

AB 617 Consultation Group Meeting

January 25, 2022, 9 am- 12pm

DRAFT Summary

Meeting in Brief

The primary focus of this meeting was the People's Blueprint Chapters 3 and 4, which address governance and training, respectively. The Consultation Group (CG) asked questions and provided comments and suggestions related to these chapters and the topics covered therein. These discussions will inform development of the AB 617 Program Blueprint update.

In addition, California Air Resources Board (CARB) Office of Community Air Protection (OCAP) staff provided updates about upcoming Board activities relevant to AB 617 and reviewed the status of Community Air Grants. A work plan for continuing CG review of the People's Blueprint was introduced.

Next Meeting: April 1, 2022, 2 – 5 pm

Action Items

- CG members:
 - Email **comments on November meeting notes** to Lilliana Nuñez by January 31, 2022 (extended to February 4, 2022).
 - Email Lilliana to express interest in participating on a **Governance Ad hoc Workgroup**. This workgroup will develop a draft charter for review and consideration by the CG.
 - Email Lilliana to express interest in attending an agenda setting meeting for the April 1, 2022 CG meeting.
 - Review People's Blueprint Chapters 5 and 6 in preparation for the April 1 meeting.
- CARB:
 - Schedule agenda setting meeting for April 1 meeting.
 - Provide meeting materials to CG with sufficient time for review.

Updates

Upcoming AB 617 CARB Board Meeting Activities

- At CARB's February 10, 2022 Board meeting, OCAP will recommend two additional communities for participation in the AB 617 program and highlight resources needed to support communities.
- At the May 19, 2022 Board meeting, OCAP will provide a status report on the AB 617 statewide strategy (Program Blueprint). This will be an informational item with an opportunity for dialogue with the Board. OCAP plans to organize a representative panel of CG members for this discussion.

Community Air Grants

Community Air Grants (CAG) are intended to fund community-driven efforts to reduce air pollution exposure in the most impacted areas. They support strategies developed by AB 617 communities to measure and reduce air pollution. CAGs help awardees (community-based organizations and tribes throughout the State) build capacity and participate in the AB 617 process. To date, 50 projects have received CAGs. Thirty-nine projects have been selected to receive CAGs this year.

Administrative Requests

Roll Call

The CG meeting platform was recently changed from Zoom Meeting to Zoom Webinar. Zoom Webinar may not show members of the public which CG members are present, to rectify this, a CG member recommended that roll call be taken at the beginning of all CG meetings. Roll was taken as a result and Dr. Balmes was supportive of continuing this practice.

Meeting Materials Review

A CG member expressed that members were given insufficient time to review and provide feedback on meeting materials prior to this meeting. The facilitator acknowledged the short timeframe for this meeting and the goal to provide sufficient time for CG member review and input on meeting materials going forward.

People's Blueprint Review Process and Timeline

The People's Blueprint, along with comments received from the CG and public, will significantly inform CARB's development of the Program Blueprint update. As shown on the draft work plan prepared for this meeting ([Consultation Group Work Plan link](#)), the CG will continue to review and discuss the People's Blueprint during the next three meetings (April, May, and July). The plan calls for reviewing two chapters at each meeting, such that the CG's review will be completed at the July 2022 CG meeting.

CG Discussion of People's Blueprint Chapter 3: Governance

This summary identifies comments, suggestions, and questions on Chapters 3 and 4. The discussion was intended to gather all viewpoints, not to develop consensus opinions. As such, this summary lists all viewpoints expressed.

Chapter 3 addresses governance of Community Steering Committees (CSC) and collaborative problem solving. Discussion by the CG centered around CSC membership and co-leadership.

Forming an Effective CSC (Membership)

CG members expressed the following comments and suggestions regarding CSC membership:

- A majority of CSC members (at least 51%) must be community members. Establish policy to ensure that environmental justice drives the process.
- Ensure that the number of CSC members allows the committee to function efficiently.

- Use examples of governance models that have worked, are familiar to non-profit organizations, and facilitate success.
- Clear agreements will lead to the best collaboration.
- Clarify how industry can be included in CSCs, perhaps in an ad hoc group. In Richmond, industry representatives participate but do not have a voting role.
- Clarify how membership that reflects the community is accomplished.
- Include scientific community and labor representatives on CSCs to address labor health implications.
 - Include some level of industry representation to get their input early (and head off potential legal conflicts).
- Air districts play a necessary and important role for CSCs.

Establishing Charters and Governing Structures

Co-Leadership

Dr. Balmes, CG Chair, expressed his personal view that co-leadership is a key principle of CSC governance. He would like to elevate it as high as legal and feasibility constraints allow.

CG members made the following comments and suggestions:

- West Oakland, Imperial County, and San Bernardino (noted in footnote 23 on page 14 of the People’s Blueprint) provide examples for co-leadership best practices.
- One model for co-leadership includes three co-lead categories: environmental justice, resident, and air district. The environmental justice and resident co-leads are elected by the CSC.
- Materials must be provided to CSC co-leaders prior to publication and with ample time for them to do their work in preparing for upcoming meetings.
- Establish co-chairs who represent an environmental perspective.
- Establish agreement on qualifications for co-leads and how they fit into the CSC structure.
- Consider subcommittees to address specific issues and an executive committee for the overall process.

Conveners

- Clarify the term “convener.”
- Clarify who are the conveners.
- Communities/community-based organizations may be the initial conveners. Madera and Stanislaus provide examples of processes that began with community residents. Communities may invite the air district and others (e.g., land use agencies) for subject matter expertise.
- The convener may vary at different stages in the process.

Conflict of Interest Policy

- A strong conflict of interest policy is key to ensuring equity.

Compensation for Community Members

- Community members who serve on CSCs should be compensated for their time.

Conflict Resolution

- Clarify and provide context for removal of a CSC member in the CSC charter or other governing document.

Public Comments on People's Blueprint Chapter 3: Governance

- Co-leadership could vary depending on the activity occurring at the time.
- The people who are trying to resolve environmental issues in their communities should have a leadership role in that process. Disproportionate COVID 19 impacts exemplify such issues. Impacts to fence-line communities are caused by land use, planning, and environmental issues. The decision-making process to address these impacts must be led by those directly affected.
 - There is a reluctance to make tough decisions about these issues. It is imperative that air pollution impacts be reduced in a timely manner.
 - Local issues differ for each community. Prioritize issues identified by the community.
- West Oakland provides a model for power-sharing in which the community has equal decision-making power. It took a year-and-a-half of honest discussions to develop this arrangement. Achieving effective co-leadership required a formal protocol on roles and responsibilities.
- Address the disconnect between the roles of air districts and CSCs as set forth in the legislation and the desire to have CSCs at the forefront of decision-making. The AB 617 legislation identifies air districts as the decision-makers and the CSCs as the consultant. Consider future legislative actions to align statutory guidelines with the desired CSC roles.
- Conflict resolution and conflict of interest policies (listed as recommended in the People's Blueprint) should be required.
- Provide more clarity on the authorities of CARB and air districts.
- CARB should establish conflict of interest and dispute resolution guidelines, for example, how to navigate conflicts around funding.

Discussion of People's Blueprint Chapter 4: Readiness for Partnership and Collaboration (Training)

Chapter 4 addresses the need for training of AB 617 participants in order to create a common base of knowledge and understanding. It recommends core training topics for agencies (CARB, air districts, and

others) and community representatives; essential competencies for agencies; and ongoing learning opportunities.

Dr. Balmes noted that CARB recognizes the essential need for training and is committed to the general principle of training in the areas identified in Chapter 4.

The CG identified a number of questions about the design and implementation of training, including:

- Would the format for training be online or in-person?
- Who would develop the training curriculum? Would CARB develop standard training?
- Would training be uniform for all CSCs or adapted by air district or region? If there is no uniform standard training, what kind of guidance will there be to ensure that everyone is getting the requisite baseline?
- Would community members be compensated for training time? Would training be stipend-eligible?
- At what point within the AB 617 implementation timeline would training be conducted?
- How can CARB's research efforts be used to address issues of equity, such as disparities in pollution exposure, and tied into the AB 617 process?

CG members offered the following comments and suggestions:

- Education, training, and capacity building are very important for agency staff and CSC members.
- Additional resources are needed to support training.
 - Air districts need to bring in and/or work with people who have the necessary skill sets and expertise to implement education and capacity building. These include experts in popular education and adult learning and people who are familiar working with multi-lingual communities.
 - Separate training from the grant process.
- Adjust AB 617 timelines to accommodate training. There is a steep learning curve and currently a tight timeline for AB 617 implementation.
- Clarify terms used in the People's Blueprint, such as "active listening."
- Include elected officials at key agencies (e.g., city council, school board, county supervisor) early in the education and training process.
- Identify and share lists of existing trainings that could be used to support AB 617 training.
 - A research assistant could find curriculum that has already been developed.

Public Comment on Chapter 4

- Include conflict resolution and conflict of interest (including disclosures and recusals) in training.

- Provide training and resources for communities to engage in participatory budgeting.
- Training on AB 617 should include public officials (especially newly elected officials) who are making decisions.

Public Comment on Other Topics

- As the program evolves, carry forward equity and justice principles contained in Chapter 2 of the People’s Blueprint, including instituting equity analysis for substantive actions and plans.
 - CARB has expressed a commitment to racial equity and social justice. However, it has rejected requests for equity analyses regarding AB 32 made by the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee.
 - Serious and systematic attention to racial equity and justice are already required under federal and state law, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and corresponding requirements under California Code Section 11135, for any agency or other entity receiving any federal or state funding or other assistance.
- Resources for sharing best practices developed at a statewide convening conducted by the University of California, Davis is available on CARB’s website here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/community-engagement-resources/ab-617-convening-materials>. The report and survey of participants are available, and the videos will be posted soon.

Appendix A: Attendee List

First	Last	Title	Organization
Consultation Group Members			
Gustavo	Aguirre Jr.	Kern County Director	Central California Environmental Justice Network
Martha Dina	Argüello	Executive Director	Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles (PSR-LA)
John	Balmes, MD	Professor / CARB Board member	University of California, San Francisco and Berkeley
Will	Barrett	Senior Director of Policy and Advocacy	American Lung Association
Veronica	Eady *	Senior Deputy Executive Officer of Policy & Equity	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Jana	Ganion	Sustainability and Government Affairs Director	Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe
Ms. Margaret	Gordon	Co-Director	West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project
Kevin	Hamilton	Chief Executive Officer	Central California Asthma Collaborative
Ryan	Hayashi *	Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
Michael	Jerrett, PhD	Professor	University of California, Los Angeles
Michael	Kleinman, PhD	Professor / Chair	University of California, Irvine/Chair, Scientific Review Panel
Tung	Le	Executive Director	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA)
Erica	Manuel	CEO & Executive Director	Institute for Local Government
Kathryn	Higgins *	Senior Manager	South Coast Air Quality Management District
Luis	Olmedo	Executive Director	Comité Cívico del Valle
Penelope (Jenny)	Quintana, PhD	Professor	San Diego State University
Cathy	Reheis-Boyd	President	Western States Petroleum Association
Samir	Sheikh	Air Pollution Control Officer	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
Paula	Torrado Plazas *	Manager of Health and Environment Programs	Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles (PSR-LA)
Christine	Wolfe *	Policy and Communications Director	California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB)
CARB Staff			
Chanell	Fletcher	Office of Environmental Justice	Deputy Executive Officer

Deldi	Reyes	Office of Community Air Protection (OCAP)	Director
Karen	Buckley	Community Planning Branch, OCAP	Chief
Brian	Moore, PhD	Community Planning Section, OCAP	Manager
Abigail	May	Executive Office	Senior Attorney
Michelle	Byars	Community Planning Section, OCAP	Air Pollution Specialist
Liliana	Nunez	State Strategy Section, OCAP	Air Pollution Specialist
Facilitation Team			
Mindy	Meyer	Sacramento State, Consensus and Collaboration Program (CCP)	Lead Facilitator
Lisa	Ballin	CCP	Lead Facilitator
Corin	Choppin	CCP	Associate Facilitator

* Consultation Group alternate.

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