



Environmental Protection Subcommittee

August 24, 2021

Minutes

The SHaPE SC Environmental Protection Subcommittee met virtually on **August 24, 2021, at 1:30 pm**. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tommy Lavender, Subcommittee Chair, and the following members were in attendance:

Tommy Lavender, Dr. Jeffery Allen, Art Braswell, Emily Cedzo, Erika Hollis, Jill Miller, Mark Nix, Myra Reece, Gary Spires, Bill Stangler, Ken Rentiers.

Not in attendance:

John Durst, Michael Fields, Todd Glover, Rebecca Haynes, Sara Hazzard, Clint Leach, Harold Mitchell Jr.

Also in attendance were Bernie Hawkins, Facilitator (SHaPE SC); Cassandra Harris, DHEC's Director of Strategy and Engagement; Lawra Boyce, Senior Consultant with DHEC's Office of Operational Excellence; Darbi MacPhail, DHEC's Chief Finance and Operations Officer; Katie Titus, SC Chamber of Commerce; and members of the public.

Item 1: Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Lavender called the meeting to order, welcomed members to the meeting, and started the meeting by stating that notice of this meeting was 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.

Item 2: Discussion of follow-up items (DHEC EA financial materials)

Mr. Lavender then directed members to the financial materials, which had been previously provided. Mr. Lavender asked the members if they had questions or would like to discuss anything related to the financial documents. The subcommittee asked Darbi MacPhail, DHEC's Chief Financial Officer, several questions about how DHEC funds its operations, budget requests and state

appropriations from previous years, and the budget request process. Ms. Reece pointed out that the environmental programs in other southeastern states are more largely supported by fees.

Item 3: Discussion of EP Subcommittee Initial Input and Recommendations document

Mr. Lavender directed members to the Initial Input and Recommendations document, asking each member if any edits or additions were needed. Members had a few comments and additions, as noted below. The comments were discussed, and edits were agreed upon.

Section #1 – Present Service Delivery

Mr. Lavender directed members through Section #1, asking for any input or suggested edits to the answers drafted for each question. Mr. Rentiers agreed that lack of sustainable funding is a common issue. Mr. Braswell suggested including other science-based careers, such as chemists and biologists. Several other members agreed with this addition. Dr. Allen suggested wording about the process for prioritizing budget requests to ensure that environmental program budget requests are given full consideration among the requests of the other parts of the agency. Ms. Hollis indicated that maintaining recreational water standards, which are established and enforced to protect public health, is an example of coordination of environmental and public health. Ms. Miller suggested wording indicating that the items raised by the subcommittee are not all-encompassing. Mr. Rentiers stated that the consolidation is poorly timed in the middle of the planning process, and that the current partnership is working well.

Section #2 – Greatest Future Challenges

Mr. Lavender asked members for any input or suggested edits to the answer drafted for the question listed in Section #2. The subcommittee had no edits.

Section #3 – Recommendations for a Bright Tomorrow

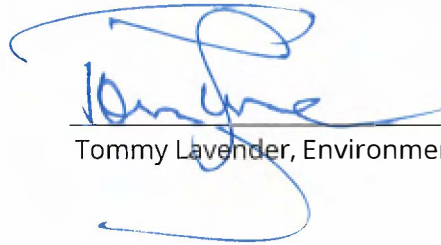
Mr. Lavender directed members through Section #3, asking for any input or suggested edits to the answers drafted for each question. The subcommittee discussed the desire to retain existing knowledgeable and experienced staff but was unable to determine how to improve current funding and resources. Mr. Braswell reminded the subcommittee of previous discussions about creating a career track for scientists and other professional careers that provides opportunities for advancement and growth in their field rather than moving into management positions. Members agreed with this addition. Mr. Braswell suggested evaluating the use of fees to support the environmental programs, similar to the method used by other states, as demonstrated in the materials previously provided. The subcommittee discussed the fact that, while it has no formal recommendations at this time, it should be noted that it has discussed a few possibilities of realignment and restructuring within the existing agencies and has not reached consensus. The subcommittee does not have any formal recommendation for realignment and feels that priority should be placed on getting adequate funding and support to the existing mission-critical programs.

Item 4: Closing Comments and Next Steps

Mr. Lavender suggested revising the *Subcommittee Input* document based on today's discussions and sending it back to the members for any final edits.

Based on feedback from today's meeting, a document will be produced for the subcommittee's review prior to the full task force meeting on September 17, 2021.

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



Tommy Lavender, Environmental Protection Subcommittee Chair

SHaPE SC
October 7, 2021