

Transcript

September 20, 2024, 6:01PM

□ **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** started transcription

RA **Juliet Birch** 0:06

This has been.

Logistically, a little scary doing this little switch over in the middle of the meeting. So thanks for your patience guys.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 0:15

Nice job.

RA **Juliet Birch** 0:16

So how is everybody? I'm seeing some of you guys for the first time today.

I'm seeing your faces.

So how are you?

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 0:24

Good. How are you?

RA **Juliet Birch** 0:26

Good. I'm feeling good.

I think the meeting is going well.

Are you guys enjoying listening in?

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 0:33

Absolutely.

RA **Juliet Birch** 0:37

Awesome. So you know this is a joint meeting today, but we also knew we had some items we wanted to address with each body separately, which is why we're breaking you up for the last third of the agenda.

As Kim mentioned before, keep in mind while we're having this conversation, we

would love for one of you guys to share out at the end when we return to the full group.

So if anyone's interested in doing a little bit of public speaking today, that'd be awesome.

Bring a chair.

Karla's gonna join us as well.

So our topics for today with just the IAC are gonna be about the environmental benefits spending guidance first and then we'll transition into a topic about community engagement kind of the long term path for the covered agencies to achieve their community engagement plans, so.

We will.

That's just kind of a plan for the next little bit of the agenda.

So first I just wanted to give you guys, this is kind of kind of going to be just like an open.

Discussion the way that the last part of the agenda has gone.

So I'll start with just a little update about environmental benefits spending.

As you guys know, the environmental justice law asks all the covered agencies to do an environmental benefit spending assessment, also often referred to as the three-year look back report.

And so the purpose of that report is ultimately to track and evaluate how funds are being allocated to programs and projects that.

Will impact EJFPS and the kind of purpose is to track what benefits and how benefits and burdens are distributed.

The ultimate goal is to, over time, redistribute funds to achieve more proportionality in environmental benefits and to prevent overburdening.

EJFPS with environmental harms.

And so part of what our agency is tasked to do ahead of this first reporting process is to draft some guidance to help guide all of the covered agencies in this process.

Reporting on their environmental benefits.

So with that in mind.

We have created a task group that is made-up of some members of just A and our staff as well as members of the IAC and members of the A/C to help talk through some of the key decisions that have come up with regard to the guidance and.

The logistics of drafting and we've been meeting for the last several months.

So at some point I would love to open up the floor for anyone who's in the task

group to.

Talk a little bit about some things that they've been thinking a lot about as we've been addressing questions related to environmental benefits spending. But I also have some really I think interesting discussion questions that I'd love for us to talk about.

Unfortunately, I don't have my slides because I don't have my computer, but I do have a little paper and I can read those discussion questions for you today. So we'll be low tech.

Abbey Willard

I can put them in the chat.

Juliet Birch

That would be awesome.

Here are those discussion questions.

But first, I know Claire.

You've been a really active member of the task group and I don't wanna put you on the spot, but if you'd be interested in talking a little bit about what the task group has been doing and what kind of some of the big overarching questions that we still have that we'd love to address.

I'd be interested in hearing from you.

If not, I know I'm putting you on the spot so I can also talk about it too.

MC McIlvennie, Claire 4:17

That's OK.

I'm happy to be put on the spot. I'll say I'm on day three of like, intensive meeting load.

So if I'm not coherent at any point, please just tell me and that's why.

But very strange, especially when you work at home all the time.

It's you really hard, I'm learning.

Yeah. So, and I'll say the other folks from the IAC who have been participating were Elizabeth Schilling from the PUC before she went out on leave. And Jenny who was here earlier.

has been show up participating quite a bit.

I'm sure I'm forgetting someone, but yeah, so I started participating in the spring so

it did not participate in the development of the guide to the guidance. But starting from the spring, we kind of walked through the five key decisions that that guide to the guidance had teed.

Up that would need to be answered. A lot of questions about.

What types of programs slash investments?

Should we be considering as we do these three-year look backs, how should we define that?

What kind of data field should be reporting? Should we be focused on primarily quantitative data or should we be thinking about qualitative indicators of how we're investing in different communities?

Trying to get but it's been, I think a robust set of discussions that really helped at least me, who wasn't involved in the development of that guidance kind of wrap my mind around what we're being asked to do although.

And reviewing the notes recently, I do think we like raised as many questions as we possibly more questions than we answered, so.

We are now, but I do think there was a lot of benefit there in getting like a lot of new folks involved in like in steeped in this work and on the same page and it like still highlighted a lot of areas that I think will be helpful.

As we move forward, so we're sort of shifting gears away from.

Oh, and I didn't say Trey Martin from the ECH has been really involved as well.

I know Jennifer has hoped to be, but hasn't.

Went to as many meetings.

So we're sort of shifting gears away from like to really discussion based conversation, I think more towards like establishing.

A timeline to.

Actually start writing which I think will be really helpful in forcing us to answer some questions and fill some gaps.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 6:43

Mm hmm.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 6:47

So I know Juliet. If you want me to go any deeper than there, or if I hopefully address what you asked me to speak to. But but yeah, that's kind of where we are in the task group and then.

Thinking how we get from like a lot of detailed notes with some answers, but a lot of questions towards like actual concrete guidance that's actionable and how we can get the covered agencies more broadly kind of involved and not just the IAC members, but staff and leadership as.

Well.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 7:17

Yeah, Claire, thank you so much for giving that really good overview of what the task group has been doing.

And thank you to Abbey for putting the questions in the chat.

I think you know.

To add on to what Claire just shared and then we can get into into the discussion.

I think that an important thing to note is that we're kind of transitioning into the drafting phase now.

And we still have a lot of outstanding questions, of course, which is why this is one.

This is a topic of conversation that we want to have with you guys today.

Some of those questions will remain unanswered in the guidance.

It might be something that we just pose to the covered agencies to consider, but I digress.

So some of the discussion questions that we have today.

Are those outstanding questions?

So for example, something that we just really want all covered agencies to be thinking about as an overarching sort of.

Thing to guide them as they go into this reporting process eventually is what does establishing a goal of proportional spending actually look like for your agency in the long run?

Mm hmm mm hmm. A really big overarching question that we've been grappling with for the guidance tax group has been what kind of approach in reporting and data gathering would work best for your agency and reporting. We as a task group have come have kind of outlined two different appro.

That are very dichotomous from each other.

And it might be that.

Different agencies depending on need.

Use either approach, but I think it would be interesting to figure out if there's one approach that works best for most or all agencies.

So that include those approaches would be a phased approach.

So starting starting small with just like specifically identified programs within your within your agency or like discrete types of investments within your agency and then expanding it over time.

Like identifying phases over time or a broad approach where you just kinda like, take an inventory of all the investments you're making and home in over time on those investments that specifically are designed to impact environmental justice focus populations.

So those are the two big first questions I've got here is discussion and then maybe we could talk about some of these other questions that are here as well, but I realize. We need time to talk.

I'm gonna pass it over to anyone. If anyone has any thoughts on those first two questions.

Abbey Willard

My first reaction is to the second question, so I'm just gonna kind of go there, but I know you should go back to kind of the goal, but I'm thinking about the results based accountability, performance measures and reporting work that we do in government and the approach that.

Used there was like the phased approach.

So, you know, 123 programs within your agency or your department that you wanna capture and share performance measures on with the objective being that then you'll grow and expand the number of programs that you capture data for. And that has worked very well for like for.

My division to have you know, a few programs that we report on and then you kind of get accustomed to it and that part gets easy. And then you add a new program every year and it spends.

It felt it feels doable, yeah.

So that's just another kind of somewhat similar process using a phased approach that has worked.

For us.

Juliet Birch

Dave, feel free to jump in. You guys don't have to raise hands here. Just free flow conversation.

PD Pelletier, Dave 10:58

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Thanks.

I just.

I didn't want to cut anybody off, but I just. I would. I think I would echo what Abby said.

Just I'm also thinking too that like.

I could see trying to bite the whole thing off at once and having the draft results of something that's not necessarily completely baked.

Be startling, potentially like one, one way or another. And I think it would.

It makes sense to follow that.

That approach of looking at maybe some subset of the hole to tinker with to to kind of understand methodology and any issues that we might have and and get those those bugs worked out before moving it on and and applying it through various other programs and building the.

Hole from that.

It seems like a a good way.

I mean just kind of in the spirit of testing something out before applying it broadly.

RA Redman, Amy (She/Her) 11:58

Yeah.

I am so relieved to hear the two of you say that because it does feel like, OK, that I think I can wrap my head around one of the questions in terms of approach is like that I'm wrangling with is who am I tapping to help do this.

Work because it's not like do you?

Do you?

Then just contact the program leads.

Is it like your business administration folks like who's?

The organizational structure of this piece, who are those people?

I don't know if anyone has answers to that, but.

That's one of the questions that's on my mind.

PD Pelletier, Dave 12:36

Yeah.

RA **Abbey Willard** 12:36

Yeah, I mean this been, I'll just say it's been on my mind from the beginning.

Yeah, of like.

I'm the secretary's designee and I'm happy to kind of share information, even that I'm doing poorly.

I realized but like.

I'm happy in both directions, but I this is not my full time job that I can take on the reporting and so I guess two things.

One, I did establish an AG, so within our ENCYC environmental Justice Committee, where I asked for two.

Representatives from each division to.

Join a group that then would, you know, have a shared responsibility for kind of like helping develop processes and then kind of like be like just join me in the like implementation or completion of the deliverables.

Yeah. They also all have full time work, not like those are people with capacity. They are just willing and inspired and kind of motivated employees.

So then the second thing that we did this year, which I'm learning, I think maybe one of a few or maybe the only I asked our leadership to create an environmental justice dei and kind of accessibility position request for the to the administration.

I've no idea if the administration will even consider it, but I'm acknowledging that, like we do not have the capacity as an agency.

And I certainly as a division director, do not have capacity to kind of complete.

Deliverables. Mm hmm, acknowledging we have, you know, a two year timeline extension.

Yeah, we have many things that are due in 25 and 26 at a position in fiscal year 26 will be just in the nick of time even be helpful.

So that's my response.

I don't know that either of those are very helpful.

Yeah. No it is.

It's really helpful if I could jump in.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 14:29

Now.

RA

Juliet Birch 14:32

Just I know this will.

This this may throw a wrench in it.

I I'm speaking on my experience at.

As you guys may know ANRs pretty unique or as you can guess an Rs.

Pretty unique because basically every single thing that we do is an environmental benefit. And so this particular deliverable is quite the undertaking for us. What we have set up is a lot like what you're talking about, Abby, where we have an entire network.

Of internal staff within our agency who? It's it's not their full time job. It's just one of these things that they do.

Kind of extra where they help with.

Jane implementation. So specifically we have a working group and we also have people that we call liaisons who represent each of the divisions.

It's one person who represents each of the divisions in our agency.

And so returning to this question of like a phased approach versus a broad approach, I'm really grateful that you guys are all reflecting that a phased approach sounds more biteable because that's exactly what our staff says as well.

We've been meeting with the working group to talk about, you know, just having, like, an initial information gathering phase with our covered agency staff to see how readily available is the data. Do we have demographics connected to the data to be able to answer that question of who?

Benefiting from investments?

And the ultimate answer to this question on from our agency's perspective is that a phased approach would be a lot more implementable.

Principle. So that's just kind of where we're coming from.

But Karla, you may have other things you'd like to share about that.

Karla Raimundi

Can the folks online hear me through? Yeah, through Amy, OK.

Yes, I think you mentioned what's relevant at this point.

The other thing that I've been thinking about is the scope of the look back reporting and the scope of the reporting perspective. The annual reporting and given the given what Juliet mentioned that it is a huge undertaking for the agency.

And other agencies have shared the same.
We were thinking perhaps having two different scopes the retrospective.
The retrospective baseline reporting would be of data that's currently being recorded.
Data that's being gathered.
And then the question is of what?
Of what is it?
All of the benefits that are identified in.
The law, which are extensive.
Are we looking?
At bonding.
Programs.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 17:54
Starting to lose lose you a little bit, Karla.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 17:54
Like Arpa dollars that are.
Oh no, I'm sorry.
I'm like kneeling here, trying to stay for a second, so I'm OK, OK.
I'm literally kneeling.
You have to see this.
Why I'm kneeling?
This is this is adaptability and resiliency because my knees are hurting.
No, no, I'm kidding.
So and then prospectively?
What's been discussed is perhaps identifying a subset of either benefits to start identifying and comparing to the baseline and then expanding it from there.
To be more inclusive and then after a certain number of annual reportings then we would be capturing the whole gamut of services and benefits that the that each of the agencies.
Touch on.

Abbey Willard

Do we have a sense of if?

A phased approach would even be acceptable.
For the intention of the deadlines Incredibles.

Karla Raimundi

Yes, I think.

That is a good question for the Advisory Council.

I think they are the body who will ultimately provide us guidance on what, yeah, would.

Be preferable in terms of identifying.

The expenditures that touch on the communities that they represent in terms of the goals of the of the Statute, I don't see an obstacle.

On starting with a certain number of either benefits or funding sources, and then expanding in a in a.

Already prescribed fashion to get us to the goal.

I think a lot of this work would really entail adapting each of the programs to.

Feel the proportionality to meet the proportionality.

Mandate. So it's not only that we're gonna be gathering data, but also using that data to make an assessment on what needs to get done so that the the expenditures are proportional.

So in terms of what that means for agencies, that's a huge lift, right?

And so I have.

I was thinking in terms of operationalizing the mandate.

I was thinking about capacity.

And then how do percolate that? How to make that go to the program level? Mm hmm. And then ultimately there is a question of will we need to amend rules, procedures, programs to meet that to meet that proportionality goal?

So it's not only the data gathering and then providing the report is also.

So what we're doing with the information, the information is not meant to sit there in a void.

It's it's intended to be captured.

And then analyzed and redistributed. If if it there's not a proportionality when there's the ability for us to do that, because that's also another question.

When will an agency given a particular benefit, be able to make a proportionality assessment?

That's a completely different question that.
Will, I think, become clearer one. We start gathering information.

Juliet Birch

If I can just jump in.

We jumped into this conversation in depth pretty fast, so I just want to take a moment for everyone to just like, you know, process what we're talking about. And then when after we've taken a moment to process, I'd also like to open up the space more to folks.

Who are online?

Because I know it's really easy for us to get through this conversation since we're all here together. But.

There are some folks that we haven't heard from, so I wanna make sure there's space for you as well.

So let's just take a moment and then whenever folks online are ready, feel free to jump in.

Karla Raimundi

I just really wanna say make a comment that has nothing to do with anything but Ed. It is so odd to see you and not like be part of the agency of Natural Resources. It does not feel kind of bright. OK, just had to say that. But it's it's awesome to see you. And I'm glad you're here.

MC **Mcllvennie, Claire** 22:51

He did work for the department first though.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 22:54

Oh, OK, Claire. OK.

MC **Mcllvennie, Claire** 22:57

Actually, you may have worked for the PUC first.

Did you work for the PUC before the department? And then? Yeah, full circle.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 23:03

Oh, there you go. OK.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 23:04
Again.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 23:05
OK, we'll add. I'm very glad you're here.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 23:09
Thank you.
It's great to see you.
I still love that little plant on my desk from like a year ago. Every time I water it, I think of you so.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 23:17
That's so nice. Thank you.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 23:20
I did actually have a question that in part relates to the reporting and apologies that I just don't know this I'm looking at the statute and it's saying that, you know, where investments were one of the pieces that we have to report where investment investments were made if.
Any and which geographic areas at the municipal level and census block group were practicable received environmental benefits.
Do we have a sense?
In terms of the mapping, could we actually say if a benefit is in the census block, it is therefore de facto going to?
An EJ population I don't think.
The granularity is going to be sufficient for that, but I'm just double checking that assertion 'cause that would make some of the reporting and some of that discussion that we had earlier of how do we implement programs without asking about.
Race or income or other things a lot easier, but.
I'm not sure that that would actually work well in Vermont.

RA **Juliet Birch** 24:26
Yeah. So what you're speaking to is?

Is something that we need to address in order to make the mapping most usable for decision making?

But it's also something that we just generally need to address for the EJFP definition. Across deliverables.

And I think that what you pose is a question that the task group has really been grappling with is like, how can we ensure that dollars are getting to individuals who are at a higher level of exposure to environmental burdens?

If the definition that we're using, for example, is geographically tied.

And so I appreciate you bringing up that question. And I think that.

Next month, that's definitely gonna be a focal point.

And this is like a secret tidbit we're hoping to we're hoping to bring in someone who will be able to talk to us more in depth about kind of data analysis and what the different options are for the definition moving forward to make it sort of meet both.

The ease of geographical representation, while also the accuracy of.

Individual level representation.

So definitely a good question.

Karla Raimundi

Juliet wants to keep an answer secret, it's John Adams.

Juliet Birch

Maybe John John Adams might not be able to join us, but.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 25:42
Spoiler alert.

RA **Juliet Birch** 25:46

It's it's. Yeah. We're working with John and he's been so helpful in providing, like, a sense of what's possible and what's not. And if we can get him to come to the meeting, he will be talking.

Very specifically about the constraints on the geographic units and that question that you asked is a question that I think will be elusive.

For for a bit of time.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 26:20

Will say, oh, go ahead, dude. No.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 26:20

I just.

I'd be.

I I just.

I I wanna just make a quick comment in this.

I think I put something in the chat on this this vein of or this this train of thought in the last meeting and I guess.

My my my thought when when we talk about this, this very specific subject of of measurement and how do we know?

I.

I guess I see there being a difference between.

Doing sort of an environmental justice assessment or analysis.

It's trying to get.

A read on whether or not we're presenting or benefits are available or or you know in a in a negative benefit instance you know present in a negative sense for a particular population groups.

I see that as being different from sort of the individual levels. Almost entitlement program measurement or.

I think it's a slightly different fruit, if you will.

And so while I don't think that it's not important to to try to get some sense of how well benefits or burdens are being experienced on an individual level, I don't know that that level of granularity is is absolutely necessary for like an environmental justice level of analysis.

And I'm I'm not expert in this, but my sense is just that with some with some measurement or assessment of what is being.

Presented at least geographically with the best data that we have.

And making some assumptions about service delivery barriers, or lack thereof or.

What's the word I'm looking for anyways?

I think that we were at some point here, we're going to have to be comfortable enough to be clear about, but make some assumptions so that we don't completely tie our hands behind your back from being able to do anything.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 28:26
I yeah, yeah.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 28:27
And then perhaps in some later phases there's spot checking.
Or there's some certain, you know, individual surveying or something that.
Helps us really get down to that granular level.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 28:35
Beginning.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 28:36
Granular level, but I don't think the data is going to be there for us to start at that
level that that's that's all.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 28:44
Mm hmm.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 28:46
Know that.
That really solves anything, but I just I I just.
I don't want us to get so hung up on on coming up with the perfect outcome in
terms of or the ideal outcome in terms of the analysis, you know, to the to the
detriment of getting anything accomplished.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 29:03
I think this adds a lot, especially in the expectation setting conversation.
I think this is very important to share and remind everyone that you know we're
working with.
A like an under PAR data set and the information that we will be gathering.
May not represent ultimately where we will end up.
Down the line as we get more sophisticated with getting more information and
tapping into other sources of data.
And then I I want to ask you all about, is there any information you need from the

A/C to guide this deliverable?

I was thinking about that that question and because my mind keeps going to how we're going to scope this, I was wondering whether.

Whether there is value in having a conversation with Advisory Council members on perhaps like a subset of benefits or like a desired.

First tier of accounting.

I think that is a great idea.

It's reminding me also the process that we went through for the complaint report, like the complaint. So like starting small and also I'm thinking about requesting guidance on the format.

We're not going to, I mean, right?

Like, we're not going to ask them to go through Excel sheet after excel sheet or even long long reports.

So even just some of that kind of framing up I think would be.

Helpful.

I hadn't even thought about that, right, I mean.

So yeah, answer yes.

Can we do a couple of programs?

Does that feel like a good first step and then, just like formatting, framing, what do they want?

What don't they wanna see?

Do they want?

Do they want all agencies to track the same expenditures, right?

Like the same benefits for the same programs.

Yeah, yeah, it's consistency. Important for this. So that they're able to make a comparison.

Yeah, yeah. And some conclusions that have.

Definitely been.

That have been raised in the task group is we're not sure to what extent consistency is important, but we do know that.

Transparency is very important.

So if if we can't achieve consistency across different agencies.

Reporting processes there should at least be, you know, if there's a prioritization or if you're determining phases for yourself or something like that.

There should be transparency about how you decided.

What to report on an what information is or is not available?

Like a little narrative on on on process.

Yes, I love that.

Yeah, 'cause, I think the ultimate goal of this reporting is to get a glimpse of where we are and also start having some accountability for where we want to be.

But we can't necessarily know where we are if we're kind of not being clear about how we got that picture, you know.

But I also just wanna jump in with a little time check.

I see your hand, Claire.

We're here together until 2:50 and I just wanna make sure that we're gonna have time to do a brief go around about community engagement.

So just bearing that in mind. But Claire, I know. I know you have your hand up.

MC **Mcllvennie, Claire** 32:46

I I just wanna say I think.

I really think before we have any more conversations, the task group just needs to like, write something down because I hear like all the questions being asked, many of which we've asked sometimes more than once in the task group itself, and we could spend like, so long just.

Like talking about what we're going to do because it's such a big ask and pretty overwhelming.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 33:11

You try to find the chair, OK?

MC **Mcllvennie, Claire** 33:15

And as someone who just spent 7 1/2 years getting AP.

So I feel like I can say this with expertise like you do actually have to start writing at some point to like figure out what you don't know yet. And I worry that if we don't start writing like right now, at least in the task group, to Capt.

MC **Mcllvennie, Claire** 33:32

Like some of what we've already talked through and then use that as a starting point to have some of these focus conversations with the Advisory Council about like this is what we think is appropriate. Is this OK?

How would you scope it differently to like?

I just worry.

That we're gonna spend a lot of time on this guidance when in actuality I think we're better off spending more time doing the work to develop the reports and like giving us as much time to do that work as we possibly can with like the guidance as a

Framework for where we wanna start from knowing that like we will not answer all the questions. Even I think when we have the three like we'll still have questions as we go through the process and.

Yeah. So.

RA

Juliet Birch 34:16

Yeah, absolutely.

And on that note, I also want to say kind of as a close out to this part of the conversation Claire has been.

Extremely like pivotal in the task group and trying to move us forward in like in making progress.

Claire actually just drafted an outline that Kim and I reviewed that I think is really, really helpful.

So thank you Claire for noting that.

I think that once we get an initial draft, we can all

Have something to react to to determine, you know, feasibility.

So I think that that's a really good point we really there.

There's always gonna be more questions, and sometimes we learn best by doing.

When we answer, we answer best by doing.

But thank you all for that.

Really vigorous conversation about the about environmental benefits.

Noting that we have, you know, about a little less than 15 minutes here together before we close out and return to the group.

For, you know, just a closeout of the meeting.

I was wondering if we could all go around and just answer the question of.

From you, from your personal perspective and also from your agency's perspective.

Where are you with community engagement?

Like culturally, how does community engagement feel to your agency? And where do you want to get?

Big question, but if we can keep each of our responses brief.

I think that the ultimate purpose of thinking about this now is that now that we have the core principles, we need to start thinking about our Community engagement plans and I think it's good for us to all hear from each other about what each agency is starting with.

And where we want to go, right?

So if we could just, if someone wants to jump in and then we can popcorn, that would be awesome.

Amy Redman

Can start.

I'll start with a few quick comments one.

The Department of Health was so lucky because of health disparities, funds to to have a whole HealthEquity team.

So what I'm about to say is because of that funding, but they a subset has created a community engagement guide which holds our principles. So that is read.

I have that.

So if you don't have one and you want one that that is there to share to, we've started to implement it.

In terms of doing workshops to try and try start a try and work with programs and divisions on the inside out method like right.

Like, really empowering communities, community based organizations who are working with our focused populations.

So that piece is just starting. The cultural question is harder for me to answer. So I think there's some inertia. There's pockets where.

This piece is like people get it? They understand why.

And I, but but we are in a hyper hierarchy, right?

And so that really dilutes things so.

Yeah, I'm gonna stop there.

Thank you for listening.

PD Pelletier, Dave 37:25

Jump on onto the tail end of Amy's comments, partially because I need to leave very shortly to go pick my daughter up at school, but also because it's a similar situation there.

Are, I think as an agency, the Agency of Transportation is there's a range of I think awareness acknowledgement and practice in terms of community engagement.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 37:51

Mm hmm.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 37:53

Going from, you know, ranging from.

Probably the most evolved and kind of comprehensive in the planning and policy and planning group and some of the some of the statewide plan development that we do and some of the processes that we conduct, whether it be for individual studies or legislative reports or whatnot and I.

Not. I'm not suggesting that they are necessarily evolved and mature in terms of. Really reaching out to disadvantaged populations and kind of I I I'm saying this in. In the more traditional community engagement.

Sense of a community engagement in that there's at least an awareness and some practice that practices that have been going on that are now, you know, from the you know, in the context of the past half dozen years or so are dated.

But they're they are there.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 38:48

Mm hmm.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 38:48

And and and that's probably on the on the better end of things. And then there are pockets of project development maybe folks that just want to like get their 502 hearing for their bridge project.

Checked off and like be done with it.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 39:02

Right, right, right.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 39:02

Like they'd gone out and they, they heard the complaints from the select board and like they've logged them and they've gone back and I'm exaggerating.

But, but you know there's, there's that. And then there are people.

I'm sure there are still people in the agency, although fewer and fewer I every like literally every year or every month at this point, with so much staff turnover and newer generation of engineers and planners and and administrators coming in, I think that there are very few people.

That just you know.

Now don't even want to go there and are just, you know, I could.

I don't care about that.

I mean, I think everybody understands there's certain obligations and then beyond that, there are best practices to to really make a better project or deliver a better program by going out and finding out what the people that are going to receive the services and projects really need and.

Want so it's a little bit all over the board and I'm going on too long.

I apologize but.

We are in the process.

We do have a public involvement guide.

RA

Redman, Amy (She/Her) 40:02

Oh, I was gonna ask.

PD

Pelletier, Dave 40:03

There's a whole range of of of aspects of community engagement and public involvement and awareness and you know, information distribution and whatnot. It's dated a little bit.

It's 2017 and we're working on.

An effort right now to kind of do a gap assessment and needs assessment for it so that we can bring it to current expectations and and norms at this point.

RA

Redman, Amy (She/Her) 40:30

That's excellent.

PD

Pelletier, Dave 40:31

I'll I'll leave it at that.

But Amy, I really would like to get ahold of the HealthEquity oriented community engagement guide that would be helpful in in our work.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 40:32

I think sometimes.

That guide I was gonna, OK.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 40:39

So if you drop a link or something or whatever, that'd be great.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 40:39

Great.

Yeah.

PD **Pelletier, Dave** 40:44

And I apologize for having to leave early.

This has been really good discussion today.

RA **Karla Raimundi** 40:49

Thank you so much, Dave.

Thank you.

Yeah. I was gonna ask Amy if you could share that.

Yeah, that would be great.

OK.

I would like to go next.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 41:01

I'll just chime in.

So for us, we often are very.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 41:07

We conduct cases like so there's no ex parte communication.

We actually have to be insular by nature in some degrees and then unfortunately that carries over when we do rule makings or other things when we don't have those same prohibitions.

One other point that I really want to make though is.

Often there's very little.

Often we get direct legislative direction to do something.
And there's very little public engagement by the advocates or the legislature.

ME **McNamara, Ed** 41:39

And then we get a law that's very technical.
So then we go out and start doing a rulemaking that's very technical and doing a public engagement.
At that point, it's not. Oh, what would you like the renewable energy standard to look like?
It's you have to do XY and Z.
Now fill in the gaps with an existing rule.
The public engagement failed because.
Like it should have been done.
It's or. It was renewable energy standard.
It was done correctly at the very beginning.
And then essentially discarded and then very little public engagement. And now when we do a rule, there's, I'm not sure what the point of the public engagement is, because we're already constrained in what we have to do.
So I think it's really important that we let folks know of when public engagement happens.
Is extremely important. If it's at the legislative level, they need to do a good job, or if it's the advocates pushing legislation, I think they have an obligation to do it because.
Sometimes it gets so far down the road, there's not sure.
As I said, I'm not sure what the point is. If it's at the very end of a technical process.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 42:50

I think we're definitely thinking about that as well and I'll I've heard shalani at the Office of Racial Equity.

RA **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** 42:54

Thank you.

MC **McIlvennie, Claire** 42:56

I know Susan is not here.

Say something similar.

It's like a lot about understanding when you can engage and on on what.

So I'll just echo, that's something the department's trying to figure out. I think as well.

Especially when you factor in like what resources are available to do the engagement and the work generally speaking.

I'd say.

We're to kind of what Dave said. I feel like at a place where there's more elevated interest and awareness of the need to do public engagement kind of across a lot of the division that the department.

So what I've been thinking about myself more recently as we like move into a public engagement plan. Development is like how we just first start facilitating better internal conversation about how we're doing engagement and when.

Who we already have relationship with.

In various communities.

Who? We don't, where we may need to do some relationship building over, not just like the short term in the context of anyone specific effort but over the longer term 'cause it does feel like.

Challenges that we wanna do this long term relationship building and we also wanna engage with communities while we're doing program development and it feels like their option isn't enough like time or resources to do the long term intentional because we're just trying to like respond to the immedi.

Need so it's sort of kind of where I've been thinking knowing that we did that really big engagement effort around the res. We're definitely doing some reflecting about. Lessons learned what we would do differently next time.

And then trying to implement it where we can, but also trying to have that longer term lens about around planning so.

RA

Abbey Willard 44:48

So, Amy, I'm happy to turn my audio on if you need to take your computer and go.

Oh, I think when you have three more minutes, maybe. Yeah. Thank you.

Do you have a few more minutes for me to share?

Juliet Birch

Yeah, please.

If you could be the last comment and then we'll move inside.

Abbey Willard

I was just gonna say that.

I almost wonder if there's a role for the advisory committee to help make.

The case or the support for the value of state agencies investing in community.

Engagement resources like.

Our agency did a series of listening sessions that were public engagement focused and they were great.

We collected a lot of data and then we recognized we didn't actually have the data evaluation expertise to actually do like you know, a true kind of like I don't even have the.

Language because I'm not a statistician, but like to to like get like what was statistically significant items that came up and how many times does it reference.

Like what does that mean based on the language that was used?

They say agriculture versus farming versus far.

Ming like so.

There's having to adequate resources to make sure that it's an equitable and and inclusive process of offering for D, Miss and food and child care, et cetera.

And then there's the whole like, how do we then interpret the feedback and the results into something that make that matters? And I just, I don't know how else we're going to unless we have external support to be able to make the case that this is an import.

Component of state agencies covered state agencies responsibility.

Especially to act 154.

We're never gonna get the budget to be able to do it appropriately and.

Not that I want to add to the Advisory Council's responsibilities, but I think they have a voice that could be heard.

I just think they could be really effective at like drawing the connections to this important work that the legislature was really supportive of.

Yeah.

Juliet Birch

Yeah, that's a really good point. And I think it also ties back to some of the conversations we were having last month as well about.

Kind of priorities aligning with resources? Yep.

Thank you all so much for you know.

In this conversation, because I realized we had some stuff going on back here and, you know, I'll just take a minute to transition. If there's someone who could start brainstorming like a little share out of some main themes from our discussion both about EBSG and the and community

Engagement, just like wanted. I'd say like two or three big takeaways that would be super helpful.

But thank you all for this awesome discussion.

We're gonna move back to the main room, so I'll. I'll go in there and call you guys back in digitally in a minute.

Cool. Thank you.

Great. Thanks a lot.

Yes. Good morning, honey. Yeah.

- **Redman, Amy (She/Her)** stopped transcription