trying to think about what kind of response could be provided, and I think perhaps the first step would be to generally get a sense from.

I'm fellow I remembers to whether this item, it's just something that we should we should strive for.

Umm.

And if so, then?

Umm, we can start thinking about what a response could look like in terms of.

This is an ideal for the agencies and there is consensus that it's an adequate system.

If that is perhaps the belief and we'll get there in a phased approach and in the meantime, each of the agencies will work to develop intake mechanisms until we can, umm, you know, put together a comprehensive across agency system.

BJ Birch, Juliet 43:06

Thank you, Karla.

Abbey, would you like to speak to that as well?

WA Willard, Abbey 43:12

Yeah.

Thank you.

I I was sort of thinking my my reactions were.

It feels reasonable to me as a state that hasn't had a very robust, in my opinion, civil rights and environmental justice, complete process to have a standardized guidance around how to provide comment.

I think that I I completely agree that the public may have interaction, but any member of the public may have engagement and interaction with more than one agency and department, and to be able to find that access for filing a complaint accessible and standardized on the on the outward facing to the public feels like something we should be able to pull together.

I don't think it's a super easy task.

I think it'll take a little bit, especially for agencies and departments that have a little bit more of a established process like AOT and others in comparison to the Agency of Agriculture where we literally have like 4 links that we can easily just update and improve.

And one one page on our website.

I think it would also be like a really wonderful way to do some coordinated communication about the standardization and how to access and where to do it. I do feel like for that to happen at the state agency or department level, there needs to be an expansion of state workforce like we can't our agency do this without additional staff.

And I think we've talked about a year plus ago about whether we wanted to have a coordinated legislative ask or coordinated message to leadership and to the administration that to implement this law, we need expanded EJ staff capacity.

And I would say this feels to me like one of numerous tasks that an EJ staff person at our agency would be responsible for.

There are not complaints that come into our agency on a daily basis.

Again, we may be different than other agencies and departments, but it would be one of numerous tasks that they would be responsible for as part of their environmental justice.

Umm, kind of job description and then I think that we should authorize and again if we were to go and a standardized process and increase staff and personnel to focus on this as well as other EJ tasks, I think it would be valuable or advisable at least from my perspective at this moment to have some autonomy at the agency and department level around how they process and how they manage complaints maybe with some guidance and some best practices.

But I know some of this feels very individualized and very personal, depending upon the nature of the complaint, especially if it's around an individual employee and their relationship with HR, et cetera.

So anyway, that was a lot, but those were my thoughts.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 46:07

Yeah.

Thank you for that.

What I'm hearing is that it sounds like from your agency you're foreseeing that this may be having a designated staff member, maybe a little bit more feasible than some other agencies may find it to be.

Is that?

Does that sound correct to you?

WA Willard, Abbey 46:26

Wait, I'm sorry.

Juliet, we repeat that.

BJ Birch, Juliet 46:28

Having a designated staff member to, you know, receive and process these complaints, it sounds like that's something that uh is seems pretty feasible for your agency.

WA Willard, Abbey 46:39

Well, I that's why I asked you to repeat.

I wanted to make sure I heard it correctly.

I think I could imagine our agency being open and responsive to an EJ staff member at our agency that is responsible for coordinated environmental justice and civil rights complaints as one of their many duties.

BJ Birch, Juliet 47:00

Yeah.

WA Willard, Abbey 47:01

We don't currently have that position or that budget or that capacity as at this moment, yeah.

BJ Birch, Juliet 47:05

Right.

Right.

Got it.

I'm following.

Thank you.

Michelle, do you have something you'd like to share?

BM Boomhower, Michele 47:14

Thank you very much.

I think I was reflecting back to Karla's, Umm, uh points about this may be step wise

that we have to do this and that everybody's at different place on the spectrum of aware the resources lay within an organization having some consistent basic messaging points that we could begin soon to push out like we have social media feeds we can utilize and I think to the extent that we could weave anything we already have that we would be communicating to the public with a common message that we may wanna be yeah engaging around would be helpful to. Sort of begin a process towards having something that's more consistent across the agencies to the extent possible.

That was all I wanted to make.

Make note of.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 48:19

Thank you.

And Karla.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 48:25

I think I'm going to hold my comment for later on.

It has to do with the distinction between civil rights complaints and intake mechanisms, or civil rights.

And EJ, umm, one of the recommendations that the AC included in their response was to.

Umm, because we're asked by the federal government and, umm, ask recipients of federal support to have complained mechanisms and intake mechanisms and investigation processes for civil rights complaints that EJ should be added on to those processes.

And so I was going to reflect on umm, on.

On whether that's an appropriate approach, but I think I'm just gonna hold my. Feedback in my comments for later on.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 49:30

That sounds good.

We're gonna uh in a moment, we'll move to the next recommendation and I think that will be a perfect time to bring up those thoughts.

And Elizabeth

Elizabeth Schilling

don't know if you could see my hands. Umm.

So I think I came into this and I think I was confused about at least the first recommendation.

And so I just wanna make sure that everyone who's on the IC, we're all on the same page as to what we think the recommendation is this particular one.

Yeah.

Well this and like the recommendation of the whole.

So based on the conversation that's happening as far it sounds like the recommendation is each agency would still be receiving and processing these complaints.

But but that we would have a unified system like a unified form that's maybe like paper and online.

I don't know.

You know, you know find website.

So there's one place where we're all like, maybe all of our websites direct people to a single page or something like that.

I'll be stored somewhere collectively online or wherever it.

I just want to make when I read this the first time and I realized maybe I read it wrong, I thought ohh there's gonna be like a new centralized office with dedicated staff and they'll receive complaints about my agency and we'll find out about them second hand or something like that.

And I think maybe I read it incorrectly.

So the description that I gave initially is that how other folks are reading it?

You're on the same page.

Birch, Juliet

Does anyone have thoughts on Elizabeth's concerns. Karla?

Elizabeth Schilling

Make sure we're all exacting in with a different view of what the recommendation was, and I think like.

The recommendation that I think it's yours, that's the recommendation.

I think I just was confused and that was causing me confusion as to how we were

beginning the discussion.

Sorry Parla, would you like to speak?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 51:36

Umm yes.

And I see that your comment resonated with Stephanie, who has the same perspective with Elizabeth.

No.

With Stephanie about Elizabeth's comment.

So what I interpreted, you know, having been part of the conversations when the responses were being developed and then having read the response multiple times is basically what you just captured.

Elizabeth thought there's a standardized intake mechanism that would somehow.

Get that complaint to the appropriate agency and then the agency via the development of an investigation manual of sorts or case management.

Process would handle that complaint.

Umm.

Through the channels and would investigate through the channels designated by the agency and process is settled by the agency.

Umm, but the other component of it is that that central intake mechanism would be supported with notices to the public on where the where the complaint is in the in the management of the complaint.

Umm.

And that that process of investigation would all be part of each agency's UM, internal.

UM, internal processes and and and conversations, and then the outcome would be then.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 53:24

OK.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 53:29

Shared again centrally and then also the resolution would be stored centrally.

That's that's how I interpret it.

It's it's the intake mechanism would be central to all of the agencies, the forms via

which members of the public can submit the complaint will be the same.

Umm.

Or it's.

Yeah, the same and then that will be redirected to the agencies for further.

Investigation.

Umm.

Which then I am assuming that the investigative process would have to have certain.

Umm.

Certain requirements that are standard for all of the agencies, like for example the term of the response like agencies, once they receive the complaints, should response within a certain amount of time and that should be uniform across the board.

But then the way in which it's handled by each agency will depend on capacity and other items.

Elizabeth Schilling 54:45

OK.

That's really helpful, Karla.

Thank you.

So so unified intake, unified storage.

Maybe some unified process, but also acknowledgement of the need for individualized processing by the agencies.

RK Raimundi, Karla 55:03

Yes.

And also I'm thinking you know touch points with, umm, the individuals who filed the complaints.

BJ Birch, Juliet 55:04

OK.

RK Raimundi, Karla 55:14

You know that also would be part of like what I am envisioning like a standard set of requirements that the agencies would stand up.

BJ Birch, Juliet 55:26

OK, kind of like.

RK Raimundi, Karla 55:27

But then again, that's my interpretation.

That is, that is how I read the response and after you know, participating in those meetings.

BJ Birch, Juliet 55:30

Yeah.

RK Raimundi, Karla 55:37

That's the sense I get from the Advisory Council is transparency is important.

Procedural equity and justice is important, and so in order to achieve that, just communicating the status of the management of the complaints.

Umm.

And, you know, sharing also like investigative processes.

BJ Birch, Juliet 56:05

I think that that's a really good summary, Karla, of some of the like overarching, I guess priorities that the Advisory Council members voiced in the drafting of this was, you know, transparency, accessibility and ensuring that people have the support that they need in order to successfully file a complaint and see it through.

So I think, uh, you know, this question of whether these specific recommendations are feasible, whether we have the resources to apply them, I think the bigger question is ultimately.

Uh, what other things can we do if these are not feasible in order to reach that same sort of same set of goals?

But since we're talking so much about, like the intake mechanism and what that's gonna look like, I was wondering if everyone would be OK if we move on to this second recommendation that specifically right, uh, it's specifies some things that they they would like to see with the intake form.

I'm getting a thumbs up from Karla.

Elizabeth Schilling

I mean, I I be OK.

Still, spending a little bit more time on the first one, I like now that I understand it like I didn't offer like offer thoughts on it and certainly not all of the agencies have offered thoughts on it.

I just.

Don't know that every.

Yeah, I don't know.

Can that's Wednesday on #1.

For just a minute before we move on to #2.

Yes, no.

Birch, Juliet

Does anyone have any other thoughts?

OK.

Elizabeth Schilling

Well, I'll.

I'll because I didn't share my thoughts coincide with making sure I understood.

I think we could at least do a component of this right off the bat, like we could have a designated person within our state entity who, at least initially received complaints. They might then get forwarded on to the individual, like the proper individual within the Commission to further investigate because.

Just how the nature of our work and like one person wouldn't necessarily know all the ends and outs of each complaint I have.

So like, that's my initial reaction to this is like, yes, there could be an initial intake person who, you know, receives the fact that there's been a complaint regarding something related to the Commission, but then they might not.

They might not see that through entirely all the way.

They might do some type of initial intake and then like forward it on to the person that it would then be assigned to.

I don't know if other folks have similar reactions.

Are different reactions from the other agencies.

Birch, Juliet

Jill, I see you.

Bye joined the call.
It's nice to see you.
Do you have thoughts?

BJ

BriggsCampbell, Jill 58:59

Yeah, and apologies for being late, but I was I was tracking the the chat thread so as soon as I got free, I jumped in.

Yes.

So I think and and some folks have heard me say this before, I think that we need to dig in a little bit more before we establish a process.

I think we need to dig in more on how different agencies.

Are required by like federal requirements around.

So for us, for example in the Agency of Education, we already have really clear federal requirements and some this is where again you've heard me say this again.

So I apologize if I'm being a broken record, but having definitions really matters here, right?

So we at the Agency of Education, they can a whole range of tidal complaints and title nine, Title 6, and then a whole bunch of other ones that are tied to our federal funds.

I don't know that all of those, maybe they would, would fall under the umbrella of environmental justice.

That's where the definitions are critical on but also.

The way that we receive complaints, some sometimes it's our school districts that are actually the recipients of the complaints.

Sometimes it's the agency of education.

It could be grants program managers.

It could be our legal team all of that.

So not all of it.

Some of it is actually bound by statute, and so I think before we move so far down the road of of a process like a statewide determined process, we've gotta.

I'm always kind of waving that caution flag like we need to understand what this looks like in our different agencies in a really deep way.

Uh, yeah.

Karla, you're gonna be like we've heard this before, Jill, but I.

I just want to leave that caution flag.

I I don't want us to build A1 size fits all, that doesn't fit all.

Elizabeth Schilling 1:01:15

No, that's that's helpful.

And like at the Commission, you don't we don't receive federal funds.

So we don't have like we don't currently have any process in place because we haven't had to have anything in the past and it's helpful to hear some of the challenges for agencies that may already have processes in place.

Birch, Juliet

Umm, I also want to highlight something that Dave just typed in the chat, which is uh, Jill raises a great point about title complaints to flip it around.

How many EJ complaints would ultimately end up being title complaints?

And Carla, I saw that you had your hand raised and I was wondering if you could speak to this as well.

Yeah, Carla, if you'd like to share.

RK

Raimundi, Karla 1:02:02

Yeah.

Sorry, I was muted.

Ohh my God, I cannot enter meeting without doing this.

Umm, OK, but at least it was like an hour 5 minutes into the meeting was not like the first comment.

Umm, so that's a very interesting question, Dave, because part of what the response from the Advisory Council implies and really just the question and the requirement presented, umm, presented by the by the remote environmental justice law requires that we answer the question what is an environmental justice complaint.

And Dodd answering that question will really let us distinguish what a civil rights complaint is.

Visa V Environmental justice complaints.

So we need to think through what kind of what kind of substance substantive content will be provided to to that question of what is an environmental justice complaint, and they should be distinct from each other.

It it in in terms of like the definitions, right, like environmental justice complain

should not, should not, should not only be.

The what is already considered a civil rights complaint.

There is, there's.

There's there's a distinction there, and it should be captured.

Umm, but I think we're gonna move on to the next slide pretty soon and I think this part of the conversation will be will be had in more context if we wait for that moment because they I do have a lot of thoughts about the distinctions between civil rights and environmental justice and especially in attention to the recommendation that because some federal agencies that are recipients of federal support need to have complaint systems in place for civil rights that we just add on EJ and that was contained in the in the response.

But I do want to dedicate enough time to that part of the conversation when the time is right.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:04:27

Thank you, Karla.

Yeah, I think that if everyone is OK with doing this, it might be best if we take a look at the suggestions under recommendation too, just to get a feel for what that includes, because I think that that will really start grounding us more in this conversation of what, what, what the intake process could look like and whether or not that's something that we can do with the resources that we have at our disposal.

Umm, so I'm just gonna put up this.

Ooh, moving too fast.

This is slot.

This is the first of two slides that have some information about this like intake form on what the elements of an EJ complaint really are.

So everybody let me know when you're done reading this slide and we'll move on to the next and we can kind of continue our discussion from there.

Awesome.

I'm starting to see some thumbs up from folks.

Are we ready to take a look at the other?

The other set of information alright.

OK.

All right.

I think I'm going to move forward.

I'm going to move to the next slide, this one a little bit shorter.

Let me know when this is ready as well.

Great.

Umm, so I just want to remind everyone that although we're not necessarily able to hash out the conversation in its entirety about each of these recommendations from the Advisory Council, if you could please put your thoughts into the first Microsoft form link that I sent at the very beginning of the meeting, we'd still love to capture those thoughts even if they can't be expressed verbally today in the meeting.

But right off the bat, does anyone have any initial reactions to this recommendation regarding the intake form?

Do you think it's feasible?

What kind of obstacles do you maybe foresee?

Abby, what are your thoughts?

WA Willard, Abbey 1:07:11

Sorry, I didn't mean to have my hand raised.

I was just letting you know I was ready to move to the next slide and I forgot to take it down.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:07:16

That's great.

Jill, do you have thoughts?

BJ BriggsCampbell, Jill 1:07:21

I have concerns.

OK.

I'll, I'll tell you what my concern is.

The the proposed remedies by complainants.

So for me, if I'm trying to play this out in a real world example, right, and really try to understand how this might work.

So in the school world I could imagine and you know, we've talked about, like, what is an environmental justice justice complaint, right.

So let's just pretend that we would say that an environmental justice complaint in a school might be the presence of PCB's.

Or it might be, umm, the presence of mold or lack of indoor air quality in schools,

right?

So I think that to me is a very concrete thing that why might imagine his environmental justice complaint.

So let's say that we have our school PCB program.

We find out that there's PCBS in a school.

It could result theoretically in hundreds of environmental justice complaints being submitted because we do have an environmental contaminant in a school.

My my question is like I'm asking a fundamental question because we don't want this to be performative.

What?

What is the proposed remedy?

What is our what?

What are we?

I don't know how to say what are we supposed to do about that, right?

So that is a question I have and that's why I think it's important to put our arms around what this is and what it isn't.

UM.

If someone apparent complains that.

Uh and and and who is the accountable, responsible entity there?

If a parent complains that there's no air conditioning in the middle school and it's 95 degrees in there.

True story, right?

And many of our schools, that is an environmental, a potential environmental complaint.

Who's who is accountable in that?

And by I don't wanna not ask the question and not have the information, but what do we do with it so?

I'm asking sort of a big question here, but I I want to like point to like if we're asking for this information in a form, I think there's an expectation that something happened and I don't know what that is and it is the receiving agency.

Supposed to do something, but we have no authority, ability or funds to do that thing.

So hard question, maybe bigger question maybe than what you're looking for, but again I just want to ask that question before we put this out into the world, right?

BJ

Birch, Juliet 1:10:37

Thank you, Jill.

I think that those are all really big, uh, fundamental questions, and it seems like we've got some Advisory Council members who have some thoughts as well.

I also just want to say, briefly drawing attention to the time we can totally pick up on this conversation after we take a break for public comment soon and for, you know, a bio break.

I know that some folks would probably like to get up and stretch for a minute, but let's hear from Walter and Maryam, and then we'll take a brief break, if that's OK.

And Dave, we can pick up with your thoughts when we're done, if that makes sense.

Walter, do you have thoughts?

BW

Brownridge, Walter 1:11:17

Yeah.

Thank you.

And I was one of the people that helped.

Draft and the initial, umm sort of format.

So thank you for your question, Jill.

The presumptions that we had the Advisory Council had and when we put this together, presumption is that.

When someone makes a complaint, the intake form, it's almost a dialogue between the person receiving the complaint, helping the person.

Umm, fill out the intake form that the key thing is to identify the pertinent agency.

Umm, who would be able to address the problem?

I don't know in the state of Vermont myself, who, for example, would handle people's would that be?

In a school.

That'd be a the State Department and education.

Would it be the local, umm, school district?

Would it be some part of the state government that deals with toxic and toxic, uh, forever chemicals?

Umm that would be.

You know that that is to be determined, but I think it is something that can be determined.

Who would be the issue?

And so?

I think from the role of of the state dealing with environmental justice complaints. You know it is not an agency unto itself that does that work, but it is the agency that, along with the community, at least my perspective as a member of the Advisory Council to hold those government agencies accountable, who need to. Remedy those situations.

I don't know if that answers your question or not.

But it would.

I mean, I think that one of the key things we wanted is that there has to be an agency.

Umm that we do that that that we I can identify depending on the circumstances of the complaint.

So I'll stop there.

I see a question in the chat.

BJ BriggsCampbell, Jill 1:13:43

I just threw some comments in there, Walter.

It's a very complicated one, but I'm guessing that a lot of folks, if we give concrete examples, it becomes this complicated.

BW Brownridge, Walter 1:13:55

It is and I think.

And you know Jill talks about funds available to support that work.

I mean, my question would be now what happens now?

If, if there's you discover something, uh, I live in Burlington.

I live 2 miles from where a high school existed, and now one uh does not exist.

But there's construction on that site for a new high school.

So I mean it's it.

Someone has to, but most of that is that took that particular local school district.

Umm, they had to of course, get a bond passed to support the building of the new.

But it's a great question and the questions of funding is always going to be there because it is complicated.

I I think we need to.

So the first step is to certainly you know, to take government is accountable.

Uh, and just as I said, it's really part of a dialogue about how do we address these, this it may be that you know down the road, we look at personnel that may help not being with the Community and having that dialogue, identifying issues should be addressed.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:15:19

Thank you, Walter.

Maryam, do you also have thoughts on this point?

MA Maryam Abbasi 1:15:24

Yes, ohm.

I'm not sure how different departments within uh Vermont government works and coordinate for issues, but I'm sure there would be complaints which wouldn't be in the jurisdiction of the agencies involved here in the meeting.

I in my opinion there can be like 2 solutions to this.

One is if that is.

Ohh if that is not a direct mandate of these expenses involved in the meetings we we can ask the complainant, you know, identify who is the relevant Government Department to it is that complain and just let the complaint know that this is not in our jurisdiction and you can submit your complaint to for example department a of you know whatever complaint is ohh our second can be that and that that depends on human resources and funding and time of the agencies as well that ohh they they can they can involve themselves and communicate to that relevant.

Department that we received a complaint through this form.

This is a complaint and it falls under your jurisdiction.

When would you like to address that?

And then these agencies present in the meeting can take out themselves from the loop, you know, and can direct, like complainant and responsible agencies.

A wait time.

I had another point which I I forgot for now.

I'll I'll I'll share as soon as it as fax my mind again.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:17:09

That's great.

Thank you so much, Maryam.

UM, I wanna draw everyone back to what we mentioned before, which is that if we could take a moment to just have public comment and then a break really quickly, that would be great.

Just to keep us making sure that everybody gets gets a snack, get some water, get some time to stretch.

For those of you who have your hands raised, please write down your thoughts and will pick back up as soon as we're done with our break.

But I'd like to open the floor for 10 minutes to public comment if there are any members of the public on right now who would like to speak, please raise your hand if you're a member of the public who would like to speak.

All right, I did my 10 second facilitators count.

UM and I don't see anyone present.

Who?

Uh.

Seems like they would like to speak, so I'm going to give us a 5 minute break here and we'll pick back up at 11:26 AM.

All right.

I'll see you all on the flip side.

BREAK

OK folks.

UM, if anyones, uh, still on their break, please come back.

Umm, once we get back into once we get back into the discussion.

I know.

I saw Stephanie's hand.

I think I had also seen Dave and Elizabeth who had thoughts.

So, umm, we left off with Marianne's suggestions about how to sort of handle situations where the jurisdiction of a complaint is outside of, you know, the covered agencies or outside of the agency that perhaps is identified by the intake form.

So that's where we can pick up if that sounds good to everybody, I'm just gonna wait to see if a couple more folks on the screen before we get back into the conversation.

All right.

And to be transparent on my end, I just wanna make sure we have enough time to have a discussion about how we're actually gonna draft in submit these responses

from the covered agencies.

So if we could just take another five or so minutes to cover this particular recommendation, we can move on to recommendations three and four and then pick back up with talking about how we actually wanna get moving on responding by August 15th.

If that sounds good to everybody.

Umm.

All right.

So, Stephanie, do you have any thoughts on uh on, you know, anything that we've been talking about in relation to recommendation too?

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 1:25:16

So my I can save my comment if you want me to.

My comment was going to be this August deadline is coming really fast and I have a proposal for how we make sure we meet that need because I want to make sure there's space for that.

So I can save that proposal if you prefer that I do that.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:25:31

Yeah, I it's great to hear that you have thoughts on that.

We're gonna.

That's gonna be one of the things that we get to right after we're finished discussing each of the recommendations in a little bit more depth.

So I'd love to hear your thoughts when we get to that portion of the meeting.

Thank you so much.

Uh.

And sure, umm.

Elizabeth Schilling

Hey, I just wonder respond.

I felt like I heard frustration expressed with the the the potential breadth of complaints that might be submitted and how those might be addressed.

And I think one thing for the agencies and everyone to keep in mind, it's like there may not be satisfactory resolution of all of these complaints, right?

That the law is creating a requirement that we have a process to receive the

complaints and that we respond to them.

But that doesn't mean we're always going to be able to, like, effectively, actually address the complaint with the resources we have the the capabilities we have etcetera.

Umm, so when we get overwhelmed like I think keeping that in mind as helpful like we do have to address the complaints and compile them out all of that.

But, but we may not be able to ultimately solve all the issues and it part of having all the complaints and like being able to compile them in one place is it creates a way that if something isn't being addressed currently under the law, advocates could then point to these complaints and then be able to go to the legislature and say we need money for this or we need a new process for this.

So just thinking a little bit global, more globally about what's required by the law and what's actually creating and the application.

Thank you.

Carla, do you have thoughts?

RK

Raimundi, Karla 1:27:13

Yes, I do.

Thank you.

Umm.

Really quickly to Mariano's point, I just wanted to mention that ohh I didn't intend to some solve my comment.

I just wanted to lower my hands, but what I wanted to mention is that.

Once there are processes and procedures set in place to manage the complaints internally to each agency, there can also be a referral process and I think what's what. Very helpful about the recommendation from the Advisory Council here in terms of having a central repository and a central location for management of those complaints is that we could actually use that mechanism to refer.

The complaint to the agencies that are.

Umm that would be in contact with that particular complaint.

So you know those questions regarding jurisdiction and and like which agents we has the capacity to exact change as intended or asked for in the complaint, they could be via that central intake mechanism, they could be sent the complaint if there is a drop down menu and I'm going really down on rabbit hole here, but if there's a drop down menu, the complainant could actually identify the agencies that they

believe are called umm for in their complaints.

So they're, you know, that question can be addressed later on when we're in that place, but just wanna.

I just wanna underscore what Elizabeth just mentioned and also a poll for a little bit of patience, because I think if there's consensus that that's where the agencies are heading, this is definitely going to take some time to put in place.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 1:29:40

That's a really good point, Carla.

That it may not be.

You know it.

I I'm hearing a lot of enthusiasm and interest in the recommendations that we've reviewed so far.

I'm also hearing a lot of concern about what it will mean to implement them, and so, you know, it might not be that this these recommendations are implementable in the next year.

It might be something that requires more of like a phased or, you know, a slower approach to set up those.

Uh support mechanisms to make these happen, but with that in mind, I am hearing still that same enthusiasm about a lot of these recommendations.

So just in general about this idea of an intake form and having more standardized elements to the kind of complaint response system and complaint intake system, would you guys all generally agree that this is a recommendation that we should aspire to or that this is like a good recommendation that feels feasible?

Or does anyone have any thoughts about, you know, maybe this isn't something that is is feasible for our agency?

Elizabeth Schilling

I'll jump in.

I think sure feasible for our agency.

Great, actually, because we're new to this arena, but I can't speak for other agents.

Birch, Juliet

Yeah, if you guys if if anyones feeling like this is you know this is something we should aspire to, this is something that feels feasible.

Please give a thumbs up.

I just wanna get a general temperature for how everybody's feeling about these recommendations thus far.

Great.

I'm seeing some thumbs.

If anyone is withholding thumbs, please feel free to unmute and let me know what your concerns are.

Great.

Yeah.

Jill just commented "cautioning capacity cause concerns, but yes, feasible.

Theoretically", yeah, I think that that's an overarching theme is that we'll we'll need to think through the capacity and resource concerns that that tend to come up as we move through things of this nature that that's gonna be like an ongoing sort of thing that we're gonna have to talk through.

Yeah.

So I appreciate everyone's robust uh conversation about this particular recommendation.

If it's OK with everyone, just in attention to the time, I'd also like to review recommendations three and four.

They're sort of packaged together.

Does that sound good to everybody?

All right, great.

Yeah.

So, uh, this is similar to the previous one where there's multiple slides that kind of have all the information.

So I'll I'll put up this first one and then we can read through the 2nd as well.

MA **Maryam Abbasi** 1:32:46

Uh, sorry I uh, the point. I forgot uh.

Related to previous point, can I state it now?

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:32:52

Yes, please.

MA **Maryam Abbasi** 1:32:52

It was.

It was the last point regarding if complainant suggests something.

Ohh, I think sometimes what I have experienced in my research work is that the people who are suffered or vulnerable due to any impact of climate change.

Other one best to tell what is the solution?

Ohh but of course sometimes if the matter is related to policy change or like a certain law or or related to technology or something.

I mean that is something which which a few people might like, like their expertise.

And so, you know, with few complaints, if there are like recommendations which are like viable and the experts in this meeting, I don't know how they address mechanism would be for the complaints.

But if that resonates with everybody, uh, I think we should we we should give them chance to, you know, kind of kind of provide them that solution along with our own recommendations too.

Thank you.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:33:59

Thank you, Maryam.

And I think that that what what you just spoke to isn't speaks to another really important foundational principle in EJ and civil rights about this idea that people are the experts in their own experience.

And so if there's ways that we can get people involved in developing or devising the best solution for them, that that sounds like that would be a really good way to move forward.

So I really appreciate that thought.

Does anyone have any other thoughts on what Mariam just shared?

Or this first slide of recommendations three and four regarding the kind of follow up and resolution process for complaints.

OK, I'm gonna put up the other slide as well.

So you guys can read, uh, kind of this last bit and then we can, uh have continue our discussion.

If everyone could give a little thumbs up saying yes, I I've gotten enough time to read through the content here.

Great.

I'm seeing lots of thumbs and just as a reminder, again, if you don't get an

opportunity to share any of your thoughts regarding, you know, the feasibility of these recommendations, what it would entail for your agency, et cetera, please, I encourage you to write down your thoughts in the Microsoft form that is linked in The chat we would love to get your thoughts even if you don't get an opportunity to share them verbally today.

But with that said, does anyone have any thoughts on you know what this means for your agency in terms of capacity, in terms of resources?

Does this seem doable?

Does this seem something like a like a recommendation that we can aspire to?

What does everyone think?

Jill.

BJ

BriggsCampbell, Jill 1:36:31

So.

I think that some of some of the complaints that we will receive will be potentially.

Sort of small scale in one off and can be responded to I.

Again, I'm I'm signaling capacity issues.

My my experience in the Agency of Education is that we are deeply understaffed for the scope of work that we already have to do.

So I I want to signal.

I don't think anyone can take this on without additional capacity.

If a another department or agency disagrees, and that's totally fine, but I I'm signaling we are flat out right.

So that is a real concern.

But what I'm thinking about is that I think a lot of the really.

I'm really significant.

Environmental justice issues and complaints and experiences that people have are are systemic in nature.

They're complicated in nature and so, and they may involve something like, you know, trying to address 1 issue may then implicate other departments in the need for like permits or planning or other things that are gonna come into that process.

So this kind of like remediation and response piece to me, I think is the most important right, like when we receive this information, as I said, we don't want this to be performative and it's not a data gathering exercise, right?

It is about responding and fixing.

But.

Something that may be experienced as a one off like this is what's happening in front of me like this is a thing I may actually be systemic in nature, and so how how do we? Prioritize and respond to issues that may at first appear small, but actually are quite large.

I don't.

I don't have an answer, it's just a question that I'm posing.

I apparently I'm like sticky question lady today I'm very solution oriented.

Normally I want people to know that.

But right now it's all about poking holes, and I really apologize for that.

It's not my nature, but how do we how do we do that?

I know I'm super sticky question lady.

I'm super sorry about that. Yeah.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 1:39:15

I think that I I appreciate that you're uh, you've thought through a lot of these questions and and you're willing to voice your concerns.

And I I really appreciate that.

So I wouldn't necessarily call you sticky question lady.

I appreciate that a lot.

BJ

BriggsCampbell, Jill 1:39:31

I'll own it today.

It's fine.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 1:39:33

I.

Does anyone have any thoughts on those concerns that Jill voiced or any additional thoughts, feelings, or concerns that are separate? Stephanie?

SA

Smith, Stephanie A 1:39:46

Thank you.

So I think throughout this entire conversation, we've clearly demonstrated that this is incredibly complicated.

So I would say for in terms of a response, conceptually all of the recommendations

from the Advisory Council are great.

I don't have concerns with any of them on a conceptual level.

There are things we should be striving towards.

BJ BriggsCampbell, Jill 1:40:03

Mm-hmm.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 1:40:05

My hope is we can all agree to that as Members of this committee, so we can submit one letter saying conceptually great sounds good, but we need probably funding to hire a consultant to work with each agency to do a stakeholder process, to build this system, make sure it works for all of us, identify how we work through all of these challenges that we just came up with, figure out what the staffing capacity needs are, figure out how we can actually implement this on the ground in partnership with the Advisory Council and this committee as the.

Next step, like we need that full process to occur before we can solve these things.

So my recommendation is let's respond with one letter that says these concepts are great.

We agree to them.

Here are the things we're going to need in order to make that happen.

And here's some other things we've flagged as potential concerns as we get to what the implementation of this looks like.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:41:03

I think that, umm, some of those recommendations and ideas that you just expressed, Stephanie, are really interesting and I think are things that we can definitely dive into a little bit more as we continue in this conversation.

I also heard your recommendation of just responding with one letter, which that's been an ongoing question for several folks is, you know, will our agencies all individually respond or should we all just do one joint response?

And I would like to OfferUp another the third option, which is that you guys could create one big joint response and then if there's a particular agency present today that would like to have a separate response that kind of hones in more on agency specific concerns or thoughts that they'd like to communicate to the Advisory Council, that could be an option as well like one joint response and then some

agencies provide.

You know individual response responses.

In addition, if that makes sense, Elizabeth, you've thought

Elizabeth Schilling

well about immediate question, I guess to draft and joint response of any sort, we have to have, but who would be taking the lead on that,

Birch, Juliet

right and we can we'll we'll get into that in a couple of minutes if that if that's OK with you

Elizabeth Schilling

that's fine.

Awesome.

And then to the the three in the recommendations three and four.

Uh, I think the Commission is like broadly supportive.

I think we might have some concerns about the very last bullet related to like the involvement in solution building because of the extent of how like how there could be there could be challenges with that in the mathematics, right.

But I think it at a broad level.

We're on board with that.

Looks like commendation.

Birch, Juliet

Awesome.

Karla, do you have thoughts as well?

RK Raimundi, Karla 1:43:07

Umm yes, I I did have several thoughts on.

I think I'm just.

After what Elizabeth mentioned, UM, I think I, you know with regards to that last bullet.

UM, I think that very much will be part of what we need to contemplate when building our Community engagement plans is the extent to which, umm, members

are gonna be involved in decision making and solution development for issues that are brought to our agencies by Community members themselves in that could be like a scope question that can be developed and built into community engagement plans moving forward, which is something perhaps that can be discussed at the PUC retreat.

Umm.

Just just thinking I'm here how to address that question.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:44:12

Yeah.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:44:16

Of how to involve, yeah.

Elizabeth Schilling 1:44:16

And I think this should.

I was just gonna say I think this just goes to how in Morpheus, uh environmental justice issue complaint can feel like it.

It's not actually explicitly defined in the law like in our report.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:44:28

Yeah.

It is not absolutely.

Elizabeth Schilling 1:44:32

On this we we developed our our own interpretation of how we were defining these things.

And so, because of the amorphous nature of what we're I'm creating a process for and being expected to report on.

I think it just makes that particular part of that recommendation feel a little.

Potentially more challenging because of, you know, but it but what are the complaints?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:44:56

Almost.

My. Yeah.
Yeah, OK.
Italian food.
Well, thank you.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:45:06
Karla, do you have additional thoughts on that?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 1:45:08
No, just it's, it's just resonating.
It's just it's just resonating 1.
Elizabeth is sharing, you know it's it's.
It it's a very complex.
Process.
I think what we have before us right now, I think we're resonating with the recommendations from the, from the Advisory Council and I do believe that perhaps there's space for agencies to speak to some of the recommendations just because we are so differently situated and the work of the agency is differs so greatly from each other.
Umm that there may be actions that some agencies are ready to take on.
Right now we're others just need more time to.
Am act on some of these responses.
We need to go just reflecting out loud.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 1:46:19
Yeah.
Thank you for emphasizing that.
I think that something that we're the the an overarching theme that we're running into is that there's not going to be a one size fits all sort of solution for all of the agencies.
And that although we are the ultimate goal to aspire to is to have based off of these recommendations and more unified approach to complaint, intake, complaint response, etcetera, you know it might be that each agency has its own timeline based off of the you know capacity and resource issues as well as uh, what systems already exist and what systems have yet to exist.

So with that in mind, this feels like you know a big undertaking, but I think that we're having these conversations and coming to conclusions about what we all agree is an aspiration.

What we all agree is something that we're all grounded in the same kind of goals and values, more or less.

And so I think that we're starting from a really good spot.

Umm, but just to kind of conclude this conversation reviewing these these recommendations, the main things that I'm hearing from all of you or that there is some concerns regarding timeline, resources and capacity and so these are things that we'll have to you know, scheme to determine how we wanna move forward.

Some other questions that have really come up is for some agencies.

Uh, Jill.

Especially, uh brought this up.

There are different requirements related to complaint responses from all different levels.

So to what extent can we standardize complaint responses, or to what extent can we standardize complaint intake processes if they're under different requirements?

So that's a really big question that we're going to wanna answer at some point and some other things that are that have come up that I think are really important or is this idea of, you know, people are the experts in their own experience.

That's something that Mariam shared with us is that we should, when we are responding to these complaints, centering the complainant and their needs and helping working with them to devise a solution where possible and some other big needs that I'm hearing is that we we would like a clear definition of what an EJ complaint really entails and how that's different from a civil rights complaint as well as you know potentially a clearer timeline for each agency.

Some agencies may need more time than others do.

All those points kind of encompass some of our thoughts, feelings and concerns.

Or is there any like?

Are there any final thoughts that we'd like to slip in there as well?

I'm seeing a positive positive response from Dave. Great.

Awesome.

And if there are any thoughts that anyone has regarding this conversation after this meeting, please feel free to throw that into the Microsoft form.

You know, if you're thinking after work, you have your feet up and you're like, oh, I

should have mentioned this while we were while we were talking today.
But I didn't get a chance throw it into the Microsoft Forum will definitely read through it.
Parse through and figure out how we can meet your needs and help support you wherever, wherever possible.
Umm, thanks.
Sure, I know exactly.
You're welcome too.

Elizabeth Schilling

It's because this is not something the Commission goes with, but you know, agency of Ed raised the fact that they have the civil rights complaints and federal requirements related to those.
How many of the other agencies are dealing with that?
Like or is it the vast majority, and are there a lot of different existing processes in place and just thinking about like, yeah, how many agencies have a lot of separate individualized processes related to the federal law or or state law and people went and it does OK.

RK Raimundi, Karla 1:50:40

We do and R.
Yes.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:50:46

And it looks like Amy also.

RA Redman, Amy (She/Her) 1:50:50

I was just thinking, umm, we have a the cancer registry which has an inquiry complaint processing protocol and then we also have food and lodging also has one, if that's what you meant.
Examples, if that's what you were asking.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:51:05

But yes, that's what I was asking about.
I'm just thinking about it potential solution if if we were to develop some type of

unified approach, you know there could be a page on like the unified page for EJ Silverites complaints that directs people to different pages or separate forms for things that have like specific federal requirements or other state requirements or something like that.

Just yeah, thinking creatively about how to create a unified approach while also recognizing that there might be differences.

That's a good that is a really good idea.

I'm also wondering if uh, maybe.

Ohh Carla please.

RK

Raimundi, Karla 1:51:54

Yeah, I think this is my cue to make the comment that I flagged earlier about civil rights and EJ, Umm, just talking about the Agency of Natural Resources.

We have 3 departments.

Each of the three departments receive federal support from different agencies.

The different federal agencies that provide support to our agency have different civil rights requirements.

Mostly they apply across the board and we have a grievance procedure as per civil rights requirements and an investigation manual that we're in the process of finalizing.

And what I wanted to mention is that although there is a recognition in the in the response that there are two distinct processes.

Umm, I think for purposes of this question that you raised Elizabeth, we should try to keep them separate from each other, specifically because for civil rights there is little prerogative that the agencies have, or that at least the three departments within the Agency of Natural Resources have with regards to what falls under civil rights complaint and what not.

And also the way in which those complaints are handled are prescribed by the federal government, mostly.

And so in order for us to be responsive to the Advisory Council recommendation of having one intake form for civil rights and adding on EJ, I think that particular recommendation may not be implementable just given what I shared.

And so and what I'm thinking is that because environmental justice complained is really, I was gonna say empty, but it doesn't have content.

It's does not come prescribe from anywhere else.

It's something that we have to put together that there's more space and opportunity for us to develop the content.

You know what kind of process we're going to be looking at for the handling of an environmental justice complaint?

What is an environmental justice complaint?

Just thinking substantively, umm.

And we don't have that with the civil rights sites of side of things.

You know that all comes prescribed.

So that's really what I wanted to mention during this meeting is that given given the. Content that is prescribed for civil rights and the lack of content on EJ.

Complaints that we should manage them distinctly, although umm, I would be remiss to not mention that some civil rights complaints may also implicate environmental justice or become an environmental justice complaint.

But I like I mentioned earlier, I think those questions may be answered by, you know, the development of a good procedure and just the scope of environmental justice complaint.

Elizabeth Schilling 1:55:29

That's really helpful.

Thank you.

Especially for like, you know, a state entity where where we aren't dealing with those civil rights complaints.

Have federal funding, so it's helpful to hear that perspective on paying, dividing this and addressing the civil rights complaints separately from the EJ complaint.

Yeah, I think that that's a really helpful perspective.

RK Raimundi, Karla 1:55:50

Yes.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:55:55

I.

Does anyone have any final thoughts on what's been shared thus far?

Or would we like to move on to talking through how we're going to draft a response or responses by August 15th?

RJ Ronis, Jenny 1:56:14

I guess I would just ship into a support all of the other calls for additional definitional clarity and you have appreciation of this distinctions that we're trying to work with here.

So thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:56:32

Thank you for that, Jenny.

I think that that's gonna be a really important priority moving forward as we continue to like hone in uh on a lot of these deliverables, but especially this one.

Does anyone have any other thoughts?

OK.

All right, so we've had a great conversation about what what we think about these recommendations and how we can apply them to our own agencies.

I think the next question is how are we?

How do we wanna coordinate the drafting and submission of a response to the Advisory Council by August 15th?

Umm.

And so we've already done that public comment.

So I'm just going to scoot forward in our presentation here at the.

My big questions are, you know, it seems that we are leaning towards this idea of having one joint response that encompasses the perspectives of the covered agencies generally.

I've also offered up the potential of, you know, if we go with just one response.

Some agencies may feel that they would like to submit an individualized response.

In addition to that joint response, depending on the needs of the agency.

Umm, what does everyone think about that?

Is that what?

What approach do you guys think lands and resonates best with you?

RJ Ronis, Jenny 1:58:09

I guess I would ask first really quickly if if the individual agencies are going to be getting feedback, uh, because I think that you know, I mean, if we're all working as a single group towards this goal with sort of our own individual understandings of the

limitations of how these various laws apply to us, then just a solo response is fine.
But you know, I mean, if we're gonna get more individual, like.
Well, here's what you've got and what you need from the the the Council that would maybe necessitate more individual responses.
But just a singular dialogue from one group to the other.
Back and forth, it's fine.
I just want to know what to expect.

BJ Birch, Juliet 1:58:50

Yeah, as of right now, the way that it's written into the law is that the Advisory Council provided its response or recommendations to the reports.
The covered agencies have an opportunity to respond to those recommendations, particularly those that they will not be able to implement.
After that, there's no indication or requirement that there is a continued dialogue. Of course there will.
This is an annual reporting requirement, so dialogue will pick back up the next time the report occurs next year.
But that's a really great question and something that if that's desired, we could discuss further with the Advisory Council at another time.
But what do you think, Karla?

RK Raimundi, Karla 1:59:39

Yes, I was going to mention that we have Advisory Council members here and, you know, an openness to consider whether there is need for more dialogue regarding recommendations.
Umm, I think it's it is perhaps with good practice that if there's an agency that has a particular reservation, umm.
Or thoughts regarding any of the responses that they, you know, provide that as part of the response.
Umm, independent of whether the AC will respond to that individual comment, but just recognize that I am unsure about whether the AC will respond or not after this after our report is due just because they ask from the law ends with our response.
If and that's akavia that's written in the law is if the agencies are not, UM, implementing the recommendations, then they should provide an answer.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 2:01:05

Yeah.

That makes sense, Karla.

Umm.

So just to get a temperature here on how everybody's feeling about the way that we'll go about this response, could you all please raise your hands if the idea of having one joint response sounds great, sounds like something you would like to do moving forward, interagency Committee members, please raise your hand if that works.

OK, seeing 2-3, I think in theory.

OK, so we've got a tentative.

All right.

Umm.

And I think that I've gotten a response from all the Interagency Committee members that are still on the call.

So if it works for everybody, what we can do is, uh, is we can we can arrange and coordinate having a joint response drafted and then are there any agencies present who feel compelled or feel like it would be necessary for them to draft a separate individual response as well.

Please raise your hand if that seems like something that your agency would like to do.

I think potentially kinda depends.

Like it's TBD once we see what the joint response says, we might wanna add some additional response like because the as the comments weren't individualized like we might want to follow up and say, you know, in the interim we're gonna do XYZ right till this joint unified process is finalized, right.

But I think that's more just to be transparent with the Advisory Council than anything.

Yeah, that's a good point.

It the the, I think transparency is probably the the focal point here is that like even if it doesn't feel like something that you can do in the next year, just being transparent and saying here's sort of where we're where we're moving forward with is a really good is A is a good approach, Carla.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 2:03:11

Yes, I I I support.

And uh and across the board answer, but I would also like to provide.

An additional response from the Agency of Natural Resources, and I think it's particularly important for the Agency, for us, for the Agency of Natural Resources to do that because of the specific.

Recommendation regarding a joint intake form with civil rights and environmental justice.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:03:51

Mm-hmm.

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 2:03:53

I just would like to reserve the opportunity to address that particular recommendation for the Agency of Natural Resources, but generally I think you know I I agree and support all of the recommendations by the Advisory Council and think that the they are the ideal like a goal where we should strive to be.

Umm, so if that's the content of the IC response across the board, I fully support writing that and then reserving the opportunity to add on an A on our specific response to address that particular recommendation.

And I think two other recommendations.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:04:48

That sounds great.

So I'm hearing that people are happy with the idea of having a joint response.

PUC may wanna have an individual response.

In addition, a NR definitely wants to do so.

Is there anyone else who would be interested in having their agency have an individual response?

Umm, you know, this may be something that you wanna just.

DB **Donohue, Bob** 2:05:07

Yeah, I.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:05:08

Oh, go ahead Bob.

DB Donohue, Bob 2:05:10

No, I'm just gonna say I think the way Karla framed it as great.

You know, we'll reserve the right to add anything that we think needs to be added that may be lacking or could be embellished upon in our in our unique agency report.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:05:23

Absolutely.

Yeah.

And mainly Kim and I would like to know if anyone wants to submit, you know, an individual response just so we know for coordination purposes, who to who to track down.

So if you, you know, once the joint response is drafted, if you find that there's particular information that you'd like to add in as well, that needs to be captured, please email myself and Kim Barrett and we will remember to track you down and get that included before the final submission.

Umm.

Jenny, it looked like maybe you had unmuted for a second.

Do you have thoughts?

I also might just be seeing things.

RJ Ronis, Jenny 2:06:03

Oh, just to agree.

No, no, you were right.

I was just trying to.

I was gonna agree with Bob that I think we wanna see what the joint response is and see if that's satisfactory to our needs.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:06:14

That sounds great.

RJ **Ronis, Jenny** 2:06:16

Thanks.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:06:16

Umm ohh go ahead.

OK, alright.

Yeah.

So just inattention to the time trying to keep us on track here.

I just wanted to talk through the timeline about what exactly how exactly we're going to achieve this goal.

From our end, I just wanna work backwards from August 15th and let you you let you guys know what we're hoping to achieve.

So August 15th, of course, we would like to have the final response or responses submitted to the Advisory Council.

We would in in attention to that in a in a in trying to have those documents, you know, be revised and formatted in a consistent way that's also accessible because they will be public documents.

We, Kim and I would like to receive those reports from you by August 12th or 13th, just to give us time to revise those documents and what we can do is send them back to you on August 14th to get like a final thumbs up before we submit on August 15th.

With sorry.

Ohh say that again.

Yes, I'll also because I recognize that timelines are really hard to just communicate verbally.

We can send this in an email as well, but if you guys could aim to submit your documents to us by sorry, what back in the joint response and or whatever individual response your agency may be interested in submitting would be drafting the joint.

Yeah, that's a great question.

I think once we establish the uh at the back end of this timeline, maybe that will help folks know whether or not they're available to help in the drafting of that.

Does that make sense?

Sure.

OK.

Yeah, I'm gonna type out the timeline that Kim and I have kind of developed on the back end just for you guys to see.

Visually.

And then.

Uh.

So my apologies.

I'm gonna.

I'm gonna be typing for a minute here, but then maybe that can help us figure out how we want to coordinate the actual drafting and what needs to happen to make to make that occur. So.

And in the meantime, does anyone have any like thoughts or concerns in the drafting of a joint response that or any potential recommendations?

I know.

Stephanie, you had start started to touch on this a little bit before.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 2:09:20

I don't think I have anything else to add from what I said a bit ago.

Uh-huh.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:09:26

Sounds good.

Uh UM.

I'm like an abysmally slow typer, so I'm very sorry for the way here.

Let's see.

And then.

All right, so this is the kind of back end timeline that we've devised.

So that gives us from now until August 7th or 8th to coordinate a way that we can all work together to draft a joint response.

Does that make sense to everybody?

I'm getting some slight nods from some folks.

WA **Willard, Abbey** 2:10:32

And Juliet, the only question that I have is like with the final submission, who would do the final submission to the AC?

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:10:39

That'll be us.

We can take care of that for you, yeah.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:10:40

OK. OK.

Thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:10:44

Yeah.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:10:44

Thank you.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:10:46

So with that timeline in mind.

If everybody had it does, does anyone have an inclination that they'd like to be involved in the drafting process, and if so, what do you guys need in order to collaborate on this?

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:11:31

I think we ask is for uh volunteers from ICC members to draft a response.

The collective portion of the response.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:11:46

Yeah.

Thank you for the clarification, Karla.

Walter, are you?

BW Brownridge, Walter 2:11:49

Karla.

OK, I could maybe it's because I'm not hearing well.

You need people from the from the AC or the EIC.

Volunteers.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:12:03
Can you pull from the IAC the IAC?

BW Brownridge, Walter 2:12:04
Is it from?
OK.
Thank you.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:12:08
This is this is our response to your.

BW Brownridge, Walter 2:12:13
Thank you.
Yeah.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:12:14
To your document, yes, replica.

BW Brownridge, Walter 2:12:14
All right. OK.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:12:26
Yes, Dave.

PD Pelletier, Dave 2:12:28
Is it this is a question and then maybe a suggestion, but is it maybe?
Maybe it's two questions.
Would it be appropriate for Juliet and Kim to to start a draft based on the conversation that we've had today and the and the the dialogue that we've had about things that the group feels good about, things that the you know, the group is cautious about and and maybe challenges moving forward and if if so, do they feel like they have enough to to start with just as to get something kind of you know to stand something up for us to to take a look at? Thanks.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:13:12

Umm, just to speak on that briefly and Karla, you can jump in as well.

Umm, I'm sure I can't speak for Kim, but I'm I would be happy to be involved in the drafting process, but I I I don't think that either of us would want to write anything that is intended to be, in the words of the Interagency Committee members or the covered agencies.

So, bearing that in mind, we'd be happy to be involved in the process, but it would be great if other folks would be interested or willing to volunteer their time and to help with this as well.

Karla, what are your thoughts?

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:13:54

Yeah, my thoughts align with yours.

Also, in attention to the fact that, umm, when the Advisory Council was drafting their response, we provided the support needed for them to do so, but we did not undertake the drafting of the document itself.

I think it's really important that the document comes from members of the Interagency committee itself.

The way that the Advisory Council response came from directly members of the Advisory Council and then environmental justice coordinators, reformatted UMM, prove red edited and then submitted for response.

I think this is an ask from the law that be performed by the Interagency Committee members.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:14:51

That's a great point, Karla.

I just want to emphasize that folks who want to be involved in this drafting process will not be doing it alone.

We would be happy to OfferUp any support as needed.

I know that for the Advisory Council, I believe that we hosted at least one office hour meeting to help kind of get some collaboration time in so there there will be support as needed.

Whatever you guys express being necessary.

So if there's any volunteers to, you know, help draft this joint response, that would be

very much appreciated.

DB **Donohue, Bob** 2:15:35

I guess I'll, I'll, I'll talk.

I'll talk.

I'll talk to Jill and see I won't speak on behalf.

We have two legislative commissions that we're now gonna be supporting that start in the next two weeks.

So the amount of information and data that has to be provided to those legislative working groups is a large ask as it is.

So I guess if after Jill and I talk, the decision is that it makes sense for me to help, that's cool.

But I don't want to commit to it yet.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:16:08

Yeah, awesome.

I was just gonna add there's a chance that I'm out before this deadline because I'm pregnant and we'll be going on the train leave in August.

So I don't think I should be like the lead on drafting a joint response, but I will certainly try and get a individualized Commission response together before I have to go on the.

Thank you guys for that.

If there are any other folks, it sounds like we have Bob, potentially Elizabeth.

Well, it's both potentially Bob and potentially Elizabeth if we have anyone else it we that would be very much appreciated just to get some eyes and multiple perspectives on this response.

SA **Smith, Stephanie A** 2:16:56

And I'm I'm happy to be a part of it.

I my capacity is incredibly challenged, so I'm my ability to be on a meeting is not great for a while.

Umm I, but I again.

I think a lot of this is the notes that you took today, Juliet.

If you can send those out so we know, here are the challenges that the group

brought up.

Here's what we're concerned about.

But ultimately, if the response is, we fundamentally agree with these recommendations.

We want to propose a process that allows us to work together, have a stakeholder engagement process with the agencies, with the Advisory committee and and figure out how to make this happen over the next couple of years.

I don't think it's going to be.

I don't think it needs to be insanely detailed other than that because a lot of the questions we brought up would come U in that process.

So a commitment to, yes, sounds great.

We want to get there.

We just need the time and the process to actually get there to be in place.

I it's if that's the substance of it, then I I think that's very doable.

We can absolutely include.

Here's the list of the challenges that we brought up as we're thinking about what the implementation of this actually looks like, but without that full process, we're not going to know the full set of challenges.

We can give examples based on our conversation.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 2:18:14

Absolutely.

I think that that makes complete sense.

Yeah.

And I I just wrote down.

I will be.

I took all of my notes in pen today, but I will be reformatting them to be in writing.

I'll send you guys a follow up email with all the resources that we discussed today.

Just so you guys have everything that you need and would it be helpful to have something like an office hour even for like half an hour to just collaborate with folks who want to be involved in the drafting process or what kind of support would be would be of use to you guys?

DB

Donohue, Bob 2:19:02

I guess I I yeah.

I mean, regardless of what we call it is you gotta be in a meeting or it's gotta be in some sort of form where we can get together and take what are the recommendations and then just start crafting those responses.

So I don't know anything other than a meeting.

I don't see how else you know what more could be done.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:19:19

Yeah.

And that that was what we were doing today.

DB Donohue, Bob 2:19:22

Yeah.

Yeah.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:19:26

Abby, you have thoughts?

WA Willard, Abbey 2:19:27

Yeah, I'm.

I'm wondering if to avoid another full meeting of the IC.

I wonder if the Subcommittee can draft something, or the subgroup that's working on this can draft something that's then shared with the full.

I see by email and then if there's concerns they come back or you know or like edits, then it could come back to you, Juliet.

And and Kim, so that again we're not triggering and public meeting were not.

Posting another official I see me like I know that the number of meetings was extended.

I don't know how many meetings it was extended to, or maybe I don't remember, but I don't know that we wanna schedule another whole meeting just for review, especially if our response to the response is similar to what Stephanie just outlined, which is like a few paragraphs of kind of identified consent in agreement with a lot of remaining uncertainty and process still to be determined.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:20:37

Yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

What we did for the Advisory Council was we hosted, you know, an office hours with folks who wanted to be involved with the drafting of their response.

And then we sent that initial draft out to the rest of the Advisory Council with a deadline for their feedback.

Once we receive that feedback, it was applied.

We sent the draft to them, got a thumbs up, did some reformatting, then submitted.

So that is sort of a similar I I'm hoping to achieve a similar process here.

So, umm, for those of you who don't want to be directly involved or don't have the capacity to be directly involved in the drafting process, we'll still give you a very clear opportunity for feedback.

So I hope that that works for everyone.

We I'll send out more information about this in our follow up email if that works, can I get a thumbs up from everybody that they're following along and that this works for everybody?

This.

That's me.

I think that Abby was just referring to the folks who volunteered to be involved in the draft.

Any firm volunteered was a maybe.

Yeah, I think we got a several tentatives and I actually fully said no, right.

OK, so I was just trying to figure out who.

Who have volunteered.

OK.

And I'm seeing Carla will support the drafting of our collective response as well.

Alright, OK.

All right, in attention to time.

I'm gonna open up the floor for public comment.

If there's any member of the public who is on the call right now, I'll open up the floor for 10 minutes for you to speak.

Please raise your hand if you're a member of the public and would like to share a comment.

All right.

I don't think we have any members of the public on the call today, will we will take a 5 minute break and return at 12:31 to talk briefly about environmental benefits spending guidance.

Thanks so much guys.

Hey folks, if everybody could come on back, we'll pick up talking about environmental benefits, spending guidance. Ohh.

I'll give it a minute for everybody to trickle back on the call.

Have I been muted the whole time since 1231, or did you guys hear me before?

DX **Davis, Xusana** 2:29:12

We heard you.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:29:12

OK.

WA **Willard, Abbey** 2:29:13

Yeah, you're fine.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:29:13

OK, great.

If so, that would have been really embarrassing.

So we're gonna pivot from what we've been talking about for the bulk of this meeting to talk about the environmental benefits spending guidance deliverable in the law.

And just a brief update.

We've had several meetings with the task group.

Who is responsible for making some key decisions and eventually drafting this guidance?

And there are several task group members present today on the call.

So if anyone wants to give us an update on what kind of work the task group has been involved in and what kind of work's been done, that would be super appreciated.

Elizabeth, would you like to start?

Elizabeth Schilling

Umm so I think we've had an Jenny and Bob China and if I get anything wrong, if you have things to add.

But we've been trying to meet weekly or biweekly.

There's been some meetings that we've missed since summer schedules and to talk through the key decision.

So there's the the guide to the guy that has, you know, lists of questions that may need to be resolved in order to draft the guidance on the environmental benefits spending reporting.

So I think we've made it through make decisions 123, maybe I'm going to be in there five.

So we've been talking through them and they've been detailed notes from the meetings and you know, ultimately we want to get through all of them and then. Start working on the guidance document itself and I I think take away that I have is that it's something we need to be high level because of the vast differences in, in potential environmental benefits spending that the various agencies have.

But yeah, we're working through that.

I'm there's the revised timelines related to the environmental benefits spending guidance now under the new law.

They don't know if it's off the top of my head, but I think we're still working towards trying to get something together sooner rather than later.

Yeah, because we know that there's going to be a lot of internal work necessary at all the agencies in order to do their initial reporting.

So anyone else who's been a part of the meetings, feel free to chime in and add to what I just summarized.

But that's a high level summary of the work it's happening.

Birch, Juliet

Thank you for that.

And if I could just jump in quickly and then I'll pass it off to you, Bob.

Umm, what Elizabeth is referring to with these?

Like key decisions, there's a document called the guide to the guide that was drafted by the previous environmental justice coordinators that basically outlined a whole bunch of really important decisions that need to be made in order to draft this guidance deliverable.

And So what we're doing in the task group is working through those decisions slowly but surely and asking ourselves those important questions.

And it seems that Carla has dropped that document in the chat for your reference Bob, do you have any additional thoughts on the task group?

DB **Donohue, Bob** 2:32:42

No, I think that was a pretty good summary of it.

As always with all these topics, there's so many more questions generated than there are answers provided, and so it just becomes, umm, hard to really have some takeaway tasks to actually turn into something practical that everybody can use.

So I think that's one of the biggest.

Points of unease in my in my world is just, you know, everybody's gonna have a different idea of how they would want to report on these environmental benefits if there has to be a common approach.

Wonderful.

If there doesn't have to be a common approach, wonderful.

I think the whole the whole sentiment through my listening in on all of this and being part of it is it's gonna be a journey where we're looking to continually improve, to try and always meet the new mark of where we think the environmental justice law is asking us to go.

So as we find the gaps, we'll fill in the gaps.

But there's not gonna be the document at the out at the outset.

That's gonna be all encompassing of everything that needs to be measured.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:33:51

Thank you for that, Bob.

And just highlighting a question that Abby asked in the chat, could we speak to the timeline revision?

Yes and no.

Sort of kinda.

So the timeline revision don't quote me on this because I I may be a little rusty.

I don't have the exact dates memorized anymore, but the based off of the timeline revision.

The guidance itself I think is set to be finalized by September of 2025 and then the environmental benefits spending report, the three year look back report will be finished by February of 2026 Ohm.

But speaking to something that Elizabeth mentioned before, uh, which is that we've already done a lot of work.

Uh, talking through the what?

The contents of the guidance will entail and we want to ensure that the covered agencies have that guidance in their hands sooner rather than later to start kind of doing the work for this look back report.

Umm, we probably will be finishing the guidance well in advance of that September 2025 deadline, although as I mentioned way in the beginning of the meeting, we're still working to come up with like a hardened timeline within our unit.

So there will be more information on that forthcoming, but we're still trying to grind out getting that information ready and drafted.

Do you have any other questions about that, Abby?

WA Willard, Abbey 2:35:26

I I'm no not at this point.

Thanks.

I just had not looked at this document and assumed that what was proposed was now what was finally approved.

So I I I'm just needing to come up to speed with all those take.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:35:42

Right.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:35:43

Yeah.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:35:43

I just put on the chat.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:35:43

And I'm.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:35:44

Sorry, I just put on the chat the document with the, with the recalibrated deadlines that we were using to guide our work and the two year asked presented to the legislature is the role in white named that two year recalling 2 year request and then below is the yellow.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:35:45
OK.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:36:11
So it's above the yellow row in that document.
Those are the new deadlines.
That are in Act 181.

Elizabeth Schilling 2:36:21
And.
And Juliette gave the correct new deadlines.
I just pulled up the the act.
Yeah.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:36:27
So the.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:36:27
And again we can send you more information in a follow up email too if you want to see the ACT itself etcetera.
Stephanie, you were gonna say.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:36:36
Yeah.
Sorry, I'm just I'm having a really hard time and maybe it's just my brain, but reading this chart so, so like bear with me for a second.
So the environmental spending guidance is due September 15th of 2025.
And then the reports are due.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:36:50
Correct.

SA Smith, Stephanie A 2:36:51
OK, now I'm seeing where that is and why it OK, this chart does not work for my

brain.

Sorry I'm I think I'm caught up.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:36:59

Yeah, we can.

We'll send you the the actual act itself, if that it, it'll be listed out differently if that's easier to read.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:37:02

It doesn't.

Umm, Hollywood.

And we will also send you a table without the recalibrated interim deadlines, just the new timeline for all of the deliverables.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:37:25

Yeah, we're still, we're still processing this change as well and we're looking to come up with as many support materials as we can to get everybody reoriented on this new track.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:37:31

But.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:37:34

So that all of that information will be out soon.

But in attention to the deliverable itself, I know that you know we we still have some time before covered agencies have to provide these three year look back reports, but something that we just wanted to talk through with everyone on like a preliminary basis here is.

Based off of your understanding of the deliverable itself.

Umm, what are you for seeing?

Is your agencies current needs potential problems?

They may run into in executing this report as well.

As you know, if you have.

If anyone has any potential solutions to problems that other folks have voiced, this is a really I think this will be a good time for us to get some of those preliminary

concerns and thoughts out.
Does anyone have any thoughts?

DB **Donohue, Bob** 2:38:35

Yeah, I do.

I guess it all parallels what my spreadsheet sample was.

That's how I think the Agency of education would pursue, lacking any clarity that's provided by anybody else.

The only thing I can see is if the need is to somehow quantify proportional spending towards environmental focused populations.

Oh.

Ohh then breaking out the environmental benefits as identified in the guidance document is seems just like a clear natural logical conclusion.

The draw and then trying to get a listing of all the grants that or all the monies that you're agency is responsible for dispersing and then categorizing them.

Uh as to what?

What environmental benefit does it address and what environmental focus population benefits from it?

And it's a big, broad brush quick way to approach it, but lacking any other advice, I don't see any other way.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:39:45

Definitely.

And I think that this also reminds me of another big topic of conversation that's happened in the task group, which is the question of the definition of environmental justice focused population.

Umm, this is something that needs to be revisited by the Advisory Council and is a priority right now for us.

Umm.

And we just we we need to provide the appropriate support to help them to revise that definition.

But the current definition as it stands is mostly related to census block groups, which can have its own sort of pros and cons.

So just wanted to share that piece of information as well.

Abby, do you have thoughts?

WA Willard, Abbey 2:40:29

Yeah, I was curious to hear from those members of the task group that might be here.

If you feel it would be valuable to have, or if you do have already in the task group representation from your business offices.

So that's like a note that I had from our last meeting in May was that, you know, the Agency of Agriculture would be interested in being involved.

I you know, I didn't sign up and volunteer to join the meeting.

So I'm, but I also wondered whether it made better sense for someone from our business office once we're through the end of the fiscal year and the start of the new fiscal year.

Since we have this elongated available timeline, you know I could imagine sometime in I don't know in our business office has capacity but like September maybe to kind of bring in some of their voice to the conversation or does that not feel valuable to those of you that have been working through the guide to the guide?

DB Donohue, Bob 2:41:25

I think that spot on another words, I think the categorization of the spending if if somehow in a uniform chart of accounts, there's a way of capturing right there may be so many millions of dollars of a certain grant going out, there's no way of knowing unless there's a granularity of the breakdown in the uniform chart of accounts from an accounting perspective.

What exactly is that?

What percentage of that money is being spent on these various other items?

And so I think the the real crux of the reporting will come down to the business managing management side finance side of it and and how well all those costs are captured and how granular those costs are captured.

So I think that's really key and in working with the SVG, that little benefit spending guidance Task Group, I think the future look has to be there, you know, right now we're gonna take a a look back but going forward the state should come up with some sort of accounting that measure that starts to categorize and define what environmental spending is.

The federal government should be doing the same thing, so that one where the recipients of the grants and where the pass through of it, it's already defined.

What our what does the spending qualify for an environmental justice benefit spending?

It's not necessarily implying it does touch an environmental focused population, but at least it's now defined by the feds.

For what?

Their money's coming through address and then likewise with any state monies we could be doing that.

So I think we should if this is the way we're going, which it sounds like it is, I think there has to be a whole financial look at how do we put in in our, in our uniform chart of accounts descriptors for capturing the various uh buckets that we want to capture in this whole discussion.

So I think that's really key.

BJ

Birch, Juliet 2:43:19

Yeah.

I just want to highlight again what Abby said about this idea of having representation from each agency's business offices.

And so a a question that I can pose to all of you is if if that's something you'd be interested in pursuing, is having your business offices represented in this task group or at least having their perspective present, UM, could you please take some time in the next couple of weeks to maybe coordinate something like that?

We we are, we were having the task group meetings on Thursdays for about an hour and a half every week, but now I think we're reconsidering how often and for how long.

Now that we have this newer timeline, but knowing that we maybe might have some other voices that we'd like to incorporate into the task group would be great in order to coordinate those new meetings.

So let us know, please reach out to Kim and I if you have any folks you think would be interested in being involved.

Umm are there any other you know potential needs or obstacles that you can foresee or that feel very pressing for your agency when it comes to this like 3 year?

Look back report.

DB

Donohue, Bob 2:44:45

I I think speaking for the AOE, I think we've had a a large amount of work thrust on

to us because of just the way things are happening with the new secretary of Ed and and upset around school budgets in property increasing taxes.

So I think it's as always, it's gonna come down to how much time can any individual focus on on this very important initiative.

That's a huge time sync.

If we're gonna do it right and if something gets diluted, it's either your main core responsibilities get deluded because you're addressing this, or this gets diluted.

So in all honesty, I feel like we dabble here because it's important and we're part of it.

But there's so much other demand pulling us back to our primary responsibilities for.

So I don't know how we do it other than say it for what it is.

If we want to do environmental justice right in Act 154, we need more resources to do it right rather than do it occasionally poorly.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:45:52

I appreciate that.

Yeah.

Thank.

Thank you, Bob.

Does anyone have any other thoughts in attention to that?

Dave.

PD Pelletier, Dave 2:46:08

I'll just support Box's comments and just.

Umm, you know, reiterate the thought that we move something forward on this without striving for perfection initially, but trying to define things, at least in some general sense, where we're able to so that we can conduct some sort of initial analysis with caveats that it's a first, a first go and then just to kind, I think also just to.

Comment that that whatever changes are made to the the definitions of or potential changes are made to the environmental justice focus population definition that that that's pivotal and kind of while we're kind of while we're talking about what the, you know, what the accounting side things are that we're gonna be looking at that we need to quickly at least come up with a a next generation that we're comfortable enough with for the E GFP that we can move forward with an initial analysis even if it gets changed again sometime in the future or gets tinkered with.

Again, because we don't think it's working properly after that.
After that kind of beta run of whatever we put together.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:47:30

Yeah.

Thank you, Dave.

I think that a quote that's come up a couple of times in the task group is this phrase.

Don't let perfection be the enemy of the of the good.

Yeah.

So, you know, it may be that as has been stated several times that the guidance can't necessarily be extremely specific because we don't want to alienate or like you know, ostracize, I don't know what the word would be particular agencies and being able to participate and report in the reporting because maybe the guidance that is very specific isn't applicable to them.

Additionally that EJ FP part really is a a pivotal point.

As you said, Dave and so I I think another discussion that's come up is the need for the guidance to be revisited regularly just as much as the reporting itself is going to be revisited as this will become annual not the three year look back, but the annual reporting from there forward, Umm.

So with that in mind, you know all of the in in order to be intentional and thoughtful and careful, we have to be this also the all of these processes have to be iterative.

But I am taking a look at the time I'm noticing that we're very close to the end of our meeting.

Karla, do you have any final thoughts or closing thoughts?

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:48:54

So that.

Have you been involved?

I think it's really important that on that the agency.

DX Davis, Xusana 2:49:08

Is anyone having trouble hearing her?

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:49:10

One ohh.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:49:11

Yeah, Karla.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:49:12

Can you hear me now?

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:49:16

Yeah. Yes.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:49:16

Can you hear me OK?

I was just saying that to to reflect back on what Abbey asked regarding business office involvement.

Umm regarding this big undertaking of environmental benefits spending, I I think it's really important that IAC Members start having conversations with business offices regarding this one deliverable.

Umm and I have been thinking about, you know, what kind of conversations we should be having with business offices to get us in from that stuff of what is possible, what kind of data are being gathered right now.

For example, maybe a a place where we can start having a sense of umm, why?

What is being captured currently so that at least there is awareness in the business offices of each of our agencies of what's to come and what is within the scope of this?

Umm of this particular task.

So the answer to your question is yes.

I think there has to be a certain level of involvement.

I question whether the right participation at the moment would be in the task group.

We're really answering questions thy that may be tuned further after we propose some answers and context to what goes into answering all of those questions.

And then perhaps at that point is when we will be able to have more nuance the more specific questions with business offices.

But I think right now we're just answering questions to the best of our abilities that we think may have some.

Something to say and and and a way to capture how all of the agencies are engaging in business and tracking spending.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:51:46

Yeah.

Thank you for that, Carla.

To that same vein, Abbey commented.

What if we had an open office hour for business office staff to come here?

What's being considered so far, and after their offer, their perspective and feedback, and I think that that's a great idea that we should consider implementing, yeah.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:52:03

Great idea.

Great idea.

Great idea and I think in order.

Ohh sorry, great idea and I think in order in order for us to do that and be efficient with all of our times, we should perhaps be farther along in the discussion of the guy to the guide and then when we have more questions answered then perhaps we can package.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:52:10

No, please.

Mm-hmm.

RK Raimundi, Karla 2:52:29

I am meeting with specific questions that will help us further this work.

Elizabeth Schilling 2:52:39

Yeah, as a number of the task group, I agree with Karla.

Just suggested.

I think we're still a little a little too early in the process for you be beneficial to involve this office.

Birch, Juliet

That makes total sense.

Umm.

Does anyone have any final thoughts before we close out the meeting here?

WA Willard, Abbey 2:53:05

I just have a quick question around, UM, kind of like prioritization.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:53:05

Abby.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:53:10

I I feel like I am trying to make kind of like the pivots of with the uh, revised timelines. Where time and energy and support is most needed.

So we obviously have this most this most kind of approaching timeline of getting the responses back on the.

Umm.

Civil rights and environmental justice response to the AC by August 15th, then.

Maybe something around the EJ definition?

And then I don't know.

I'm.

I'm just trying to kind of verbally process so some of you may be feel better equipped of like, OK, where do our efforts need to be directed?

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:53:55

Yeah.

WA Willard, Abbey 2:54:01

And I guess I'm asking from a selfish perspective and that I have very limited amount of time to contribute.

I want to make a contribution I have not volunteered because I don't have capacity to do all the things, but I'd be happy to do whatever might need to be the most pressing need.

BJ Birch, Juliet 2:54:20

Yeah, absolutely.

I appreciate that thought.

I think that you know, especially with the new recalibrated deadlines, it is a lot to wrap our heads around and this might not be the most satisfying answer, but UM, our unit is gonna come up with a more solidified overarching timeline of what we're gonna be prioritizing when in order to get to that final, you know, here's the final step of implementation sort of.

And of course implementation is gonna be an ongoing iterative thing for as long as the future lasts.

But with that in mind, we will get to you soon with a a like an updated timeline and we'll make that a priority so that you guys can be in on it and and really figure out where where you can best put your effort.

So I appreciate that thought, Abby.

Elizabeth Schilling

I would add like my initial reaction to the revised timelines like you might glance them and think, oh, we have a lot of extra time.

I don't think that's the case, right?

We were behind with all the old timelines, right?

Like we had flown past timelines, we were quickly approaching deadlines that were coming up.

And so, like, yeah, we might have an X or an extra year or a year and a half or something like that to to meet some deadlines.

But we have to keep working hard on all fronts in order to meet the revised deadlines.

At least that's that's my impression,

Birch, Juliet

Right it that time is really helpful to do things with more thought and more intention and more care than what was previously afforded.

So that I agree with Elizabeth that we have to continue chugging along in order to do so.

Karla, are you unmuted?

RK **Raimundi, Karla** 2:56:06

And.

Yes, I am.

And yeah, along the lines of what Elizabeth mentioned also is communicating. Steps that are foundational to some of the deliverables in the law, like for the Community engagement plan development.

It is important that agencies have a sense of what kind of language access they will offer for those agencies who have the requirements coming from federal partners, they should put in place a language access plan before that, tackling the the project of developing our Community engagement plan and for purposes of intake mechanisms for EJ, it is important that there's a network identified internally to the agencies to process enjoy complaints.

So there's definitely a lot of work to be done before the new deadlines get here, but those that time will definitely be filled with important steps.

Non in in one of the most important steps which we've been talking about internally is community engagement and making sure that the Advisory Council representatives are supported in communicating to the communities that they represent the work that we're doing, so that they're also effective in capturing feedback from their communities and bringing that feedback to the group at large so that we're not working in a void.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:57:55

Thank you for that, Karla.

Unfortunately, we are at the end of our time for our meeting today, but I appreciate the vigorous and UM really involved conversation that we've had today.

We'll be sending out a follow up email with all the resources that you guys need to kind of do those asks that we've talked through and additionally for anyone who's watching and anyone who wants to review the transcripts, meeting minutes, the recording, anything of that nature, those will be available on the EJ Online Resource library.

But thank you so much for a really great meeting and I hope that you all have a great rest of your day and hopefully we'll see each other again soon.

Thanks folks.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 2:58:44

Thank you for participating.

BJ **Birch, Juliet** 2:58:46

Course.

Thank you.

- **Birch, Juliet** stopped transcription