



Environmental Protection Subcommittee

June 14, 2021

Minutes

The SHaPE SC Environmental Protection Subcommittee met on **June 14, 2021, at 2:00pm** virtually via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tommy Lavender and the following members were in attendance:

Attending virtually:

Tommy Lavender, Dr. Jeffery Allen, Art Braswell, Emily Cedzo, Rebecca Haynes, Jill Miller, Charles Gray, Mark Nix, Myra Reece, Gary Spires, Bill Stangler, Erika Hollis

Not in attendance:

John Durst, Michael Fields, Todd Glover, Sara Hazzard, Harold Mitchell, Ken Rentiers

Also, attending virtually were Lawra Boyce, Senior Consultant with the Office of Operational Excellence (DHEC), Bernie Hawkins, Facilitator (SHaPE SC), Cassandra Harris, Director of Strategy and Engagement (DHEC), Marshall Taylor, General Counsel (DHEC), and members of the public.

Item 1: Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Lavender called the meeting to order, welcomed members to the first subcommittee, and started the meeting by stating that notice of this meeting has been provided to all persons, organizations and news media, which have requested notification, as required by Section 30-4-80(e) of the South Carolina Code of Laws. He then directed subcommittee members to the agenda and asked if anyone had any comments to share before getting started. He then called upon Bernie Hawkins.

Item 2: Overview of Subcommittee Purpose and Process

Mr. Hawkins expressed his appreciation to everyone for agreeing to provide their participation in this process and their commitment of time. He stated that the primary goals for the day were to hear tips for meeting as a public body, get an overview of the environmental services provided in South Carolina, get an understanding of the specific goals of the task force and how the

subcommittee will carry out the important role of providing input to address those goals. He then called upon Marshall Taylor.

Mr. Taylor stated that the task force is an advisory committee and therefore it and any of its subcommittees are considered a public body and explained the process for holding public meetings.

Mr. Lavender reminded the members that all email communications related to SHaPE SC and this subcommittee are considered public documents and would need to be included should the agency receive a FOIA request. He then called upon Myra Reece.

Item 3: Overview of current environmental services in South Carolina

Ms. Reece expressed her appreciation for everyone's commitment to this committee and the environmental services that are provided to the communities across this state. She then shared a brief overview of DHEC's Environmental Affairs programs. She referred to materials that were provided to the subcommittee, specifically the Overview of Environmental Affairs, which lays out the basic environmental services offered by DHEC.

Ms. Reece stated that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) delegates authority to the states to implement federal environmental programs. She explained that the state agency has better knowledge of the unique needs of their state. She stated that unfortunately some states have had to return the environmental programs back to EPA due to inadequate funding from EPA and lack of other sources of revenue. She stated that EPA conducts audits of the state programs for air, land and waste, and water and SC is meeting its mission and goals for environmental protection.

Ms. Reece also added that one issue impacting all the states is lack of sustainable funding, explaining that the funding EPA provides the states to support the programs has not increased in 20 years. She further explained that oftentimes the states receive additional responsibilities and mandates from the federal government with no additional funds.

She stated that Environmental Affairs in its current structure includes 5 bureaus including OCRM. She also stated that one of the most critical challenges is losing a lot experienced staff and difficulties with recruitment and retention of trained staff. She concluded by saying she is looking forward to seeing the ideas and recommendations from this group. She then turned the meeting back over to Mr. Lavender.

Lavender asked if anyone had any questions for Reece. None were raised. Cassandra Harris indicated that organizational charts and other materials referenced by Ms. Reece will be posted on the SHaPE SC website.

Item 4: Subcommittee Input Process and Next Steps

Mr. Hawkins reviewed the purpose, mission, and goals for the task force, which are intended to be carried out at the subcommittee level. He explained that there are three (3) subcommittees – environmental protection, health, and behavioral health – which will be generating input that can be consolidated into consensus-driven recommendations.

Referring to the SHaPE SC Charter, Mr. Hawkins further stated that the purpose of the effort is to receive input from a wide range of customers, stakeholders, and public that receive these services, to look at how they are being provided currently and how they could be improved moving forward. He reiterated that the mission and goal of SHaPE SC is to evaluate the state's current health and environmental services, including how those services are currently being delivered within and across existing agencies, and to make recommendations to the Board, General Assembly, and the Governor on how state resources can be maximized to improve quality of life for South Carolinians. He referred to the Charter and stated the process must be consensus-driven and focused on improving current services, restructuring services within the existing organizational units, or realigning agency services and how they interact. He stated that all possibilities should be considered and should be data-driven and take into account all available information including national standards and best practices.

He stated that verbal and written input should be solicited from affected organizations, entities, individuals, etc., who interact with DHEC and the other agencies who provide these services. Mr. Hawkins stated that the process for how each subcommittee will go about arriving at their recommendations is not formally prescribed, and that there is no expectation that the subcommittees will function in an identical fashion. He also stated that there are no preconceived notions within the task force about the anticipated input or conclusions.

Based on requests from members after the last task force meeting held on June 3, 2021, he shared that the task force leadership developed the Subcommittee Input document as a tool to assist with gathering input, but not a requirement for the subcommittees to use. He then proceeded to go through the Subcommittee Input document, which starts with guidance and context and then provides questions for the subcommittees to consider based on three main topics: **(1)** Present delivery of services – how and how well is DHEC currently delivering services, **(2)** Greatest future challenges – referencing many of the items Ms. Reece mentioned earlier, and **(3)** Recommendations for a bright tomorrow – what should be preserved, changed, and how.

Mr. Hawkins also demonstrated a PowerPoint template that the subcommittee could use to provide a high-level summary of its findings to present to task force leadership in late June. Mr. Hawkins asked for questions.

Item 5: Other ideas and suggestions

The subcommittee had some discussion of how the subcommittee will provide input and discuss. Mr. Lavender suggested that healthy discussion and exchange of ideas may be best suited for an in-person meeting. Mr. Lavender proposed that members should review and digest the questions so the subcommittee can have further discussion at an in-person meeting in a few weeks. The subcommittee agreed to spend the next couple of weeks reviewing the input questions and be prepared to discuss each question in person at the next meeting, at which point the discussion will be recorded and compiled into a cohesive summary.

The subcommittee members agreed to provide the clerk their availability the week of June 28 so that the date and time for the next meeting can be determined.

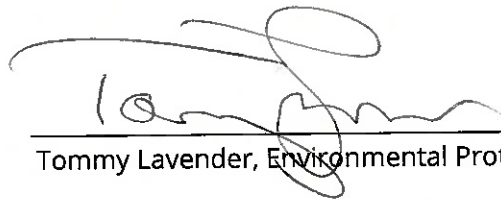
Being no further business, Subcommittee Chair Lavender adjourned the meeting.

After the meeting, subcommittee members will:

- review and digest the input questions and
- provide their availability for the week of June 28 to the subcommittee clerk so that the next meeting can be scheduled in person.

Based on post-meeting feedback provided by the members, the next Environmental Protection subcommittee meeting is **scheduled to be held in-person on July 1.**

Recordings of Task Force and Subcommittee meetings can be found at the SHaPE SC website.



Tommy Lavender, Environmental Protection Subcommittee Chair
SHaPE SC
July 1, 2021