Transcript

March 28, 2025, 3:06PM

Barrett, Kim started transcription

BK **Barrett, Kim** 0:07
Alright. Can you all hear me?
OK, excellent.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 0:10
We can hear you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 0:12
Hello everyone.
This is the meeting of Vermont's environmental Justice Advisory Council.
We're excited for you all to be here today.
Fine, could actually.

Juliet Birch
Can we take a look at the attendance really quickly? Yeah.
Yeah. Thank you.
Oh.
Alright, I think we're waiting on two more people.
But we could read the Community agreements while we're waiting.

Kim Barrett
OK.
Sure.
Hi.
Yes. Welcome everyone.
I don't know if there are any community members here yet, but thank you for coming if you are.
Yeah, let's read the community agreements.
OK.

So this is what we have. Normally we folks read and then pass along.
So who would like to start first?

Mariana Sears
Like I'm start #1 the present. Hold on. OK, I can send that. My microphone is like I kind of I got be present with yourself and.
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.
Would like to go next.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:57
I can go next. This is hosanna.
Calling in and calling out best intent, but attend to impact. We can stop things that are being said that are hurtful and be curious and create a space for learning.
Tools include using oops Ouch. To indicate a pause is needed.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:33
Who wants to go next?

VD **Victor Davila/slingshot** 2:49
I can. Hi, this is Victor from Slingshot.
Expect and accept non closure.
We are unlikely to leave here feeling 100% ready to go or have everything on our agenda wrapped up, especially if we are committed to moving at the speed of trust.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 3:09
Thank you.
Jennifer, are you here?
Would you like to read one?
It would be great if the if A/C members could could read these just 'cause.
Right. For you all, OK.
Yeah, no worries.
And it doesn't look like Walter is actually here yet.
So I can read number 40, go ahead.

Sorry, I already read it. #4 sent her respect. Be respectful.
Intentional in where to build trust and create a safe and inviting space.

Juliet Birch
And I can read #5.
Share verbal and other space mindfully. Consider the balance of taking and making space. Move up. Move back.
Tools to do this include the acronym wait. Why am I talking?
And vocalizing support for another person's comment without repeating the same points that have already been made.
No.
Give me one second here.
Alright, OK.
So we're going to get a show of hands.
You can give us a thumbs up if you agree to these Community agreements.
OK.
Excellent. You can keep going.
OK.
So here is the draft agenda that we're proposing.
And we'll have to wait for folks to formally approve it, but we have our welcome and introductions where we would normally approve the November 18, the past minutes.
So in this case, it's from November 18 of last year, we have an ice breaker that we can do and then after that we will go over.
Updates just to let you all know what's kind of happened over the last 2-3 months and then as you all saw in the e-mail, we wanted to experiment with you all.
So something that came up last year was the desire to have more unifilitated time for you all to discuss and delivery.
And so we have several.
UN facilitated blocks.
In the meeting, so the first one.
One at 11:20 or so will be on the environmental justice focused population discussion.
And then that's part one.
We'll do our public comment and then come back for another 30 minutes on the EJF PS we'll take a 10 minute break.

And then we'll move into discussing or you all will move into discussing the civil rights and environmental justice complaint reports.
And so you'll have about 40 minutes for that, and then a completely UN facilitated time that for you all to discuss anything that you'd like.
And then a deep breath and then talk about next step.
Yeah.
That's what we're working with.
OK.

Mariana Sears
What happened if we're young to have corn?
Because that's OK too.
Continue with.

Juliet Birch
Yeah, we we right now have four of the 11 states that present, but we're expecting three more members to show up at some point today.
So right now we don't have quorum, but we can return to the meeting minutes when we do and make sure that we get those approved while everybody's here. But I don't think there's gonna be any formal decision making during today's meeting.
So that's helpful as well. Actually is Walter here.
Oh, Walter.
Hey, Walter.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 8:23
Hi everyone.
Sorry, I'm at the car dealer right now. Getting my car serviced.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 8:27
No problem.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 8:29
I'll be but I'll be able to join.

Barrett, Kim 8:32
OK.

Brownridge, Walter 8:33
Online today.

Barrett, Kim 8:33
Good to see you.
Yeah. Good to see you.

Brownridge, Walter 8:36
Good to see you.

Barrett, Kim 8:39
OK.
Well, I think now we have the information.
I think we need to wait for one other person and then we so we can return to this, OK.
Sounds good.
Thank you all for bearing with us. With the low tech option here.
I hope you're enjoying my camera work. We're gonna move on to the next slide.
OK.
So we have an icebreaker to do.
So finish this sentence in relation to the law and also the work that we're doing together here at the end of 2025. I want to look back and say that I.
You can take a moment to think about it, and then we'll all share.

Davis, Xusana 9:36
And the lens for this is related to this group's work specifically, right?

Barrett, Kim 9:40
Yes.

Davis, Xusana 9:41
OK.

Barrett, Kim 10:02
Whenever anyone's ready, you can. You can go ahead.

Mariana Sears
I can go first. Hi everyone.
I don't know where this is here to make that out of you.
My name is Mariana Sears.
I work for hunger free Vermont and I am here as the food representative for Security representative at the Advisory Council.
And I would love to say that at the end of 2025, I I want to feel that I have full participated in the process and that we have.
Advanced the implementation of the law.
Thank you.
Yeah.
Tough.

Davis, Xusana 11:21
I can go next.
This is Susanna. At the end of 2025, I want to look back and say that I, through this group's work, meaningfully impacted ongoing policy discussions around this work.
Because, you know, sometimes we we create these bodies to be rear facing.
But the policymakers continue to create new stuff.
On top of it, before we've actually gotten our bearings on the existing work.
So yeah, just being able to keep up with that.

Barrett, Kim 12:00
Thank you.
That was really great and thanks, Walter, no problem.
Would anyone else like to share?

Byrne, Jennifer 12:22
Hey y'all, can you hear me?

Barrett, Kim 12:24
Yes.

Byrne, Jennifer 12:25
Oh good.
I guess I'll say that at the end of 2025, I'd like to look back and say that we.
Made a meaningful impact on the quality of people's lives in Vermont.

Barrett, Kim 12:47
Thank you.

Victor Davila/slingshot 12:51
Hi, this is Victor from Slingshot. At the end of the 2025, I'd like to look back and say that I contributed to actionable agendas.
Throughout this work and throughout the work that Slingshot is doing.

Barrett, Kim 13:09
Excellent. Yeah, Jennifer.

Byrne, Jennifer 13:12
Sorry, I'm I didn't introduce myself.
I'm Jennifer Brown, the Advisory Council member for the Natural Resource Conservation Council, representative of the conservation districts.

Barrett, Kim 13:25
Thank you.
All right.
I I will go next at the end of 2025.
I want to look back and say.
That I'm.
Yeah, that I've had the chance to work directly with community members.

And Jennifer?
Your message.
Yes. So Victor is now a part of the Advisory Council, and we're gonna formally introduce them in Slingshot in just a little bit.
Yeah.

Juliet Birch
OK. And at the end of 2025, actually, I'm Juliette.
I'm one of the EJ coordinators at the agency of Natural Resources.
At the end of 2025, I want to look back and say I asked.
I asked a lot of questions.
Especially questions around.
Some of the things that we consider to be status quo and figuring out if there's new.
Or creative approaches that.
We can use it all as alternatives around the implementation of the law.

Kim Barrett
And yes, I am Ken Barrett and I'm one of the other environmental justice coordinators here at the Agency of Natural Resources.
And we work within the civil rights and environmental justice unit.
Awesome. All right, let's go ahead.
OK. So quickly we're just gonna do just to get everyone back on the same page.
We're gonna go over the high level modes of influence, the deliverables under the Vermont Vijay Law, and then Juliet will get started with that.

Juliet Birch
Yep. So as you're all aware, the EJ law has five.
Major buckets.
Work and the 1st that we typically talk about is community engagement.
Community engagement in the EJ law is all about, you know, for the covered agencies.
It's developing policies and procedures so that members of the public can meaningfully engage with state work.
But you know that that also means for the Advisory Council potentially engaging with the communities that you represent to ensure that their perspectives are

represented in your decision making.
And so some of the deliverables related to community engagement were the core principles of community engagement that we completed last year and the Community engagement plans that the covered agencies will be working on. I think to prepare for the deadline in 2027.
And just in general, as we go through these modes of influence, if you're looking For more information, high level about the EJ law and the deliverables, you can look at the EJ Public Resource Library.
Very. There's a great Vermont environmental justice law overview document there.
I'll pass it to Kim, yeah.

Kim Barrett
And so the second body of work that we're gonna be sharing about is the proportionate distribution of environmental benefits. And that is about assessing agency spending around environmental benefits to more proportionately distribute them across populations. And of course, focusing with a special emphasis on the environmental justice focused.
Populations.
So examples of what this looks like in the context of your work informing the environment.
Little benefit spending gardens is one of those areas helping us to identify what environmental benefits could be in the context of your individual.
Areas of work.
And then also.
Representation on the environmental benefit spending guidance Task group.
We're in need of A/C representation.
In the past, the the folks who contributed from the A/C have really support.
It's it's supported us in going a long way.
So yeah, I will pass it to Juliet to talk about the next mode of influence.

Juliet Birch
Yep, so mitigation of cumulative environmental burdens is really all about the covered agencies. Taking a look at.
How environmental burdens are impacting populations across the state and to develop essentially?

Plans to mitigate those burdens over a period of time, and so really this is.
Focused around assessment and then planning for planning from there forward and some deliverables related to this area of work are the mapping tool that you're all familiar with and rulemaking the covered agencies. I believe specifically ANR will engage in Rule making around environmental burdens.

Kim Barrett
Thank you.
And then the next is annual agency reporting regularly reporting on things like spending actions responds to complaints to be more transparent.
And so examples of that would be the civil rights. Your responses to the civil rights and environmental justice.
Report summaries that the IAC that all of the covered agencies put together.
And then also supporting the review of the.
Environmental benefits pending guidance reports that'll come out once we move farther along in that in that process.

Juliet Birch
And then finally, we've got legislative adaptation.
This one's kind of our administrative bucket of work. So this is all about reevaluating some of the definitions in the EJ law, things like environmental justice, focus populations, environmental benefits, environmental burdens, etc.
To make sure that those definitions in the law accurately depict the perspectives of EJF PS and.
Communities.
In Vermont at large, we want to make sure that the law is really depicting and centering those perspectives, and then additionally, legislative adaptation captures things like turnover and we can talk more about.
Turnover of the bodies in a couple of minutes here, but just wanted to note that that is another part of this adaptation. Work is making sure that we are fairly and regularly.
You know, changing the representation of perspectives to ensure that lots of folks get a say and get a voice at the table.

Kim Barrett
And so next we'll move into some of the updates and I'll pass it to Juliet to formally introduce Victor.

Juliet Birch
Yeah. So.
Just a quick rundown on the A/C appointments, as we mentioned.
The Advisory Council turns over.
There's a third of the Advisory Council that turns over every two years and that first round of turnovers happened in the last couple of months.
So depending on which appointing body is in charge of your seat, your seat may turn over in December or February. And if you're looking For more information on that.
At you can check out the EJ Online Resource library.
But we just wanted to acknowledge that we do have a new appointment for one of the seats.
And Victor is a representative from Slingshot and Victor. If you'd like to introduce yourself a little bit here, we would welcome you.

VD **Victor Davila/slingshot** 21:35
Hi. Sorry, I'd love to have my camera on, but Microsoft Teams isn't currently agreeing with me.
My name is adagua.
I have been working in the environment to justice field for about 17 years now.
I am originally from an environmental the burden community in Hunts Point, S Bronx.
I've lived in Vermont for seven years plus.
Now I'm based out of Burlington and I am excited to work along all side alongside you guys.
Trying to chew up some environmental regulation to make sure people know what's up with these issues.

Juliet Birch 22:14
Thanks Victor for introducing yourself and other A/C members.
We'd encourage you to reach out to Victor outside of the meeting, maybe over e-mail to just get to know each other.
We want to encourage an opportunity for folks to get to know each other outside of

these meetings.
Something else I'll say about turnover is that we do still to still have two vacancies.
I believe that those are for the mobile home communities representative and for the municipal government.
Representative, you may all be aware, but zariah Hightower's seat for municipal government turned over in December, and we're waiting for on the legislature to appoint a position there.
And then finally, Walter, your seat for environmental justice focused populations, we've been in communication with you about this.
It is.
We're we're still waiting to hear from the legislature on if reappointment is something that's gonna happen.
We're hoping that that's the case and we'll keep you up to date, but you know, we have very little control over what decisions the appointing bodies make when it comes to these seats, susano.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 23:29
Yeah. Thank you.
The you said the legislature's responsible for appointing the municipal seat.
Is that going to be the Senate Committee on committees?

Juliet Birch 23:37
Yes, I forget which seats are handled by which appointing body, but it's either the Committee on Committees or the Speaker of the House.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 23:38
OK.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 23:45
Those are the two that handle all of the seats.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 23:49
OK.
Thank you.

Juliet Birch 23:51
And Victor is a representative of, we believe, statewide environmental organization. Uh, looking to get confirmation on that. OK, welcome, Victor.
And another update that we'll provide is about the civil rights and environmental justice complaint reports. As you all saw in your emails, the covered agencies submitted their next round of reporting for their civil rights and environmental justice complaints from the last year.
And all of these reports can be found in your e-mail or in the EJ Online resource library.
As you may remember from last year, you as an Advisory Council have about two months.
Under the law to, you know, forge some responses to any of their reports.
You can also choose not to respond to some or all of them, if that's what you think is the right direction.
But we are going to give you an opportunity to talk through that later today in the agenda and that response, if you're interested in providing one, will be due May 15th and I'll pass it to Kim to provide other updates.

Kim Barrett
Yeah. So regarding the mapping tool, we're happy to say that things have moved along a little bit.
On that front and you know, I think that just having gone.
Having seen this process through thus far, I'm really excited about engaging you all more, I think that.
Your input is needed to, especially.
We bridge this gap that exists this data gap.
And just recognizing that it's really important to get your voice, not only you know to support the implementation of the Y and support the covered agencies and fulfilling their duties with each deliverable, but also for community members.
And so some other updates on that.
So if you all remember we in consultation with the agency.
Digital services.
Decided to have two RFPs go out to support the development of the mapping tool and so the first one is a GIS focused.

RFP and then the other one is a community engagement focused RFP.
But the idea is that this work is intersectional.
So both of those contractors will be working closely and also you all will have.
An opportunity to work with those contractors as well.
What else did I want to share on that?
So the sow RP.
So that's the one that the agency of digital Services is supporting us with. That went out a couple of weeks ago to the retainers list and basically what that means is that folks who have used Jennifer.
Do you have a question?
If you're speaking, you might be.
On.

Byrne, Jennifer 27:22
Yeah. So I'm. I'm just, like, shocked.
Like, how were we not sent the RFP or engaged in that?

Barrett, Kim 27:31
Yeah. So you all were actually sent the the RFP last year and some folks weighed in on it.
And so essentially because the GIS.
The GIS Sow statement of work.
Are the is done through the agency of Digital Services?
Hold on.
I'm seeing that you're sending messages, so just let me.
Get my thoughts out and then I'll we can keep tracking. But because that process is kind of run specifically by the Agency of Natural Resources.
We were responsible for the payment, the procurement and then also navigating this process with the Agency of Digital Services.
There's kind of a protocol for how that worked, and so that's where a focus has been.
The other point that I'd like to make is that a huge part of the development.
Of the both of these RF PS and these are things that we can, you know, communicate it very consistently.
In in these public meetings is we wanted to find a way to create like an intersectional process, and we wanted to find a way to write these RFPs knowing that it isn't, you

know, our kind of area of expertise, but wanting to develop an RFP process that act.
Allows for the most amount of.
Possibilities and opportunities. Once these contractors came aboard. So what I'm trying to say is that based on the conversations that we've had in all of our public meetings around EJFPS around the need to have a mapping tool, the around some of y'all's ideas for what a mapping tool could look like, capabilities all.
Of those things.
Were put into the RFP.
And so.
So you've had some consistent updates about that and we've been really transparent.
So, Jennifer, I wanna offer you a chance to speak and then also.
Other folks, if you have questions or thoughts.
But we're we're really excited and also.
The last thing that I'll say is that.
You know, once, especially the community engagement contractor.
Comes aboard that. That's another space that we'll really need you to support.
And so I think in the context of this meeting in the context of the unification.
Sessions that you have being able to get really clear about how you all want to show up in that process that that would be helpful for us.

Mariana Sears
Yeah, I I have a question.
So if we, I'm just gonna avoid the acronyms for the request of proposals have been sent out already.

Kim Barrett
So what the GIS?
Statement of work request for proposal was sent out about two weeks ago.
The community engagement RFP has not.
Gone out.

Mariana Sears
And and we were we supposed to be, you know, consulted on the final?
Document that went out and we missed or or we weren't and the staff were. Jennifer

is trying to.
Express. I mean, I I I would.
I would think that it would be great to see those documents before they go out.
I don't think I've received one.
And I was certainly be happy to contribute, especially to the Community engagement.
One, but I'm not sure if that is what. That's what Jennifer is commenting.
Yeah.
Sure. And then I'll continue, OK.

Juliet Birch
Just to speak to this a little bit more.
As Kim mentioned.
The mapping tool project is something that we're breaking into two phases.
The GIS contractor will handle the like technical development of the tool mm HMM and the community engagement contractor would be there to ensure that the data that's represented in the tool accurately depicts Vermont because a lot of the federal, federally available data, as we've talked about during these public.
Meetings it does not accurately depict Vermont.
The.
RFP.
That covers the technical side was sent to you all, and we did give you an opportunity to weigh in via e-mail, and we're going to do the same with the community engagement request for proposal.
I will say that the Community engagement RFP that we're referring to is limited just to work around the mapping tool.
And so I see, Jennifer, your comment of why are we doing a community engagement RFP when we have an Advisory Council?
And I would say that.
The community engagement that would be done in the context of the mapping tool is different and more specific than the Community engagement that generally needs to be done by all of the covered agencies and by the Advisory Council itself.
Specifically for the purpose of filling data gaps. Sorry about the.

Barrett, Kim 33:21
Yeah, and also.

Barrett, Kim 33:34
Saying that you know, and again we had shared this was that.
In order, so the two purposes.
Written under the law for the mapping Tool, One is identifying environmental burdens. The other one is being able to illustrate where Ejfps are.
The thinking is that that cannot be done well if we don't have.
Community engagement involved. We don't.
People's voices involved and also if we don't have the opportunity to make sure that this tool will be usable, accessible. So the idea is that, you know, part of having this contractor, they would be working in collaboration with you.
So it's not to replace.
The the impact that the Advisory Council has on the process, the point is just that.
To really ensure that this, you know, kind of GIS focused endeavor does not happen outside of community engagement, which is something that typically happens.
So it was a very important part of the RFP drafting process and also something that we wanted to share with you all. And let me just review some of the other questions that have come up because I want to make sure.
We're actually seeing them.
Where is the GIS RFP?
So I think Julia and I spoke to some of that, but just to be clear, the.
The GIS.

Byrne, Jennifer 35:17
We need engagement around like, like even sending out those types of RFPs so that it's not just going to the same old, same old.
I'm like I'm. I cannot believe that this is the process and that this is moving forward and we did not discuss this like the fact that there's RFPs open for this work and they haven't even been like the link to the open contract hasn't been sent to us.
And let alone like actually talking about the RFP and getting input.
And.
Doing a separate community engagement RFP would not have been something that

I would have supported at all. We've seen this time and time again with an R.
This is exactly how they've done so many projects.
So this is not new.
This isn't like a is not a good idea.
It's not a new idea, in my opinion.
And I would really appreciate if you could post the link to the RFP. I know a lot of people who have this expertise in GIS.
And just sending it around to the same list that you all have.
Like of course, like guaranteed stone environmental's gonna get that contract, you know, and CBI is probably gonna get the community engagement contract. Like we we have to be doing robust engagement.
And also like the the point of having the Advisory Council in this position to inform the map is I I would hate to see another situation like the Climate Council, like 30 by 30, like, you know, many others processes.
That ANR has led where the the the actual body that was created is then sidelined and the money is going instead to another organization.
You know where we are supposed to be informing that community led process?
That's the point of having us here in this role.
So I I don't feel that we can send it to this in any way shape or form.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 37:12
Yeah, I just wanna say, Jennifer, I hear you.
I also would kind of want everyone to just take a quick breath, a quick a quick moment just to come to center 'cause I wanna make sure that we're all hearing each other and also that we're kind of abiding by our Community agreements and I just wanna say.
That I was in the middle of speaking Jennifer before you jumped in and didn't have the opportunity to finish speaking.
So I just wanna make.
For that moving forward that we can you know that this is part of the collaborative process and that I want you to be heard and I want you to know that some of the concerns that you brought up.
Particularly around the retainers list.
And you know, these are all things that these are all things that that we've been concerned with.

I also wanted to expand on the point that I had made.
Need that?
We're trying to do is process differently.
What I'm specifically talking speaking to, which I think might be different to what you're speaking to, both valid.
Is that?
In general, when folks are looking to create mapping projects on GIS work, a lot of that is just seen through the through the actual lens of the technical pieces of that work. And so for us, the understanding was that.
Especially for some of the, you know, firms and folks that you've mentioned, but also just in general the idea of.
Connecting and aligning GIS focused work with community engagement work that was.
The the thought behind that.
So I hope that that clarifies a little bit more for you.
What I was trying to say on that and Julia, I know that you had some some.
But and before I'm done, I think,

Juliet Birch
Oh yeah, I just wanted to say that.
I think that again, if we could have the space and the opportunity to share before assumptions are made specifically about, you know this particular process or the efforts that our unit has done, I think that there have been a lot of new kind of referenced in previous.
Contracts or, you know, things that again, it's important to make sure that.
That you know that we can talk about those things, but I also wanna make sure that we have the opportunity to describe what we're trying to do here. Yeah.
I just want to acknowledge that as you are all aware.
We work in a team where Kim and I are working to coordinate the implementation of the law, but we are not the decision makers at ANR.
And so while I do think that it's important for us to have these conversations, we also.
I I think it would be helpful if we maintained that perspective and also what we can do is get you all in contact.
We can get a statement from some of the folks who are involved in the decision

making processes to answer some of these questions, because I understand how some of these concerns are coming up and you know.
We.
Are members of the public, and we're also employees.
And so I want to just acknowledge that there's, you know.
There, there are things that happen that we don't necessarily have control over, but we can get you some more information.
We just might not be able to provide it right now.

Kim Barrett
Yeah. Thank you.
And then I think someone also had a question about the Community engagement RFP that has not gone out yet and that will be sent.
Does anyone have any other thought?
S.

Mariana Sears
Yeah, I'm. I'm trying to understand.
Thanks.
All right, I am a big. Oh, goodness. Get out Hun, OK.
So yeah, I'm just trying to understand a little bit more what's going on here.
I got lost in the shuffle between Jennifer's concerns and your responses, so.
Different people here have different expertise and background on this work, so I need revision so I don't understand what's going on.
And I am upset that Jennifer is upset and I want to understand why she is upset and I want to understand why.
These links or these documents have not been sent ahead of time, so we're asked to revise. What's that expected and for some reason that was sneezed or that is not part of the process. And Jennifer is trying to change the process.
You know, I'm just a little lost and I want someone to go a little slower and revise so that I can understand her concerns.
And and also make things right for the next.
You know, the one that is has to go out. Is that something that we are supposed to have a direct impact and we should have seen it before and for some reason that was missed or or no the, the the process I was follow was actually correct and.

Jennifer doesn't seem to agree with the process. You know what I mean?
Am I clear with the question? Like yes. Thanks.

Kim Barrett
Yes, that's a really good question.
Jennifer, would you like to respond?

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 43:20
Could somebody please post the link to the RFP contract so that we could do our own engagement to try to get the word out about this available opportunity for state money?

BK **Barrett, Kim** 43:35
Yeah, that's a great question.
I think what Juliet had indicated before, and essentially my response is I would love to do that and I just personally don't know if I as environmental justice.
Coordinator can do that at this time because.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 43:51
Wait, wait, wait. But what do you mean?
It's a public contract, like it's gotta be posted publicly somewhere, right?
So put the link in the chat like what?
I'm confused.
Why is this so secret?

BK **Barrett, Kim** 44:04
All I can say is I would like to confirm with my supervisor that I can do that.
I'm not challenging the fact that please let me finish.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 44:10
That.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 44:13
Jennifer, please. I'm not. I'm not.

Byrne, Jennifer 44:14
I'm sorry this is.

Barrett, Kim 44:18
I'm not saying I'm not challenging that.
It's an open contract.
I'm not challenging that. I'm just saying that.

Byrne, Jennifer 44:25
Somebody needs to post the link in the chat to this open public available opportunity for funding, you know.
Like what is going on?
I'm so confused.

Mariana Sears 44:40
It's not documented out in the public regarding it.

Juliet Birch
It was released to the retainers list, which is a list of pre-existing contractors that the state has already worked with.
The community engagement RFP is one that will be released.

Byrne, Jennifer 44:50
Yeah, but.
No, no, no, no, no.
Yeah. No, that's just not how this works.

Byrne, Jennifer 44:57
Like, that's the opposite of environmental justice.
It's the opposite of meaningful engagement and robust, you know, participation like you, you can't just choose the winner. You know, you can't just choose from a list that already exists in your database.

Barrett, Kim 45:01
You don't have to contact them, yeah.

Byrne, Jennifer 45:12
That's the whole point of this is to open the opportunities up to people who haven't had it before.
You know, like there's there's no private.
Contract list. It has to go out publicly.

Mariana Sears 45:28
Yes, you repeat that now that you're where I'm muted.
Sorry, I'm asking what I'm trying to understand, why was it sent to the retainer list?
And not.
To the public.
Or to at least first to ask for revision and then also.
To everybody else, what does anybody know?

Kim Barrett
Yeah. So what I can say specifically with that and again.
And I think that.
Yeah. So to answer that question first.
The the decision was made and also there are other.
Factors involved with this that had to do with funding and the availability of funding and when.
Decisions need to be made to secure funds, and so I know that part of in Rs decision making.
Again, that happened above, Juliet.
And I.
The the approach was to go with utilizing.
The retainers list as a way and I don't know if Juliet. I mean Jennifer, if this is partly what you're speaking to, because the process for to my knowledge, the process.
For putting out.
The statement of work RFP specifically to.
The retainers list within the agency of Digital Services, but that's something that isn't

publicly shared.
So I don't know if that's specifically what you're speaking to or if to marianna's point.
If you're saying that you're not agreeing with that like procedural process.

Byrne, Jennifer 47:11
This.

Barrett, Kim 47:21
And what could be done about that procedural process until we should be?

Byrne, Jennifer 47:25
Yeah, of course.
I'm not agreeing to that procedural process like, of course not.

Barrett, Kim 47:28
OK.

Byrne, Jennifer 47:30
That's the worst process.
That's like, that's exactly the process that we're here to, to help to build more robust engagement with more people. Like I can just keep saying the same thing, but like there is no secret list like there's no secret money like post the RFP in the chat, so we. Can see it like this.
Is this is like beyond anything I could imagine that this meeting would would entail. Like post the RFP, it's a public fund.

Juliet Birch 48:02
And as Kim said and as I repeated, we can send you the content of the RFP after the public meeting and we can follow up with you with more information.

Byrne, Jennifer 48:10
No, not the content like I need the link so I can send it to like.

Juliet Birch 48:14
Yes, and we can do that for you after the public meeting.

We can't do that at this time because both of us are navigating the the technologies to run the public meeting, but we can send it to you after the fact, if that's OK with you.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 48:24
But it's a public resource.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 48:28
Yes, we are utilizing our devices right now to run the public meeting.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 48:41
Thanks. I just have a question and I think you already said it, but I just.
Procurement is not a strong suit for me, so I just want to make sure that I that I understand the we're talking about two different bid processes.
One of them is for the engagement. The other one is for the mapping piece.
The for for either of them.
Were they posted?
Or were are they being handled through BGS, Office of Purchasing and contracts or no?

BK **Barrett, Kim** 49:17
Yeah, so good question.
And this is This is why I appreciate the question and this is kind of why I want to slow down because I also want to make sure that we're on the same page about how there are different processes based and and then also different entities that support so.
The.
Community engagement RFP, which has not been shared and again this is specifically the Community engagement RFP.
To bring on someone.
That could support and making sure that the actual like GIS development of this mapping tool involves community. Which.
Is something that's going to require like a lot of time, and so the group that's supporting with that process.
In the procurement of that contractor is the is BGS and so that is the.

I think it's, I forget the the full the full acronym, Suzanne. I don't know if you remember, but it's also.

Davis, Xusana 50:28
The electronic bid, whatever it is.

Barrett, Kim 50:31
Yes.
And so that is a different process that it to my knowledge is open and that that's something that link to the RFP, the request for proposal that could be sent to folks. It's not something we can't send like our unit cannot send that link to any any particular firm or.
Entity, but it's it's going to be available.
Separate and apart of from that.
And again because of.
Factors relating to the the money for this RFP.
And just different legislative processes. The Agency of Natural Resources decided that it was best.
To choose.
The approach to.
Work with the agency of Digital Services to support us in.
Trying to to procure a contractor who?
Already has a contract or is a part of our retainers list. So essentially that means that it could be a slightly more easy process.
On our end and what I hear. Oh, yeah. Go ahead.

Davis, Xusana 51:55
So OK, so you're saying the community won is not yet released, but when it is released, it'll go through BGS, its purchasing office and the GIS one is released?
But ads is using.
Existing vendors on retainer, right?
OK, the what the what are the start dates for those?
And the other question I have, I had a few questions.
I'm curious to know what are the start dates.

Barrett, Kim 52:24
Yep.

Davis, Xusana 52:25
On the work for both and. Also, are there bidders conferences planned for either of these?

Barrett, Kim 52:34
Yeah.

Davis, Xusana 52:35
And and I'm asking these questions because.
I first want to apologize if this was shared and I missed it.
All it it is a lot but but I'm I'm sharing in Jennifer's concerns about the what feels like a very closed nature of the GIS one.
So what?
I would like to do first is just understand.
More deeply, their reasoning behind it? I know sometimes we strategize the way in which we offer procurements based on things like timeline or wanting to create an inclusive process or reduce red tape and bureaucracy for for organizations, especially for example mwbes or those that may be really small.
So I I want to seek to understand more deeply what was the rationale behind using that.
Approach, and if that was a decision made at ads.
Or if it was a decision made elsewhere then then it would be helpful to me to understand that.
So yeah, that that may not be something that you all can answer, but I guess the other two that I am that I am working asking for this group are what is the start date for the work on those and are are we gonna be holding bidders conf.

Barrett, Kim 53:50
Hi Maryam. Thanks for joining. OK, those are a lot of really great questions. I kind of wrote some notes in my I might need a little moment to go through them.
Start dates. There are no start dates associated with.

Any of these.
Rfp's.

Davis, Xusana 54:13
I'm sorry I might have.

Barrett, Kim 54:14
It is.

Davis, Xusana 54:15
That's my fault.
I I asked.
The wrong.
I asked.
The wrong thing? I'm sorry I used the wrong language.
I asked.
The start date but I meant to say the the closing date, the big close date due dates, yeah.

Barrett, Kim 54:24
OK.
Yes, there are.
I can look and share those with you if it's OK if I could do that at the end of the meeting like we could send an e-mail or at a break, you can give me time to check it. You know, just logistically right now I'm trying to keep my focus on the meeting, but I can provide you with those dates.

Davis, Xusana 54:43
Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 54:48
I just need to look.
And then your other question was about a bid conference.
And just so that everyone is aware.
The bid conference allows, like in the context of the statement of work.

Our fee, which went out to the retainers list, that's an opportunity for the folks on that retainers list to ask questions about the request for proposal. And so the bid conference for the SOW actually was yesterday.
I know I I apologize.
It's it's. It's hard to keep track of all of the the acronyms, but it's essentially an opportunity for the folks on that retainers list.
To to ask questions as they're looking at the RFP, the request for proposal.
And get more clarity and then after that, whatever questions were asked.
Get documented and everyone on that retainers list gets access to the questions and answers so that it can inform their proposal if they choose to do it.
And then I think you may have had another question, Susana, that I didn't speak to.

Davis, Xusana 56:19
Yeah, the the, whether they're whether there's a planned bidders conference for the community engagement one and and I will say for the community engagement one, I I think it off top I would I would I would presumptively agree with with Jennifer that I'm curious to know why we.
Would why we would pay for another engagement process separate from this one.
However, I can say just from our experiences in in the Office of Racial Equity, it's often the case that we are recommending that that.
That state government conduct, robust community engagement, and they often say, oh, but we have an Advisory Council, we don't need to.
And there are times where it is appropriate to go beyond that.
So I am I am.
I am curious to to hear more detail about what we hope to get from that kind of a process that's distinct from.
This I know, I know.
Previously you mentioned. I think it might have been Juliet who responded.
You know that there's a sort of.
The the deeper dive engagement that you get that's different from this sort of regular engagement that we're getting.
So if the group has thoughts about how those processes can be distinct just to make sure that we're.
Really getting bang for Buck on that and that we're not missing an opportunity.
So again, I'm asking a lot of questions.

I don't mean to take up a lot of a lot of air time here, but I am.
It it sounds to me like we all could could use more clarity.

Barrett, Kim 57:57
Yeah, I agree.
And now this is your space to take up.
It's good to hear from you.
When you say and I think that this would also be helpful for the conversation is understanding. When we say community engagement, you use the the term.
Regular community engagement versus possibly this process. I just want to understand more about what you mean by that.
So that I can answer your question.

Davis, Xusana 58:31
Oh yeah, I guess I was probably inaccurately quoting Juliet.
Earlier about the difference between what we're getting from the Advisory Council versus what we're seeking to get through a process separate.

Barrett, Kim 58:42
Oh.
Got it.
And so again the the role, the rationale behind.
Trying to make sure that the funding that went to that's going to this overarching development of this mapping tool, which there isn't a lot of guidance in the law that you know specifies how that works.
But the rationale behind having a contractor that can.
Again, not replace.
The contributions.
Of the Advisory Council, and I don't know if part of the issue is that in previous projects or councils something like that has taken place.
But what I can say is that.
It's not only in part because of accountability.
Like I again what I was trying to communicate previously is that.
At least from what I've seen, is a lot of the GIS focused work does not have someone else there to again like help with data from a community lens support this GIS person

in making sure that they're accurately bringing in anecdotal data. Like all of these things that.
We've talked about previously.
In public meetings, get the rationale was having a contractor.
Who can support in those technical aspects of the Community engagement and particularly have the like hours and the the capacity to put towards that?
So again, it's kind of trying to cover some of the other responsibilities and maybe.
Time intensive work that perhaps goes on the Advisory Council wouldn't have the capacity to do part of their job would be to work closely with you all.
So if they're a community engagement events.
If there are places that you all you know, community members that you like, that community engagement.
Contractor cannot do that.
You know what I'm saying?
So the idea is that how can we bake into the this overarching project, this overarching effort to attempt to create this environmental justice mapping tool.
How can we do that and hold ourselves also accountable to making sure community engagement, making sure that there's someone who can ensure that those things are happening?
In tandem.
With the actual GIS work.
I don't know if that answers your question, but in no way is the thinking that.
This outside.
Community engagement person is going to replace or do something that the Advisory Council should be doing.
What I wouldn't want to happen is for us to engage you all in the in the process of doing community engagement work, and then there's no.
Liaison or support. That actually says taking this information and all of what you all are able to support with how do we make sure that that actually gets involved in the actual development?
So that's the thinking behind that piece.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:02:29
Thank you so much.

And I'm sorry the intended closed date for the. Oh, you said we said at a break we could find that.

Barrett, Kim 1:02:39
Yep.

Davis, Xusana 1:02:40
OK, cool.

Barrett, Kim 1:02:41
Yeah, and the community engagement RFP has not gone out yet.
Some of the other talking points that we had were to discuss.
And share some of the ways that we want to represent.
The your contributions into the RFP, so again in the past when we've shared the scope of services that we were thinking about for the GIS RP and where we shared the knowledge requirements and the things that we wanna hold these GIS contracts. There's accountable like things like environmental justice being willing to apply those principles. Like all of those things, are explicit in the in the GIS RFP. And so the same thing applies to the community engagement one.

Davis, Xusana 1:03:33
When will be this group's opportunity to learn more about that decision for how the GIS contract?
Was announced and.
Yeah.

Barrett, Kim 1:03:51
Yeah, if I understand your question, you're asking when you can get more information about what happened and what will happen next.
And so that's something that we can take back to our unit. And Carla can work on figuring that out.

Davis, Xusana 1:04:09
OK.

Juliet Birch 1:04:13
Yeah.
Can I speak to what Jennifer just put in the chat?
Sure. So just, Jennifer, I see you have your hand up and I'm gonna read what you dropped in the chat. Which.
It.
That says the agency agency of Natural Resources, in consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Interagency Environmental Vermont Justice Committee, shall determine indices and criteria to be included in the state mapping tool.
To depict environmental justice, focus populations and measure environmental burdens at the smallest geographic level practicable, and what Kim is saying and has said in a couple of different ways, is that we're currently in the process of.
You know, I guess putting our feelers out to understand what is in the world of possibilities in terms of contractors.
This idea of determining indices and criteria.
Is something that's going to happen.
It we haven't hit that part of the process yet and so this this part of the law that you have dropped here is something that we have 100% intention to comply with and just we're we're not in that stage of the process yet but yes in.
Terms of consultation regarding indices and criteria to be included in the mapping tool. As we've stated before, we would love for you all to have.
Very regular.
Interaction with.
And engagement with the contractor and be involved in the process.
So Jennifer, I'll pass it to you.

Kim Barrett
And just real quick, I wanted to also echo that and say This is why the conversations around the environmental justice focused populations, those types of things are important.
To move that part of the work forward, but I also want to emphasize that no one.
So at no point in this, you know, drafting of the sow RFP, at no point has anyone suggested or made determinations about the indices and criteria.

I think what I'm trying to say is that.
In the confines of the procedures and policies.
And just the kind of the the, the systems that were working.
Within, we wanted to try to find a way that allows to the best of our ability that the indices and the criteria that you all come up with and the folks in your communities that you want us to work with and the folks that you want to inform.
This tool that there's a system for that and so again the reason why.
For example, if you use what you put in the chat as an example.
Well, I want to make sure that the folks who are going to be working on the mechanics of the mapping tool have the ability and the knowledge requirements to use the indices and criteria that you come up with.
Create data that can do that.
We've talked about how that data in a lot of ways doesn't exist.
We talked about how the census data is not supportive of.
Capturing what's happening?
On the grounds, like with lived experience of Vermonters.
And also environmental justice focused populations.
So all of that is not in competition.
And is not.
It's it's we're in compliance with the law. I think that we need to get to a place also, what would support us in this process is understanding how much capacity like for instance.
Jennifer, how much capacity you have to be involved in the the mapping tool process?
How much time can you and this goes out to everyone you know, logistically I just want to make sure that folks know that there haven't been any determinations made on any of those things. And part of what we're wanting to do is make sure that there's an actual.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 1:08:34
Can I?
Speak.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:08:47
Mechanism to make sure that what you all come up with.

And what community contributes actually makes it into the tool?
Jennifer, I think you were speaking.

Byrne, Jennifer 1:09:01
Yes.
I.
I.
I mean everything I'm saying in the chat is how I feel. I feel like this is so typical of an R.
This is the exact same process that I've seen time and time again at ANR.
It happened with the payment for Ecosystem Services working group. They put out an RFP without consulting the actual working group and it was written poorly.
I mean it was.
It was missing what it could have had.
In terms of what we're seeking.
And you said you threw in some environmental justice terms into the RFP, but you're not doing robust engagement around procuring those contractors?
So I'm I'm really really disturbed.
I'm also disturbed that the group agreements, which I did not consent to are being used against Advisory Council members.
Them we've been on the phone for over an hour and the majority of the speaking has been done by.
Staff members.
And so like this, this is just.
It's just. I'm, like, very taken aback that this group would put up RFP, hide it from us and also not have, you know, any effort to do robust engagement to to try to expand our network of who gets this state money.
It's the same couple groups that get this state money.
And that's exactly what the spirit of this law is trying to address.
Us and I feel the need. Like I I'm. I'm not even sure how to move forward with this work right now and I'm definitely thinking about going to be addressing my council with about this and and and the legislature about this because this is like completely out of.
The spirit of the law.

Barrett, Kim 1:10:50
We hear you.
And to not take up space, I'm not going to respond.
Well, Mariam, you had your hand up.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 1:11:02
Yeah. Thank you.
Sorry, I was in another meeting for a first hour of this meeting.
Can you quickly just in a minute or two, tell me like what discussion is going on from Jennifer comment?
I get that.
Maybe some consultation hiring is in the process.
Can you give me a little bit background so that I can give my input on that please?

Barrett, Kim 1:11:23
Sir. Jennifer, do you wanna share your concerns?

Byrne, Jennifer 1:11:29
Sure, ANR put out an RFP, a request for proposals for the mapping tool.
We haven't seen it and they also won't share the link with us to to see the the open request for proposals.
They're saying that they're only sending it to their closed list of existing contractors in the state, and they're also have developed a second RFP for community engagement that hasn't been released yet.
And maybe we'll have a chance to weigh in on that.
It's not clear, but and that's also just it's just a process.
That none of us have consented to or been able to review.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 1:12:08
Thank you.
Thank you, Jennifer.
That's helpful.
And after hearing, I think I'll echo with Jennifer I.
Mean in my input I would not be entrusted.

Who you wanna hire? If you have, like, a set of contractor which is approved by whoever any those guys are capable.
I'm I'm not looking into that, but while developing RFP, I think input from the advisory members like what what is needed exactly in that and what should be the expectation.
Chance for the person you guys are hiring.
I think that there is something which which you guys might have taken our input because.
When we were when we were working on like community engagement plan, that was the most exciting excited part where which I I wanted to like work on like practically not just developing the document like engaging communities, asking them what kind of you know, environmental issues, they are exper.
How we can help them?
How can make resources available for them like those kind of things? And maybe if you guys have already published that share that link with us so that we can we also have our network.
But you since Jennifer's comment is telling that you guys have a set of like people. You guys sent out to a consultancy. Whatever that is. I heard this experience of working with.
Planning Commission.
Oh, that's it's one of the garment Institute in probably a six to something.
I'm forgetting its name and I was involved in the committee.
To finalize proposals actually, and I loved their process.
You know how they.
How they involve like different members to review, reset proposals.
And they were open to every research proposal.
They did not declined like they they did not. Did like initial work to let's just sort it out few lists and give those proposals to like committee members to review it.
No, they like gave all the proposals to committee members and developed a sheet and took input.
So if if one step is already missed out, what you can guys can do is develop an actual sheet of criteria.
And send us like who you wanna hire who have applied?
And take our advisory members input that if if a thing like you guys do interview or whatever staff or listening you wanna do, but at least like what our pros and plus and

minuses and that if if you guys like take our input that would be awesome because. Because the community engagement thing, if if that is being properly studied or mapped out or investigated.
The right person or the right criteria for working on that.
Is like highly highly recommended and 2nd part is after the hiring.
Like how you how.
What is the implementation plan for that?
Like how that person would execute. Would you guys be taking our input on different steps for that?
What is the methodology to implement?
Implement this community engagement plans. What sites you guys would be like targeting for doing that?
And apart from this hiring.
Process I at the end if you guys have like person five last 5-10 minutes I wanna know like what is this situation of?
Federal availability of resources and everything with Vermont without ongoing change in administration and.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:15:45
Hmm.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 1:15:50
Taking funding back or is climate change sustainability in environmental projects?
So if if you have like any situation, if you wanna talk about test time or maybe next time in another meeting, I would love to hear in detail about that.
Because it's the ongoing situation is really bad all over the US and I would be interested to know about who won.
Thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:16:10
Yeah. Thank you.
Just quickly question for you, ma'am.
Do you want us to respond to the questions that you asked or would you like us to hold the answers till later?

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 1:16:23
No, I was looking for response and what is your solution?

Barrett, Kim 1:16:27
OK. Just wanna make sure.
So in the beginning there and I see that your messaging here, Juliet.
Sorry I missed it.
OK.
So another point of clarification is that.
Before the.
Before the SOWRP, before this, GIS request for proposal went out.
The focus was on developing.
You know what you said? Figuring out the scope.
Figuring out what the criteria would be used to.
Assess contractors or bidders vendors.
And so the first thing that we did is when we had.
Conversations earlier conversations in the year in the public meetings with you all.
We discussed those things we talked about.
What criteria would you want?
Mapping tool GIS.
You know, person to have to do this work.
What types of things would you want that person to do?
What kinds of concerns would you have around the data?
How could we possibly address some of that data? What we came up with, what you all came up with in those public meetings?
Some of the things were being able to address those data gaps. Some of those things were to do community engagement.
So we don't repeat some of the issues that.
That happened before and some of the the things that we had shared our unit shared during that process is we don't know fully what procedure we have to go through, but we have this information about what you all feel is important, what our concerns are. So the 1st.
Thing that we did in the development of the RFP was take the information that was generated in the public.

Meetings alongside you know our.
Concerns and thoughts thinking about it from the perspective of how much capacity does this particular team have and then created a knowledge requirement created like a section in the RFP that talks about the knowledge requirements, the things that the competencies.
That a mapping tool.
GIS firm would have to have to do the work we develop developed a scope of services to describe.
Ribe. What that could look like, recognizing in a project like this, you can't put it all. You know you can't capture everything, but to the best of our ability we created. That scope of services and then I believe I can't remember if it happened at the same time, but I remember creating like an evaluation, an initial evaluation kind of criteria based upon these knowledge requirements and what not.
That document is what we sent you all early in the process and I think the only formal response that we received was from the Agency of Transportation.
With their edits to that, that document and the information that was included in it, the scope of services, those types of things we took that when we didn't see the engagement directly from.
The engagement around that document, we tried to hold facilitative conversations. In the public meeting to cover some of that.
So I want to be clear that that part of the work we did in direct consultation with you. And it's just this procedural thing. And I hear Jennifer's point, which is that K, even with the RFP made at that point, how do we also make sure that it gets to the folks that it needs to go to?
And I'm paraphrasing it doesn't.
You know, I'm not suggesting that that's only.
What Jennifer said.
But I just want to make that clear.
Is that from the beginning? That's been part of the rationale. And then also I do want to make sure that it's clear that the effort to capture and emphasize environmental justice, social justice, organizing practices, equity, like all of these different things.
It's not that they were thrown into the RFE.
There's a whole section that talks about.
The knowledge requirements.
But also what?

You're willing to do.
It's one thing to have the the knowledge, but also are you willing to work directly with folks most impacted things like that. And so I just want that to be represented as well.
So and then the other thing that you asked, Mariam was, you know, how are we going to evaluate?
We have not reached that point of evaluation and part of what you were going to ask is who on the Advisory Council would be open to coming to the meetings where we're actually.
Reviewing applications or not applications, the request for proposals who would be interested in scheduling that?
Because it's gonna happen in the next couple of months.
And unfortunately I can say that part of what we wanted was to have a longer kind of runway to to schedule that. But because of again procedural, the processes and also coordinating with the agency of Digital Services, which is not our agency, this is the timeline that we.
Working with, but as we've asked previously, who's interested?
In supporting this this work and personally I I think that this meeting.
Showcases that there is interest and now we just have to figure out based on where we are in this situation, what needs to happen happen next. Some of that we can answer in this meeting, some of it we can't.
And I also just, I'll stop talking to not take up too much more space.
I recognize that we're being asked a lot of questions. And so for me, I want to respond to the questions, but something I heard you say, Jennifer.
Is that we've been taking up too much space.
So when each person, each Advisory Council member shares, if you could clarify because I want to do it based on your individual thoughts, if you want us to respond in that moment, let us know if you want us to just listen.
Happy to do that as well.
Walter and Juliet. Did you want to say something?
OK.
That's not all.
Walter, I don't know if you you can hear videos.

Brownridge, Walter 1:23:40

Yeah, I can.
I can talk.

Barrett, Kim 1:23:43
Thank you.

Brownridge, Walter 1:23:43
Am I on now?
OK. Can you hear?

Barrett, Kim 1:23:45
Yep.

Brownridge, Walter 1:23:46
Can you all hear me?
I'm trying to talk soft.
I'm I'm I'm in a car dealer.
What do you call waiting room waiting on my car which I needed to bring in?
It was an emergency problem, so.
They try to keep my comments in the chat, but I just wanted to say and I'll say at the outset, I don't need.
Juliet and Kim.
I don't.
You don't need to respond, but if you want to, you can.
I I appreciate very much, Jennifer.
And Mariam, what you all noted.
This there are a couple of things I just wanted to say, and this is not about me, but I've had.
I'm pretty sure I'm the oldest person on this call and I worked in and out of government in various states as well as federal government. And what I've noticed in my only like 4 years in Vermont and particularly the two years that I've been on this.
Advisory Council.
A.
A challenge which is not this is not the fault of our staff members Juliet and Kim, and even your predecessors. I think this is and Jennifer, you've been, I'm sure, all of you

have been around a lot longer than me and know this.
So maybe this is not something new.
The problem is the way this.
Our our government is structured and the relationship between its citizens.
And the advisory councils represented by the advisory councils and and the powers that be, which are from the governor on down. And so I'm gonna, I'm gonna say stuff that may get me in trouble.
But as I said, I'm I'm too old to worry about that anymore.
The I was at a fundraiser for a political candidate last year. Last summer, statewide office holder person was actually an incumbent at the time.
And I I mentioned to this person that the problem I see in this body is not the staff that interact with us, but the fact that you all and I can see this way, you don't have to say anything.
You all are dictated by.
You are dictated by those above you on on what you can do. What you cannot do and.
I read and follow in the media quite a bit that this is not uncommon.
In Vermont.
There's a very top down heavy-handed approach from from certain offices that that go down into the various agencies and so.
That's my observation. If there's a suggestion and I think this is up for us as Members and this is not to get the staff involved because.
They they operate under some different rules.
I think we need the demand.
Conversation.
With Secretary Moore, who is the secretary for an R, and other senior staff that report to her.
That I don't know the layers of.
I don't know how many levels there are between Juliet and Kim and Secretary Moore, and it may even be frankly, if, if if we're not satisfied and I agree with Jennifer, these things are public.
They're meant to be public.
These RSPRFPS.
Need to be available to all the public and not to a closed list.
They may have a reason, and it may even be semi valid.

About why they have a closed list, but they need to say that in public.
To us and to other members of the public and and it may go beyond Secretary Moore. But that's, I mean, I think that's the battle we need to to go with and that is as Members we actually should, you know, take a vote.
Somebody moves somebody seconds.
Somebody take a vote and say we want to have this conversation because we find the current process.
Violates it.
Not that the law, certainly the spirit of the law and and we need to go with that and that doesn't reach satisfaction there. You know, I'm a priest, but I'm I'm old. Before I was a priest in my 20s and 30s.
Not only did I work in government, but I'm a lawyer and I know what laws are supposed to do, and I know when they're not done you find a lawyer and you do something about it by going to a judge, I mean.
If this is not happening and it should be happening.
It's not for us to invent our frustration at Kim and Juliet, but say.
Because I I used to be in their position years ago as a staffer for US senators for mayors.
Attorney General of the State of California.
I worked for bishops.
Now I know how this plays.
It's not good to to deal with the. We need to talk to, as they say, the organ grinder.
And I'm not here to insult you all. But you know the rest of that metaphor.
We need to talk to the people who are setting the policy and saying they're not doing their job.
So that's and I think if we if we need to at this meeting.
Move to get a conversation or meeting with those above. I mean, I've done a little biographical research, Secretary Moore, maybe a fine person, seems to be well educated as an engineer, but used to work for the company.
That's one of the companies on the restricted list. So.
That's a wild thing if you know what I'm saying. So.
I'll rest there and as I said, staff doesn't need to comment.
I see there are few hands raised, but I think that's what we need to do.

Juliet Birch 1:29:58

So yeah, thanks for your comment, Walter.
I'm not going to respond.
I have some other things that I just wanted to share.
It was previously stated and it has been stated a couple of times, that you all were not consulted on this RFP process and I would like to reiterate that and I forwarded this to your emails that on October 2nd, our team did share the original draft of the.
RFP with you all.
All for your evaluation as well as the Interagency committee. And so that was one opportunity to be involved.
We also dedicated two different public meetings last year, 2 discussing the EJ mapping tool and.
You know what some of our preferences or what we'd like to see in the mapping tool are we definitely want to consult you further and wish that we could do more in terms of consultation.
But as Walter astutely.
Put you know there are limitations in terms of you know the systems that we work within.
It was also said that we are apprehensive to share with you the current RFP and that you know the.
The potential contract, but we've said that we will be able to do that with you after the meeting.
And then you know, it was also said that it was unclear if you will be consulted for the community engagement RFP that we've talked. We've been talking about and.
To make it clear, you will be, you will be consulted and we will continue to stand by that and you'll be heavily involved.
So you know, I just wanted to.
To state that we are doing our best within the limitations that we're working to.
Follow the spirit and intent of the law and be in compliance with the law. So thank you.
Marion.

Mariana Sears
I just wanted to make sure that this.
That.
Validate the concerns of my fellow A/C members and as I understand it seems like

we are not so concerned with having been consulted.
Of what it was going to go on the on this particular.
Request for proposal.
But more the concern is more about the process of sharing it with that close list. It seems to me that that is the main concern and the main.
Lack of alignment with the spirit of the law.
So not to repeat any other things that have said and I do trust you.
And the process that we're trying to alter here, the change, you know that we're trying to propose. This law is trying to change this processes and it is a process and it's going to take time.
But as we have more conversations and find ways to change the process that is stopping this from being more clear and more open, is there a way that we can promote a motion to?
Stop.
The.
The.
Sharing of the request for proposal as it is with that particular list until we have a conversation and we understand.
If that can go.
In a different manner, in a more public way, before going to that specialist first. Or is it gonna ready?
Perhaps you don't know the answer, but could we just have a motion and see what happens? And you bring that?
You bring this concern to whoever comes up the least.
Of.
You know what? Power or.
Authority to see if you know just having a say.
Yeah, the whole Council said they didn't.
They didn't feel like this is the right way.
And this is in the spirit of the late so of the lock.
So they are requesting a stop in a conversation. Is that is that something that we could propose?

Kim Barrett

You have quorum and you can.

We're here to. You can do whatever.

Mariana Sears

OK. Perfect. As a non expert, I don't even know what the process is for.

No. Yeah. So yeah, why don't we propose that and see if somebody seconds and.

Yep. Sorry. No, no, no, no, no, I just don't.

Not sure you know 02.

Yeah, propose this.

Is that something that the Council wants to?

Actually propose.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:34:55

Would support that.

I'm I'm wondering if Jennifer, you seem the most articulate on what should could be done.

If if I'm gonna ask, I'm sorry to take over, but I'm trying to interject something here.

It's Jennifer. Would wanna make a motion and then we could.

Someone could 2nd and then if we need to have discussion, I'm kinda.

I'm sorry it's the lawyer geeking me.

I'm kind of parliamentary procedure Geek, so I know this stuff.

But that would be the thing, and I think Jennifer might be the best one to propose.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 1:35:31

I'll think I'd love to hear what Mariam has to say.

And then also Susanna, since her hand is up.

But I can start to write something up potentially.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 1:35:42

Thank you.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 1:35:44

Thank you, Jennifer.

Yeah. I just wanted to clarify that first of all.

Thank you, Walter.
This is really helpful because I am not from Vermont.
It's just been three years that I'm here. I'm international student here.
Immigrant here, testing time for me to be in the US.
But I I didn't know the process is like within the government, how they hire and how these things work, you know.
And this is helpful to understand the what are the limitations of Kim and Juliet and?
I think it could have been.
They might have already mentioned the first first hour of the meeting when I was not there, but it would have been just helpful.
They just we have limitation.
It's not our capacity to comment on that. You might have said, but I wasn't in the first part of the meeting. So thank you for putting that out there.
When I was giving my comment, my intention was I just wanna make it clear my intention was never to insult like any of the staff member involved here.
Or attack them.
The intention is to just share the feeling as an Advisory Council member on any of the things we have been consulted and we know as a matter of the fact that Juliet and Kim, they come, they compose like meeting minutes in every minute.
So speaking meant that they would take our comments into those minutes and we discussed whatever hierarchy of working they have in their like.
Institutes what can work and what cannot work. It's it's already there because in next meeting they.
They probably discussed like about previous meetings that he have in port or something. If you want update from something on that minutes.
So I just wanted to, you know, clarify that out there and yeah, thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 1:37:43
Susana.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:37:45
Yeah. Thank you.
I just we're talking about making a motion to potentially as far as I understand that it sounds like we're talking about possibly halting or pausing the process, the procurement process for the GIS.

Situation and I am.
I just wanted to ask some clarifying questions about that and I know that we, you know, if we're doing Robert's rules, then it's, you know, motion 2nd and then discussion.
I don't know if we have ever adopted that process formally.
So I can wait until then, but but my question really is, is that something that this group can't?
I mean, where is the Interagency Council in this?
I'm saying that as a Member of this group, but also as somebody who sits on that one too. So I just want to understand from a procedural standpoint what is the universe of options we have available to us and who else needs to be involved in a discuss.
If that's the direction.
We want to take.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 1:39:00
I want to ask a clarify question because I'm confused. These hand raised are like from RTR or new.
Would that motion come under or interpreters sort of activism?
If that would be the case, I would not like to be part of this because ongoing administration issue with international students and.
And immigrants, I would refrain to participate in that, but I would love to give my comments as an Council member.
Thank you.
Sorry, I I I would love to do it.
I want to do it, but due to these testing times I can't.
I can't risk it.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 1:39:43
I would say this is not legal advice, but I would say that because if you're an official member of a body that's considered an organ of government.
Then I think it's fair that that would be interpreted as not advocacy, in the same way that, you know, my office would be not doing quote UN quote advocacy because we're on the taxpayers payroll.

But again, this is not legal advice and I think you should do what what you feel comfortable with.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 1:40:15
Thank you.

Davis, Xusana 1:40:36
Maybe I can share a couple of best practices that we do in the Office of Racial Equity when we do. Procurement processes. One of the things that we do and we usually advocate other departments do is to post for longer. We also do this with job recruitment, so there's a standard number of days that something gets posted.
We usually extend that significantly. We also.
Formally and informally, share opportunities in other networks, which include maybe professional networks. I'll give you an example.
I don't know if you knew this, but there's a national.
Black veterinarians association.
So if there's, like, you know, a job related to animal care, we might share it with them.
We also tend to use language like a statement of intent at the beginning of our processes that make it really clear that we are looking to incorporate an equity lens and that we expect any vendor we contract with to do the same. And that includes through their sub.
Grant awards if there are any. Another thing that we do is when we do a scoring rubric, we always have.
Part of the rubric metrics or other considerations related to inclusion or justice to make it really clear that those are some of the things that we take into account, obviously with changes at the federal level, we have to be super cautious about all of that, but those are.
Some of the things that we tend to do and then of course broaden the reach by sharing it out as widely as possible.
So I don't.
I don't know what the current.
Lineup of of vendors is and I don't what it would be.
If we did those other things.
Again, I I would be interested to know how and by whom some of those choices

were had. If it can give us insight into why this process was was taken.
Yeah, I'm the quiet now.

Barrett, Kim 1:42:37
If I may, I think it would be helpful.
So just name that.
We haven't had a break also naming that.
It sounds like there's a little bit of organizing that might need to happen.
It sounds like Jennifer might be working on something.
For you all to you know.
Do a motion.
That's great.
If that's where you all want to go.
And then also we have not done public comment yet, so.
I think it might be good to see if there are any members of the public on the call who would want to to comment and then.
I'm suggesting a break.
To to collect and then walk in, organize around the.
The motion.

Davis, Xusana 1:43:39
I would support.
That.
And I think it would also give us time to review and consider what Jennifer's just put in the in the chat as well.

Barrett, Kim 1:43:53
I wish you.
OK. Would a 10 minute break sound good?
There's no members of the public on the call.

Brownridge, Walter 1:44:05
Sure.

Barrett, Kim 1:44:07
OK.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 1:44:08
Can can I please take 15 minutes, break 5 minutes?
I it's prayer time when Ramzan going on, I would appreciate. Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 1:44:14
Yeah, of course, of course.
So we can just say for everyone.
15 minutes? That sounds good.

Davis, Xusana 1:44:27
Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 1:44:28
OK.

Brownridge, Walter 1:44:38
Like a boy or girl, you.
Get.
You too.
Are we on a break?
I'm sorry I had to take a call and stepped off.
Are we on a break right now?

Mariana Sears / HFVT (s-h) 1:46:52
Yes, we are.

Brownridge, Walter 1:47:36
Joseph, you tried calling me a while ago.
It's almost 1:00 here, so it must be almost 10:00 there.

Davis, Xusana 1:47:46
Walter, I want to let you know you're not on mute.

Brownridge, Walter 1:47:48
Oh, I'm in a.
I'm I'm in a lengthy zoom meeting and go on for another hour.

Davis, Xusana 1:47:51
Walter, you're not muted.

Brownridge, Walter 1:47:54
So it was a slight break, so I took it to try to call me back so.

Mariana Sears / HFVT (s-h) 1:48:02
Maybe we should jump.
I don't think he's looking at us.

Davis, Xusana 1:48:08
I think he just made it, or someone muted him.

Mariana Sears / HFVT (s-h) 1:48:10
Yeah. Oh, yeah.
Good, good, good.
I am the only one in the room right now.

Brownridge, Walter 1:59:59
You all hear me.
Him, can you hear me? Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 2:00:02
Yeah, we can hear you.
And we can all come back.
Books are here.

Davis, Xusana 2:00:13
I'm back as well.

Barrett, Kim 2:00:15
Great.
I suppose they're coming back.
Just want to.
Make sure everyone saw Jennifer.
'S message in the chat.
With the potential motion, so I'll just.
Jennifer, if you'd like to take it from here.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:01:01
Sure.
I mean, I could read it out loud.
I don't know what's what's best. I think I would just like to hear what other people think, but I'll. I'll just say I'll put a motion in the chat.

Barrett, Kim 2:01:14
Yeah, I think you should read it out loud.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:01:14
And.
OK.
We, the environmental Justice Advisory Council, did not consent to the process of developing or releasing the EJ mapping tool RFP and we can like spell everything out.
We believe the decision made by ANR to release the RFP to only the approved contractor list. I don't know if that's what it's called, but violates the tenants of environmental justice and goes against the spirit of the environmental justice law of Vermont. We're requesting information from state AG.
Leadership on how and by whom the decisions were made to release the RFP for GIS support for the EJ mapping tool.
We're also requesting this public resource opportunity to be shared in a robust,

meaningful way with all potential contractors.
In alignment with the principles of Community engagement approved and published by the Advisory Council, on whatever date, we are not aware of the timelines and the current RFP, since it has not been shared with us, but we might also.
Request an extension to the length of this important procurement process or an opportunity to weigh in on the language of the RFP.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 2:02:46
So the action would be to seek information and if that's the case, do we need him?
Do we need this to be a formal vote, or can we just ask them for it?

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:03:07
Hello.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:03:12
We can hear you.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:03:13
Yeah.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:03:14
OK.
I.
I I would say that.
We take a formal vote.
It's not about whether we have to or not. I think it's better for the Minutes if we actually vote to approve.
I I agree with Jennifer as stated and we we.
I would.
I would move to adopt Jennifer's or Jennifer could move it and I would second.
What she's written.
And then we could vote to approve it.
And then that a goes into our minutes.
And formal action that we've taken.

And then it can go on.
You know, then be referred to the secretary of the ANR.

Davis, Xusana 2:04:16
OK.
So who moved and who seconded?

Byrne, Jennifer 2:04:20
I'll move to.
Submit this statement to ANR and also any other agency leadership that needs to see it.

Brownridge, Walter 2:04:31
And I second it, Walter.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 2:04:35
I also second that I put that in the chat.

Brownridge, Walter 2:04:40
I'm sorry.
Thank you, Mario.

Davis, Xusana 2:04:51
Is there a discussion?

Brownridge, Walter 2:04:57
I I think we've discussed it enough.
Someone else wants to speak, but if if not, I would call the question so we can vote.

Mariana Sears / HFVT (s-h) 2:05:01
Yeah, yeah.

Davis, Xusana 2:05:07
Yeah, I mean, I guess I, I guess my only question and that probably is something that can't be answered here, but I still am curious to know is how?

Barrett, Kim 2:05:07
To.

Davis, Xusana 2:05:17
Does we should at least be aware of?
How it would work VIS a vis the Interagency Council, if we are making recommendations about changes to the process or I I don't know how it works, I don't know if they also need.
I don't know what kind of agreement mechanisms there need to be.
I understand that.
That's probably why we have two separate councils.
Because there's not always going to be agreement.
So I'm completely cool with that.
I just want us not to forget that that body exists and that eventually, depending on the the, the direction this conversation goes.
We may need to, I don't know, inform them.
Or solicit feedback. But but I don't say that to to stop a voter or anything.
I just want it to be on our radar.

Brownridge, Walter 2:06:06
I would.
I would say that we could copy.
Could we just, you know, as we send this to Secretary of?
That we also copy the leadership or you know and staff.
Juliet and Kim, do you also work with?
The IAC do you coordinate with?
You do, so I would say we.
That every member of that inner agency group would also be copied on this.
Yeah.

Barrett, Kim 2:06:38
Would you want us to?
Get you emails for all the ISE members.

Brownridge, Walter 2:06:46
Sure.

Barrett, Kim 2:06:49
Can hear that.

Brownridge, Walter 2:06:50
And and and in my view is. It's not that we need their approval, but we just are. We're making, we're making them aware of this issue and that this is an important piece of it of what we think our work is.

Barrett, Kim 2:07:06
Heard.

Mariana Sears
Right. Just wanna make sure that I'm understanding the motion.
What I understand from Juliet and Kim is that we were consulted or involved in the process.
Of getting feedback for this mapping tool.
Whether I personally participated or or responded to some of the emails or conversations that happened in October or November, I cannot remember right now.
But I would not like to.
That's fantastic.
Hold that process, but I am more interested.
In I mean if if the motion if we share this motion as written by Jennifer, it seems like we are concerned with the content and I wondered if that is our main concern or if our main concern is how is it shared?
And the process of.
The process of just being shared with this specialist.
Contractor as opposed to share in a more broad public and meaningful way.
So.
Do you guys understand what I'm trying to ask?
Fellow members of the Council, it's our main concern is the content or the distribution process. It seemed to me originally that the distribution process was the

main concern, and it appears that we have been consulted through the process by our coordinators and that we have put our works.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:08:38
Yeah.

Mariana Sears 2:08:50
Whether we remember it or not.
Right now, I mean, we could all look at our emails and revise transcripts, but I would. I wish that we do not.
By the length of this process, we're making it more lengthy by just going over our work again, and if we are really concerned about the distribution then that we should that we can point and identify that in the motion.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:09:21
Speaking to me personally, I'm if I had to prioritize it.
I mean, I don't know what the content is, so I don't I you know, so for to that extent I I have no idea, but.
Definitely the distribution is of like for me, the greatest concern in terms of the content and it being shared with us. Back in October, I imagine I think it was said it was only released two weeks ago, so it.
I think.
I think we definitely should have been further consulted in the content I remember. This coming up that this RFP was gonna be released.
We could go back. I'm sure these are recorded in their notes and stuff, but I do remember flagging that I was really concerned that the RFP would be released before we do anything with the definitions and everything else that we've been tasked to do since the order of.
The law.
The mapping tool comes last.
In the law. And so I know I said that whenever the mapping tool was brought up. And so I guess I shouldn't have assumed that we it would have been like on the agenda in any meeting between October and March.
I don't even know if we yeah, but so I would say I'm definitely concerned about both. I can't say I'm not concerned about the content because we haven't seen it.

Mariana Sears 2:10:46
Did you have the power to share that with us, Kim and Juliet?
Right now, yes. OK.
How about we do that?
How about we share it right now and we take 5 minutes to take a look.
And perhaps 10 minutes if needed, and then we revise the motion. Whether it is the content that we're concerned about.
For the distribution.
For that, it seems too little for for members of the Council to look at this.
It's like just a quick look would be.
Not enough time.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 2:11:32
My my input would be for distribution, which Jennifer earlier pointed out that is for only like for few contractors and later on that's the. Another point is like later step which is that when a person is hired to whatever process they saw out at the end.
What methodology?
That person would be using for mapping out.
Issues.
And I think that that can be discussed later on, I think pointed out to that part.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:12:17
Zan and Walter and Jennifer.
Would you?
Would you feel like having it right now?
Available to us could give us a better sense of what we are motioning for.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:12:38
I can agree with that, yes.

DX **Davis, Xusana** 2:12:42
I want to make sure I understand. I'm sorry.
I have some other volume issues behind me here.
We're talking about reviewing it currently right now.

Mariana Sears 2:12:52
Yes, I as I understand.
Is that what we're all talking about?
Is it a lengthy document or is it 1 pager?

DX **Davis, Xusana** 2:12:57
OK.

BW **Juliet Birch** 2:13:00
It's like 20 something pages, but a lot of it.
Request for proposal is 20 pages.
It's a statement of work because it's a statement of work.
Request for proposal.
It includes some contractual content, so that's stuff that you could just skip over because it's like.
The It's like copy paste what ads communicates to all folks that they work with.
So I would say that probably half of it is actual substantive content, yeah.
And you, yeah.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:13:34
But the only yeah. The only question I have is I tried to go back through my emails from September through November.

Brownridge, Walter 2:13:43
I can't seem to find the document. Juliet. You sent several emails during that time, but I don't.
And I'm not saying we didn't send it, but I can't find.
That original document that we should have looked at back in the fall.
So I don't know if you'd have to resend it or.
Post it somehow in team like in the chat, and then we could open it and look at it that way.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:14:13
Yeah, Walter it.

I tried to forward it to you all about 45 minutes or an hour ago, so it should be in the emails that you typically receive our communications from.

Brownridge, Walter 2:14:26
OK.
Alright, let me look at that.

Barrett, Kim 2:14:27
But I also I was doing it quick so I'm I might have missed something, but I usually use a list so let me know if you receive it there.

Brownridge, Walter 2:14:36
Hold on one second.

Davis, Xusana 2:14:36
I did receive it when you sent it, but I didn't have access, so I did go ahead and send an access request.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:14:45
Yes, I believe that happened to me too at the time.

Barrett, Kim 2:14:49
Mm hmm.

Brownridge, Walter 2:14:50
There is the open I'm trying to open it right now on my phone.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:14:59
Confirm this is exactly the verb it like.
This is exactly what is in the public RFP.

Barrett, Kim 2:15:11
No, no.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:15:11
That's so it's not. So can you please send the public RFP?

Barrett, Kim 2:15:18
And just to clarify, it's not exactly the same, because the sow so the RP that went out in consultation or through the agency of Digital Services has you know other contractual information and things like that.
And yeah, we send.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:15:39
I I feel like we need to see the real one.

Juliet Birch 2:15:47
If I download it now will that?

Kim Barrett
Yeah, I was gonna say I'm trying to download that one. Yeah.
And you can share it from our drive? Yep.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:16:16
Yeah, I mean just on quick glance of what's here, you know they're put it.
You are including things like. I mean it would be extrapolated to indices like if you. If you look at the law and what we're supposed to weigh in on.
All of that seems to be included in this RFP. So it, yeah, I I definitely think we should have a robust.
Role in defining what the RFP is for and that just didn't happen.

Mariana Sears 2:16:57
Jennifer, would you mind repeating that, please for a moment?
I didn't quite understand you.
You said that you are concerned with the content or that the content seems to reflect what we have given input for in the past.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:17:02

Sure.
No, I see.
No, like I I'm concerned because like when I a long time ago in the chat I put a quote from our law.
That talks about what the Advisory Council will be consulted on in terms of this mapping tool, and I definitely think that it's it's it's captured in this RFP.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:17:32
RFP, you know and and it's very possible that we would have had.
Input you know like and and something to say about. I mean it says statutory purpose of the environmental justice mapping tool. And then it says other uses. And then it says data challenges and considerations.
You know, it talks about the definition again that we haven't.
You know, that was like step one was, you know, redefine EJ population.
So I don't like without.
Spending a lot of time on this like I I don't know.
I think that we we definitely could have talked about this beforehand and it and it fits into what the law says that we were supposed to be consulted on, in my opinion.
It was certainly my expectation, which was why I asked that question back in last year, several times about the RFP.

Juliet Birch 2:18:25
Is it OK if I weigh in? Sure. OK.
Yeah, Jennifer, I think that that's a really good point that the RFP does include things beyond the statutory purpose and.
We.
Kim can speak to this in more depth because she was the lead in the like drafting of the language, but the RFP reflects and the other purposes that are included beyond the statutory purpose are intended to reflect your feedback.
That was provided, I think in the May or perhaps no, I think it was the May public meeting of last year and.
Jennifer, you'll find that some of the comments that you made.
You specifically made in that May meeting are reflected in those other purposes.
The other thing that I will say is that.
The RFP from our perspective, when we were working on it was intended to.

Keep the world of possibilities for a contractor open.
Basically saying, here's all the things that could potentially happen with the tool.
Can you please tell us what's possible within our financial limitations?
And so you may find that there's things that are in that in the RFP that.
You know, go beyond the statutory purpose and maybe aren't going to end up in the final tool, but were things that were under that have been under consideration through our work discussing these things with you?
And additionally the regarding the data challenges that are listed for the EJFP definition.
This was all.
All of that content comes directly from the October public meeting that we had last year with John Adams from the Center for Geographic Information, where he provided us with a pretty in depth analysis of the usability of the current ejfp definition, which I agree and I recognize is somet.
That needs to be addressed by the Advisory Council in depth, and that was part of the intention for this current public meeting.
And so, you know, with the recognition that the ejfp definition requires review.
That is the purpose of that section is acknowledging some of those. Some of those challenges that the current EJF definition poses.
And the last thing I'll say is that yes, the mapping tool is one of the last deliverables that is to be completed under the statutory timeline.
But it's also one of the projects in the law that requires the most extensive runway in order to collaborate with.
A single contractor, much less what we're finding now, will be more than one contractor.
And considering you know the extensive public input that we're going to ask for in terms of not just the content of the tool, but the usability of the tool.
I'm sure.
Where you can imagine, considering you stated that you work with a lot of people who have expertise in this area.
We have about a year and a half now to complete the tool, and that's not even like the ideal runway we would have.
To do this really thoroughly in a first pass so.
Yeah, that, that's all I'll say is that you know, I I understand your concerns about the timeline with the RFP.

Process. But I also want to acknowledge that this is an extensive project that the the mere deadlines in the law do not acknowledge. The runway that gets.
That brings us to that final product.

Kim Barrett
Yeah. Hi, acobat.
I also just want to say a couple other things, which is that yes, John's presentation.
Did contribute in part to the data challenges, but that section.
And also mainly was drafted based on our in depth conversations about privacy that we had at public meetings.
So I just want to make that clear that a lot of the sections in the RFP were directly.
Inspired and and based off of conversations we've had.
Yeah, that's I had another point, but I can't can't remember it right now.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:23:23
There's hands up.
They're like a facilitator will call on us or how.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:23:31
At this point, this is y'all's.
I want to make sure you have the space to do what you all need.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:23:45
Walter, did you have something?
Your your hand is #1.

Juliet Birch 2:23:54
I think you're muted, Walter.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:23:56
No, I'm sorry I'm not.
I was.
I was listening, but I'm trying to adjust this chair.
That was all. Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 2:24:10
Oh yeah.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:24:12
OK.
Well, I'm seeing that this is due April 10th.
Is the. It's open until April 10th.
And I I mean in terms of our our statement, I I would also love to see the inclusion of. The Office of Racial Equities kind of best practices on procurement like that. That's that's a huge piece of the problem here is like we're not doing we're, you know, meaningful procurement process or an open procurement process.
And it would be great to extend the timeline.
So that we don't have to rush.
In terms of our outreach?
I find that inter I I also just find that like.
The sort of tail wagging the dog like making it all about meeting this deadline in a year and a half of having a tool as opposed to like doing the work that we're here to do up front.
It just isn't. I'm I'm I like.
I wish that, like we spent so much time talking about consensus in this group, like many meetings, talking about how we're gonna make decisions together.
And this has just been consistent throughout my two years on the Council.
Where it comes down to this and there's been decisions made by ANR without us and so I'm like a little bit. I don't really know how to move forward on this cancel with like because we're not abiding by. That was the, you know, like the the group agree.
I you know some I know who wrote them.
You know, like and we just adopted them.
But but what we adopted as a group, as an Advisory Council, was a consensus process.
And then we even went through that with the interagency committee around like.
Putting forward our own thoughts.
So I just would love to see like dedication to that.

Barrett, Kim 2:26:19

Yeah, we hear you.
And you know, again, Julia and I, they're they're just aspects of why those decisions were made in response to a lot of the real time things that were happening with the timeline shifting, things like that, budgeting that we don't have the authority to share.
So.
And I'm hoping that part of your response might include that.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:26:53
Can you speak more on that? Like I guess I'm confused by that.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:26:55
I can't.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:26:56
Like you don't have the authority to share information with us. Like, what's the point of having this Council?

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:27:04
Some of what you're asking me to speak to, I it's not appropriate for me in my position where I sit in this agency to share, and I fully support you all in asking.
And creating the motions and doing what you need to get the answers that you need.
And it's not that I don't agree with you.
Yeah. And I know that you, you know, working close partnership.
And familiar with.
State government and I, I would imagine that you understand where I'm coming from.
And I just wanna make sure Victor does that link that I shared work for you.

VD **Victor Davila/slingshot** 2:27:56
But you shared does work.
Thank you so much.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:27:59

Alright, perfect.
Thank you.

Victor Davila/slingshot 2:28:00
I did want to ask, given the delicate nature of your position, is there a particular person of authority or an agency that we should be kind of knocking on the branches on that you would suggest if that's possible?

Barrett, Kim 2:28:13
Yeah, great question.
And you haven't had the chance to meet our supervisor, Karla Raimundi, who's the director of the Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Unit.
She opted to not be a part of this meeting because this meeting was focused on the Advisory Council and wanting to respect the fact that we're, you know, trying to.
Use different methods of facilitation.
And so.
She's someone that you know you could always reach out to, and it also sounds like there's interest in in kicking this up even higher. And and if that's what you all choose to do, we we definitely think you should do that.
But as far as where coordinators both on the same level in this three person unit, our supervisor is Karla Raimundi.

Victor Davila/slingshot 2:29:08
Thank you.

Barrett, Kim 2:29:09
Yeah. And she also has CCD on that e-mail. The one that we had sent just kind of welcoming you onto the Advisory Council.

Victor Davila/slingshot 2:29:19
Much appreciated.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:30:29
I've put a alternative language in the chat.
I edited a little bit.

Barrett, Kim 2:30:34
I will still listen.
And Mariana Ju just said, I don't know if you all heard, but she's also editing.
I was just editing too, but I don't know.
No, no, go ahead.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:30:47
Nice. Yeah, good.

Barrett, Kim 2:30:48
I cannot read Jennifer's because I'm typing better.
Perhaps it's the same? Well, feel free to just send your so everyone has what you contribute, but I can move it up for you here.
Just wanna make sure your thoughts are represented as well.
Yeah, yeah. Up here I can.
I can raise OK.
Walter, if you're speaking, I think you're muted.

Brownridge, Walter 2:31:25
I'm sorry, Jennifer. Did you?
Is that your question at the end?
Do you want to take out the last?
Piece.
Around weighing in on the length.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:31:34
Yeah.

Brownridge, Walter 2:31:38
If.
I don't mind if we take it out, but if if we are requesting more time.
For approval.
What? Why wouldn't we want to at least take a look at that? As long as you know.
We we set a new date.

That's reasonable.
Yeah.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:32:00
I think I think the difference would be because if we're requesting change in the language, I imagine there's gonna have to be like a a closure of the current RFP. Reposting like that would be.

Brownridge, Walter 2:32:12
OK.
Yeah, alright. OK.
So then I agree with just yet. OK, that makes sense.
It makes sense to do that.
It makes sense to take out the last piece.
On the content.

Mariana Sears 2:32:50
I can I say something real quick.
I don't know if you're. Yeah, I just.
I kind of edited a little bit just to re present or just to focus on the distribution rather than in the development of the content just because I would be concerned that the process will be halted and I'm I'm not sure if it if that will be the.
Case but.
I'm I'm concerned that we will go back to scale square one.
And and that we may risk missing the deadline and losing the spons and also thinking that there will be another request or proposal for the Community engagement and there we can have an input.
And.
We can continue to have input in the in the in the rest of the process.
Just something to consider, but I'm happy to go with whatever the majority of the Council feels. It would be the right thing to do.
Because it wanted to explain my thinking.
That's all.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:34:30

Yeah, I'm. I'm just comparing Mariana, yours and and mine just above. And I think that makes a lot of sense in terms of.
At like you know, I I don't know if that's what people, it seems like that's what we're we're feeling is that we don't necessarily want to completely halt and revise this.
I just, you know, we haven't been able to review it, so it's hard to say if there's something. I know that it could have been, you know, just better informed if we were involved.
And but I do wanna make sure that we say this line we're requesting information.
On like how and by whom these decisions were made.
So I'm gonna maybe like, put another draft in the chat in a second.

Mariana Sears 2:35:25
Yeah, yeah. Jennifer, go ahead.
And I'm glad if you feel like that's important, Mike.
The only reason why I took it out, it's because I don't want us to be distracted, to be explained, a process that is old and that needs to change.
I'd rather stop the process and make it and redirect it as opposed to having them explaining us how they did. I personally am not interested in learning.
How and by whom?
I'm pretty sure that it's an old process.
To change and that's why this law is in place. So.
But I understand what you mean and it's it's it's it's completely important.
I just don't want that to be the destruction to the main thing, which would be actually sharing this with the rest of the the public, you know, with all that network of people that you think that could bring something new to the table.
That would be I I I rather have it short and concise with the hope that this will be distributed in other channels.
And not having a conversation on who made the decision then why it's like. But that's just me. Just I I'd rather you know, move forward with things. So in the hope that any change can be done. That's my hope because I feel very important the way you just.
Mentioned that network of people that can bring more meaningful impact and insight into this process.
So do we need to have somebody passing the motion again and do not that we have

the language?
Yeah. For the record, it might be helpful to read.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:37:50
Yeah, I just put another version in the chat.
And I I guess I'm. I'm curious, Miss Davis, if you have.
Because the how and by whom I I I wrote in there when you were speaking.
So it was something that you said that made me think of that.
That's that's just an important I think if we're gonna make change to an old process, it's good to understand what it is, you know.
So that's sort of my thinking around finding out since it's really unclear. Like who?
Did this and it seems like our like people aren't allowed to save somehow.
So I just don't understand like what's the secrecy and how can we get an answer and then and then also I wonder what you all think in terms of?
Like is there any other thing besides just extending the length of time?
Like, are there any other best practices that we would like to request that they follow in this procurement process?
I don't know Susanna, if you can hear her. Walter, if your hand is up.
Oh great.

Davis, Xusana 2:39:26
Yeah. I'm sorry. Sorry. Hi, Walter.

Brownridge, Walter 2:39:27
My hands.
My hands. My hands did not be up. But I mean, I agree with what you're saying. I don't.
I didn't wanna.
I didn't think I needed to add anything.

Davis, Xusana 2:39:41
Yeah, I am.
I am also listening and I think that.
You know, I take everybody's point.
I think maybe the question about how and why decisions were made perhaps is

something that I still would like to pursue internally that doesn't have to be the charge of this group because I recognize that we want to be forward-looking.
So I respect that and I don't feel wedded to either approach.
I will also say I've been.
This entire conversation. Really.
Wanting to to review my own participation because I don't know if you all knew this, but I am a chronic e-mail misser and so I just have the nagging sense that perhaps somewhere along the way I either was asked to or should have been.
Somehow looking at this internally, so I also am just going to have a chat.
With, with, with some of my staff, and we're just going to ask internally, did this come across?
Our radar. Did we miss something and?
Whether whether there's something that we can do to support at the agency level as well.
And then I'm seeing the the stuff in the chat, so that's just me trying to take ownership of what the possibility that I also may have dropped the ball.
Separately, I'm seeing stuff in the chat here about things like contracting best practices that I mentioned earlier.
Those are things that we tend to informally recommend.
We haven't.
We haven't gotten them on paper, even though we have sent a couple of formal recommendations to to agency leadership about making some of these things mandatory across the agencies.
That's a whole nother conversation that I'll say from my diary, but I am happy to pop a few of those in the chat if you want to include language about it, although.
A lot of it has less to do with putting the language in the document and more to do with how we conduct the process.
But I'll still throw a couple of bullets in the chat for you all to.
Peruse.

Mariana Sears 2:41:47
I'm just concerned about the time because it's 1:48 and we are ending the meeting at 2:00, so this would be.
Is this? Is this the right time to either motion vote or something before we run out of time time?

Brownridge, Walter 2:42:08
Call the question and press the vote on this.
With we're taking up that last piece about content.
With the.
With the changes that Jennifer and Mariam have, I think made.
And what we have, what we have in the chat that gets saved, doesn't it, Tim Julia.

Juliet Birch 2:42:38
We can save that, yes.

Brownridge, Walter 2:42:40
So that could be saved and then I think what we could do then if we vote on this now, then I guess before it goes out, it could be just proof you know?
And then you know, and paired with us to look and we could go out, but I think we could.
We could vote on it right now then.

Juliet Birch 2:43:01
The only thing I'll ask is that for folks who are like listening in to the meeting, recording or reading the transcript after the fact, before you all vote, if you could read what is your latest version of the draft, that would be really appreciated.

Brownridge, Walter 2:43:15
Yes, absolutely.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 2:43:19
Yeah, I I read the revised second third probably by Jennifer.
She incorporated Mariana's seditions to in that, and I think I would.
I would vote for the last part of her.

Mariana Sears 2:43:37
So we need someone to read it.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:43:42

I I can read it.
I'm kinda.
I'm wondering what suzanna's typing so I don't get ahead.

Davis, Xusana 2:43:50
I'll put the 1st 3IN now and keep going.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:43:53
OK, sweet.

Brownridge, Walter 2:43:53
Yeah.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:43:56
OK.
So what it says is we the environmental Justice Advisory Council, did not consent to the process of releasing the EJ mapping tool RFP.
We believe the decision made by ANR to release the RFP to only the approved contractor list violates the tenants of environmental justice and goes against the spirit of the environmental justice law of Vermont.
We are requesting information from state agency leadership on how and by whom the decisions were made to release the RFP for GIS support. The EJ mapping tool in order to ensure.
Robust, meaningful, equitable procurement process.
We're requesting that this public resource opportunity be shared with all members of the public and all potential contractors in alignment with the principles of Community engagement approved and published by the A/C on the date, and we would like to request an extension in the length of time this.
RFP is open.
And then I'm seeing these additional, you know, pieces and I wonder if there's more than just an extension of time that we want to add.
I'm.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her) 2:45:14
I wanna.

Yeah, yeah, I it's not related to what's going on here, but I felt that.
Susanna, that's an pronunciation of the name.
I'm sorry if I'm pronouncing it incorrectly. I think whenever she's like trying to speak, I think she has told her around and she's kind of conscious for that.
I just wanna put out there that most of like few of us are moms here and it's OK if you're speaking and told her is like crying.
In the background, at least, I wouldn't mind that.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:46:03
Folks should feel comfortable having their kids in the background.
We agree.
Thank you, myan.
Mar.
Yeah.

VD **Victor Davila/slingshot** 2:46:42
Are we now moving on to a vote with the remaining 5 minutes?

Mariana Sears 2:46:46
What are we?
What do we need to do now? If you guys would like to vote, we would welcome you to it.

Juliet Birch
And one other thing that would be helpful for us to wrap up before we finish the meeting would also be the meeting minutes from November of last year since we have quorum now.
Should we say all those in favor of the motion that Jennifer Read?
Class the language that Suzanne is drafting in the chat.
All those in favor of raise your hand.
Is that. There you go. OK.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:47:46
And I can circulate.
I mean, I put that Google Doc just now in the chat.

And I could circulate that to the e-mail list too.
So we can weigh in, but I'm I am putting in as bullets. What Susan is putting on in the chat.
And I'm also gonna maybe I'll pull from the connecting people to Power report as well.

Juliet Birch 2:48:10
Just to check in before we move on.
Mariam, are you in favor of this movement or are you abstaining?

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 2:48:20
No, no, I I am in favor of this.
I think I I spoke before you read it.

Juliet Birch 2:48:25
Great. Just wanted to double check.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 2:48:27
Thank you.

Juliet Birch 2:48:27
Sounds good.
So all Advisory Council members who are present.
Which is all Advisory Council members except for Trey, the representative from the Vermont.
Housing conservation board.
Sorry, my brain is leaving me.
And Rich, who's the representative for the Vermont Council for Native American Affairs.
All other members approve mm hmm.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:48:53
Correct.

Mariana Sears 2:48:55

For you and also we motion to approve the minutes of the November.
Meeting all those in favor, raise your hand.
Excellent.
Is there anyone not in favor of approving the meeting minutes?

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:49:31
I'm if if it has to be done right now, I'm gonna abstain.
I just wanna pull them up before.

Juliet Birch 2:49:43
OK.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:50:06
Are those minutes in the agenda? I'm looking at the e-mail you sent.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:50:14
They're linked the agenda.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:50:15
OK.
OK so.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:50:17
And we're also on the BJ resource library.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:50:23
Alright, I'm not sure where that is.
I'll look in the agenda. Here we go.
OK.
OK.
Yeah, I don't see.
We didn't discuss the mapping tool in November, it looks like.
Just wanted to confirm that, OK.
Right. Well, I approve these minutes as well.

Barrett, Kim 2:51:43
Sounded like Walter.
You outlined some next steps that would need to happen after this meeting.
I'm wondering if you all can be.
Can maybe figure out what those details are and share what you need from us.

Brownridge, Walter 2:52:01
Well, I just think the first thing if if we could get the the final copy emailed to us and everyone who's here on this call.
Commit to taking a look at that and.
I guess the question would be, how soon would we be able to get the e-mail?
Would it by next week sometime?
Is that possible and that?

Barrett, Kim 2:52:31
Copy of the motion in the chat or.

Brownridge, Walter 2:52:34
Yes, yes.
Final copy of the motion in the tab.

Mariana Sears 2:52:41
Jennifer, the document.

Byrne, Jennifer 2:52:42
I will often something out, right?

Brownridge, Walter 2:52:44
And then I'm just.
I'm just thinking, once we get that if if everyone could respond within.
24 or 48 hours. Enough time.
I think I think certainly two days, 48 hours, some receipt of from the in the e-mail being sent.
To reply back to Juliet and Kim.

On that, and then the and then I guess once that's and once it's distributed.
Then I think.
Someone.
From the Advisory Council.
Would would.
Be given the opportunity to follow up with, I guess this would be a a question on one level, I don't know to to Carla as the person who works for ANR and and is responsible for the civil rights.
Component of that.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:53:54
Yeah.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:53:55
To see what would follow up with what would be the next steps in this and I mean I ideally frankly would be if at least some or all of us could get a meeting.
Yes.
The secretary and I, and I suppose the question would be once we do this, you know who makes, who is the final decision on on extending.
This.
Deadline for the RFP and is, is that the Secretary and and if and Kim and Juliet, you probably don't have that ability, but we maybe Carla could make that inquiry and I think it's basically some people from our group will need to volunteer.
I'm willing to be one of those people.
That I would be more comfortable if someone else like Jennifer or someone else who has a lot more experience.
In this area would be involved in that.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:54:57
I just wanted to say that Julia and I as coordinators can share the Interagency Committee's emails with you, but we cannot distribute the motion that would be this is a, a, an official.

BW **Brownridge, Walter** 2:55:10

OK.
Correct.

Barrett, Kim 2:55:15
Action by you all. So you would just need to coordinate and you don't even need to include us on the emails of you coordinating around. Who's gonna send this.

Brownridge, Walter 2:55:24
Got it.

Barrett, Kim 2:55:27
So I can commit to sending you the ICS emails.
Yeah.

Brownridge, Walter 2:55:36
OK, OK.

Barrett, Kim 2:55:40
Hello I'm wonder. Thank you.

Brownridge, Walter 2:55:40
Yes, but if we if I know it's already after 2:00, if we could get the emails, then we could send them out directly. Yes. OK.

Barrett, Kim 2:55:53
OK, sounds good. Thank you all.

Brownridge, Walter 2:55:57
Thank you all very much.

Barrett, Kim 2:55:59
Thank you.
Have a good weekend.

VD **Victor Davila/slingshot** 2:56:00
Have a good one.

BJ **Byrne, Jennifer** 2:56:03
Thank you.

RJ **Ronis, Jenny** 2:56:06
Good work today guys.

MA **Maryam Shabbir Abbasi (she/her)** 2:56:08
Thank you.

BK **Barrett, Kim** 2:56:08
Thanks. See you later.

Barrett, Kim stopped transcription