

Minutes of the Sixty-Fifth Meeting of the  
**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE**

DATE: December 10, 2024

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

PLACE: Virtual Meeting

Members Present

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

Members Excused

Gina Sanchez Juarez ..... Director of Financial Stability, La Casa de Esperanza  
Keith Martin..... Construction Representative Senior, Wisconsin Department of Administration  
Jackie Schellinger ..... Indian Community Representative, Retired Judge

Guests Present

Madalena Maestri..... Civil Rights Program Manager, FHWA  
Katie Rosenberg..... Wisconsin Office of Environmental Justice  
Karyn Rotker..... Legal Action of Wisconsin

Commission Staff Present

Eric Lynde.....Chief Special Projects Planner  
Benjamin McKay ..... Deputy Director  
Nakeisha Payne..... Public Involvement and Outreach Manager  
Jennifer Sarnecki..... Deputy Chief Transportation Planner

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. McKay called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) to order at 5:10 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. He noted that Mr. Nelson was having technical difficulties joining the meeting and that he would chair the meeting until Mr. Nelson arrived.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2024**

Mr. McKay asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2024, meeting ([link](#)). Ms. McNeely moved, and Mr. Holz seconded the approval of the meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

## **PRESENTATION ON DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Ms. Payne and Mr. Lynde shared the updated draft Commission Community Engagement Plan (plan available [here](#); presentation available [here](#)). The following discussion occurred during the presentation:

1. In response to a question from Ms. McNeely regarding more virtual or interactive outreach methods, Mr. Lynde responded that the update to the draft Community Engagement Plan includes a greater focus on virtual methods of outreach. Ms. McNeely and Ms. Barrutia suggested that a podcast or video engagement could be effective methods of outreach. Mr. Lynde indicated that Commission staff has prepared videos for public engagement and intend to do more videos and visual outreach, particularly when considering outreach for the next major update of VISION 2050.
2. Ms. Brown-Martin indicated that utilizing AM talk radio, such as WNOV 860, can help get the word out and generate interest, particularly in Milwaukee's North Side neighborhoods.
3. In response to a question from Ms. Brown-Martin about the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for public involvement, Ms. Payne noted that the draft Community Engagement Plan includes performance metrics in Table 1, such as the number of outreach methods and participating individuals. Mr. McKay noted that Commission staff typically publish a record of public comments after each planning process, which includes the number of participants, outreach methods, comments, and responses to the input received.
4. Ms. Mendez Barrutia asked why seniors are not included as a specific group for public engagement. Mr. Lynde responded that the Commission's public engagement process includes an emphasis on groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the decision-making process. Mr. Lynde agreed with Ms. Mendez Barrutia that there may be an intersection between low-income populations and seniors. Ms. Payne noted that groups that focus on the needs of seniors are included in the Commission's primary organizations list, which will be reviewed later in the meeting.

[Secretary's Note: The draft Community Engagement Plan was updated to indicate under Ensuring Environmental Justice that, "Commission efforts extend to considering the needs of additional protected or disadvantaged population groups, including those protected under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (people with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency, seniors, LGBTQ+ people, and women)."]

5. In response to Ms. Mendez Barrutia requesting a visual to accompany the descriptions of how public involvement is conducted during planning processes under the Targeted Format and Frequency section, Mr. Lynde indicated that Commission staff will attempt to add an illustration of a sample process. Ms. Payne added that one intent of the draft Community Engagement Plan was to provide more visuals and improve the flow of the document.
6. In response to Ms. McNeely regarding the feedback on public outreach processes, Mr. McKay indicated that the specific comments received from outreach are documented in the record of public comments for individual plans. Ms. McNeely indicated that it would be helpful to understand what

participants thought about public outreach and recommended that Commission staff consider how to gather responses directly through an online portal.

7. In reference to the Incorporation of Public Input section, Mr. Nelson asked if public participation materials are documented on the website. Mr. Lynde responded that the input received during each public participation process is published on the Commission website.

## **REVIEW OF DRAFT PRIMARY ORGANIZATIONS LIST**

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Payne presented updates to the Primary Organizations list (available [here](#)). The following discussion occurred during the review:

1. Ms. Brown-Martin suggested adding Milwaukee County Housing First to the Primary Organizations list given their work assisting the homeless population, including recent efforts at park-ride lots.

[Secretary's Note: Commission staff researched Milwaukee Housing First and determined that it was a strategy within the Milwaukee County Health and Human Services rather than a stand-alone organization. Therefore, it has not been added to the Primary Organizations List.]

2. In response to an inquiry from Ms. Alkaff regarding Commission staff outreach to the Primary Organizations, Mr. McKay noted that the groups listed as primary organizations have more extensive outreach based on the number of contacts per year. Mr. McKay added that Commission staff have divided outreach duties based on location. Ms. Alkaff suggested updating the list with consistent references to which counties each organization represents. Mr. Lynde responded that Commission staff will review the list to ensure that locations of Primary Organizations are consistently referenced.
3. Ms. McNeely suggested that the list be organized by county and to indicate how many times each group is contacted. Ms. Payne noted that the draft Community Engagement Plan includes a table of performance metrics, including outreach goals for primary organizations. Mr. Lynde responded that the list of Primary Organizations includes the county that each group represents, and that staff would make sure the locations are consistently referenced, as previously discussed.
4. Ms. Adams suggested that additional groups be added to the Commission's list of secondary organizations, including the Kenosha Education Association and the Racine Education Association, given their work advocating for families.
5. Mr. Nelson inquired about the service areas for the African American Chamber of Commerce and the Wisconsin Black Chamber of Commerce. Mr. McKay responded that the Wisconsin Black Chamber of Commerce primarily serves Southeastern Wisconsin, and the African American Chamber of Commerce typically has a statewide focus.

[Secretary's Note: Comments from the EJTF were reviewed and updates are included in the final 2025 Primary Organizations list [here](#).]

## **PRESENTATION ON WISCONSIN OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES**

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Ms. Alkaff introduced Ms. Rosenberg who presented on current initiatives of the Wisconsin Office of Environmental Justice (available [here](#)). The following discussion occurred during the presentation:

1. Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Rosenberg for the presentation and Ms. Rosenberg offered to be a resource for the EJTF in the future.

## **REVIEW OF EJTF'S WORK IN 2024 AND PREVIEW OF 2025**

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Sarnecki reviewed closed action items from 2024 and discussed future topics and presentations for the Task Force in 2025 (available [here](#)). Ms. Sarnecki summarized the research conducted by Commission staff, resulting in the questions proposed for removal from the 2025 Action Item List. The following discussion occurred during the review:

1. Ms. Alkaff approved removing her question about gentrification from the 2025 Action Item List and noted that the resources shared may need updating in future planning processes.
2. Mr. Nelson requested that Commission staff contact Ms. Adams directly prior to removing the items she requested from the 2025 Action Item List.

[Secretary's Note: Commission staff confirmed with Ms. Adams that her requested items related to the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood, power outages, and Village Green Center updates could be removed from the 2025 Action Item List.]

3. Ms. Brown-Martin suggested that Commission staff coordinate with Milwaukee County Housing First staff when considering future agenda topics related to the housing and transportation needs of low-income seniors as requested by Ms. Schellinger, such as recent efforts to relocate individuals at Park-Ride Lots. In addition, she noted transportation programs operated by the Milwaukee County Department of Aging. Ms. Sarnecki indicated that recent research conducted by University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee urban planning students will also inform future agenda topics on housing and transportation needs for older adults and long-range planning efforts.

## **OVERVIEW OF COMPOSITION OF APPLICANTS FOR RECENTLY FILLED COMMISSION POSITIONS**

At Mr. Nelson's request, Mr. McKay shared that the Commission recently filled a biologist position with a white female. There were 26 applicants, one of whom reported they were a person of color.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. McKay stated that Commission staff worked with graduate students at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee's School of Architecture and Urban Planning to identify strategies to support older adults to inform the next major update of VISION 2050, the long-range transportation and land use plan for Southeastern Wisconsin. Commission staff will provide a summary of the four detailed reports at a future

meeting of the EJTF. The students' findings may also support future action items related to affordable housing and accessible transportation.

Mr. McKay shared that there will be virtual public involvement meetings for the draft Regional Natural Areas Plan on December 19 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., and that the interactive web tool is now available online (information available [here](#)).

#### **NEXT MEETING DATES**

Mr. Nelson indicated that meetings in 2025 are scheduled for March 11, June 10, September 9, and December 9. Mr. Lynde stated that Commission staff will send calendar invites to EJTF members and provide more details closer to each meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Nelson adjourned the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sarnecki  
Recording Secretary

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