

Adopted Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

September 24, 2024

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJusticeCouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)
- Tatiana Brown
- AJ Dotzauer on behalf of the Honorable Misty Napeahi
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)
- Running-Grass
- Aurora Martin
- David Mendoza
- Esther Min
- Todd Mitchell
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- The Honorable Monica Tonasket
- Raeshawna Ware
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur
- Maria Blancas

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- Rosalinda Guillen

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Lea Anne Burke, Puget Sound Partnership
- Michael Furze, Department of Commerce

- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture
- Eliseo (EJ) Juárez, Department of Natural Resources
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation
- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Angie Ellis
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Rowena Pineda
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

Guests and other participants:

- John Bergin, The Lands Council
- Annie Cooper, The Lands Council
- Cristina González, Latino Community Fund of Washington

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Maria Batayola, Council Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. Rowena Pineda, Council staff, facilitated roll call. An initial quorum was established.

16 Members / 0 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 9		
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Present
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown	Youth Community Representative	Present
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Present
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Present
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Absent
Aurora Martin	Community Representative	Present
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Present
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Present

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Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Present
AJ Dotzauer On behalf of The Honorable Misty Napeahi	Tribal Representative	Present
Faaluaia Pritchard	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	Present
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Present

II. Approval of Agenda by Council

Aurora Martin, Council Member, facilitated adoption of the agenda.

Motion: The Council adopts the agenda.

No objections noted. **The motion passed.**

III. Approval of May 3, July 2, and July 25, 2024 Meeting Notes by Council

Member Martin said the Council had minutes from the past three meetings to adopt.

Motion: The Council adopts the meeting notes for May 3, July 2, and July 25, 2024.

Motion/Second: Todd Mitchell/The Honorable Monica Tonasket

No objections noted. **The motion passed.**

IV. Public Comment

Faduma Fido, People’s Economy Lab, asked for support for Community Assemblies. She said the pilot project kicked off in August. She thanked the Council for its funding recommendation last year. She said the first session is being convened in Walla Walla today. She said because they are just beginning, there are relationships to build, and they want to identify other agencies to engage. They will continue to share updates.

Martha Lucas, Executive Director of WA State Coalition of African Community Leaders, is appreciative of the funding in support of benefitting vulnerable communities and hopes the funding will continue. Their work is multi-generational. She is hoping that it is not just one-time funding.

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David Bulindah, Wakulima USA, said their organization supports East African immigrants. He acknowledged the HEAL Act and the support the community is receiving. He appreciates the outreach being conducted in their own language. They provide resources and information in ways that are relevant to the community. They said the HEAL Act is benefitting their communities.

Howard Greenwich, Research Director, Puget Sound Sage, said they have been helping to build a climate justice movement. They support the budget recommendations, and in particular, the statewide energy assistance pilot program. They know most assistance programs don't reach eligible households. They think investor-owned utilities should support assistance. They agree with a pilot program to see if it can work.

Ruel Olanday Jr., Equitable Recovery and Reconciliation Alliance (ERRA), said their organization is a regional think tank to advance equity and social justice. They said they support the proposal for \$5 million for Community Assemblies, adding that the work is needed and they know it is working. They shared how the work is bringing BIPOC communities from across the state (Spokane and King County) together.

Toshiko Hasegawa, Yonsei Consulting, said she represents a public affairs consulting firm that has been retained by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. They are advising on a green fertilizer grant program, which is not a significant agency action, though the outcome would be the establishment of a green fertilizer program. They have done the analysis of potential health benefits and identified relevant vulnerable populations and overburdened communities. They have a report due in November that will be publicly available. She thanked EJ Council Members for joining office hours that they held to share information about the grant program.

Bea Covington said she works in partnership with the Toshiko Hasegawa (previous speaker) to understand the models that might be employed to support a grant program or other subsidy

program that might be recommended to the Washington State Department of Agriculture. They will share their contact information.

Jackie Vaughn, Executive Director, Surge Reproductive Justice, said their organization is a Black and Queer led organization and they are a recipient of the HEAL grant. They expressed support for the capacity building grants that allow organizations that work on reproductive justice to connect their work to environmental justice. They said there is a direct connection between health and community resilience and community power. They said the grant has helped them build capacity and contribute their insights. They hope the funding continues to be invested into the community so they can continue to participate and lead.

Ezana, Youth Coach, Washington State Coalition of African Community Leaders, and they have a program called the Evergreen Environmental Justice Warrior Program. They are comprised of youth from 8 to 23 years old to find solutions to climate issues in their communities. They mentioned heat and smoke, soil degradation, lack of trees, and the youth are noticing and challenging these issues. They said the grant from the Department of Health is allowing them to continue with their work. They hope the funding will continue.

V. Discussion and Possible Adoption: 2025 Environmental Justice Council Budget Recommendations

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff, said that the draft budget proposals have been available since September 14 and that each Member has had the opportunity to meet with staff one-on-one for a briefing. Sierra asked Members to identify any proposals that they didn't feel were ready for adoption, that needed further discussion, or that required any Member to recuse themselves. The Council first adopted the recommendations where full Council consensus had been reached and where no Members needed to recuse themselves. They next discussed each budget recommendation, made changes as needed, and passed motions adopting the recommendations.

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Motion 1: The Environmental Justice Council adopts the following 2025 Budget Recommendations as submitted on September 26, 2024: **1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 12**

The Council directs staff to work with Council Members, the Governor’s Office, the Office of Financial Management, relevant agencies, and others as needed to continue to refine the budget estimates and other details while centering the intent of the recommendations adopted today.

The Council directs staff to submit the recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2025-2027 biennial budget.

Motion/Section: Maria Batayola/David Mendoza

The Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

16 Members / 0 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	A
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	A
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	A
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	A
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Absent
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Aurora Martin	Community Representative	A

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Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
AJ Dotzauer On behalf of The Honorable Misty Napeahi	Tribal Representative	A
Tatiana Brown	Youth Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent

Motion 2: The Environmental Justice Council adopts the following 2025 Budget Recommendations with any amendments agreed to by the full Council on September 26, 2024: **4, 5, and 7**

The Council directs staff to work with Council Members, the Governor’s Office, the Office of Financial Management, relevant agencies, and others as needed to continue to refine the budget estimates and other details while centering the intent of the recommendations adopted today.

The Council directs staff to submit the recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2025-2027 biennial budget.

Motion/Section: AJ Dotzauer/Tatiana Brown

The Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

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16 Members / 0 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	A
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	A
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	A
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	A
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Absent
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Aurora Martin	Community Representative	Absent
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
AJ Dotzauer On behalf of The Honorable Misty Napeahi	Tribal Representative	A
Tatiana Brown	Youth Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent

Motion 3: The Environmental Justice Council adopts the following 2025 Budget Recommendations with any amendments agreed to by the full Council on September 26, 2024: **10 and 13**

The Council directs staff to work with Council Members, the Governor’s Office, the Office of Financial Management, relevant agencies, and others as needed to continue to refine the budget estimates and other details while centering the intent of the recommendations adopted today.

The Council directs staff to submit the recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2025-2027 biennial budget.

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Motion/Section: Lua Pritchard/Esther Min

The Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

16 Members / 0 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	A
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Absent
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	A
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Aurora Martin	Community Representative	Absent
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
AJ Dotzauer On behalf of The Honorable Misty Napeahi	Tribal Representative	A
Tatiana Brown	Youth Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	A
Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent

Motion 4: The Environmental Justice Council adopts the following 2025 Budget Recommendations with any amendments agreed to by the full Council on September 26, 2024: **11**

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The Council directs staff to work with Council Members, the Governor’s Office, the Office of Financial Management, relevant agencies, and others as needed to continue to refine the budget estimates and other details while centering the intent of the recommendations adopted today.

The Council directs staff to submit the recommendations to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2025-2027 biennial budget.

Motion/Section: Lua Pritchard/Tatiana Brown

The Motion Passed

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

16 Members / 0 Vacancies / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	A
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	A
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Absent
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	A
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	F
Aurora Martin	Community Representative	Absent
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Interim Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
AJ Dotzauer On behalf of The Honorable Misty Napeahi	Tribal Representative	A

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Tatiana Brown	Youth Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	A
Maria Batayola (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent

VI. Briefing and Discussion: 2025 EJ Council Legislative Policy Statement and Procedure

The Council did not have time to discuss this item.

VII. Discussion and Possible Adoption: EJ Council 2025 Meeting Schedule

The Council did not have time to discuss this item.

VIII. Update: Governance Committee Work

The Council did not have time to discuss this item.

IX. Update: EJ Council 2025 Budget Request

The Council did not have time to discuss this item.

X. EJ Council Community Connection

Co-Chair Batayola said the goals of this agenda item are to learn from Tribes and community groups about EJ issues, ideas, and solutions in their communities. Sierra Red Bow, Council Staff, introduced the presenters.

Cristina González, Director of Community Mobilization and Strategic Partnerships for the Latino Community Fund of Washington said they have convened cohorts for wildfire preparedness and leadership development. She provided information about the Latino Community Fund’s mission. They educate community about wildfire resilience and all the cohorts are in Spanish only. Participants receive a stipend and childcare is provided. She provided facts and data about the impacts of wildfires in the state. She also shared community-identified concerns and needs. Raeshawna Ware, Council Member, asked if the program could lead to career opportunities. Cristina González said some participants volunteer and they provide stipends for those services.

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John Bergin and Annie Cooper from The Lands Council provided background information on the organization. They shared information about a program to build awareness of the Spokane River toxins and the health risks that they pose to economically disadvantaged communities. They shared information on PCBs and heavy metals (e.g., lead and arsenic) and guidance on how community members can fish, where they can fish, and how much fish they can eat safely. They shared information on how to reduce exposure to heavy metals. They shared some results from their surveys. They finished by saying that the health of the river is improving.

XI. Public Comment

No additional public comments were provided.

XII. Appreciations and Adjournment

Co-Chair Batayola thanked participants and thanked Members for their contributions to the discussions.