

Environment Council of Rhode Island



Virtual Meeting, via Zoom

May 4, 2020, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Priscilla De La Cruz, Mal Skowron, Kathie Gibson, Sue Korte, Jerry Elmer, Judee Burr, Jeanine Silversmith, Everett Pope, Christopher Hamblett, Peter Trafton, Laura Landon, Gregory Schultz, Paige Therien, Angie Koziera, Jerry Elmer, Paul Beaudette, Sue Anderbois, Greg Gerrit, Lisa Petrie, Hank Webster, David Veliz, Court King

Agenda:

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. President's Report
- III. Approval of March Minutes
- IV. Presentation about Green Justice Zones
- V. Office Report
- VI. Policy Report

Minutes

Priscilla opens the meeting at 5:30 pm.

I. Welcome and Introductions (all)

- Participants introduce themselves on zoom

II. President's Report

- Priscilla goes over recent ECRI successes – transitioning to online meeting, releasing an op-ed in ecoRI news, contributing to the effort to successfully get the governor to acknowledge
- Priscilla discusses \$10K award from National Wildlife Federation, to be used for strategic planning and as a matching grant
- Laura from the nominations committee gives a report – aiming to elect officers next year. Committed roles for next year are: Priscilla as President, Sue and Mal will continue as VP Communications, Eugenia Marks will continue, Greg will continue as NWF delegate. ECRI is seeking a new Treasurer, Secretary, VP Development, and 2 more people from the nominating committee.

- Link to the ECRI bylaws: <https://www.environmentcouncilri.org/content/ecri-bylaws>
- Contact Laura Landen with recommendations for new officer role candidates

III. Approval of March Minutes (Due to the Pandemic, April's meeting was cancelled)

- Paul Beaudette moves to accept the minutes, Jerry Elmer will second the motion. No abstentions or oppositions. Minutes are approved.

IV. Presentation about Green Justice Zones (Court King)

- 1790 – Samuel Slater and Moses Brown opened first cotton spinning factory. Providence and RI were a hub for a slave trade. Context for injustices today.
- Industrialization and pollution that comes with it creating negative environmental impacts.
- Sea level rise will dramatically impact providence.
- Court’s role is to help with community implementation of the City of Providence’s Climate Justice Plan.
- Shows slide of select Climate Action Milestones for RI.
- The Climate Justice Plan was crafted in partnership with the Office of Sustainability’s Racial and Environmental Justice Committee and with Providence residents most impacted by environmental harm. The city of Providence is working to reach back out to communities at the frontline of climate change impacts – that’s the centering of Green Justice Zones (these zones are an idea that came out of Minneapolis).
- Negative environmental impacts that harm communities living in these zones include high levels of asthma, high levels of lead in blood, and other key indicators.
- Read the climate justice plan and listen to “Future Stories” – what would Providence be like if communities had what they needed to thrive?
- There are important roles for frontline community members and for allies to amplify the work that’s being done.
- Court answers questions.
- Find the climate justice plan here: <https://www.providenceri.gov/sustainability/climate-justice-action-plan-providence/>

V. Office Report (Greg Gerritt)

- Giving out refunds for the compost conference
- Greg is delivering raffle prizes from Tisdale Award Raffle Tickets
- Annual meeting will be in one month – How do we create a more just community? Speakers: Amelia Rose, Groundwork RI; Jim Vincent, President of RI Chapter of RI NAACP; Marcella Bettencourt, RI Latino Arts; and moderator will be Joanna Detz from ecoRI news
- Priscilla and Greg have been having more conversations about how to manage ECRI, including how to be more virtual

VI. Policy Report (Mal Skowron)

- Mal report on behalf of the Climate Crisis Campaign: Goal is to get more people active on climate
- Thinking about how to give people the tools to host virtual house parties to discuss climate change

- Act on Climate Bill: Janet Coit testified in support of the Act on Climate Bill. ECRI also released an op-ed connecting the pandemic and the environment
- The Climate Crisis Campaign website is here. You can follow the campaign by signing the statement as an individual: <https://www.riclimatetcrisis.org/>
If you'd like to get involved with planning future events, you can join the communications committee by emailing Mal at mal@greenenergyconsumers.org
- PolComm has recommended bills for ECRI to take a stand on.
- Jerry moves to approve the ECRI agenda as recommended by PolComm, Laura Landen seconds. All approve, no votes in opposition, no abstentions.
- See <https://www.environmentcouncilri.org/content/ecri-calendar> for green events in Rhode Island

Attendees make announcements on upcoming events.

Priscilla closes the meeting at 6:57 pm.