

AB 32 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee ("EJAC")
April 17, 2025, Meeting
Minutes¹

Meeting Attendance (* notes virtual attendance)

Committee Member Attendees:

1. Martha Dina Argüello*
2. Dr. Catherine Garoupa
3. Kevin Hamilton*
4. Thomas Helme
5. Matt Holmes
6. John Kevin Jefferson III
7. Luis Olmedo*
8. Jill Sherman-Warne
9. Rey Leon*

Committee Members not in Attendance:

10. Juan Flores
11. John Harriel Jr.

CARB Attendees:

- Chanell Fletcher*, Deputy Executive Officer for Equity, Communities and Environmental
- Radhika Majhail, Branch Chief of the Justice and Equity Branch
- Karina Jhaj, Air Pollution Specialist
- Emma Lawrence Tome, Air Pollution Specialist
- Jennifer Gress, Division Chief
- Melanie Zauscher, Air Resources Supervisor I
- Roberta Ruch, Staff Services Analyst

Other Attendees:

- Jane Harrington, Leading Resources (Facilitator)

¹ These minutes serve as a high-level summary of the meeting; they are not a verbatim transcript. Instead, they capture key topics, decisions, and directional insights from the discussion. To hear the full conversation in participants' own words, please see the meeting recording available at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/events/ab-32-environmental-justice-advisory-committee-meeting-52>

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Housekeeping and Logistics

A quorum of EJAC members was reached at 1:03 pm and the public meeting began. The facilitator made housekeeping announcements and conducted EJAC member roll call. At roll call, 7 EJAC members were present; 4 were absent; one EJAC member joined the meeting virtually after roll call and announced himself. A second EJAC member joined virtually during the discussion in Agenda Item #6 regarding the CARB presentation on Zero-Emission Space and Water Heater Standards.

Agenda Item #2: Introduction and Opening Remarks

Opening remarks from EJAC Co-Chairs, including ground rules, meeting agreements, agenda overview.

EJAC Co-Chair Dr. Catherine Garoupa provided an overview of the agenda. EJAC Co-Chair Martha Dina Argüello reviewed the meeting agreements.

Welcome from CARB and acknowledgement of CARB participation.

Chanell Fletcher provided opening remarks. She thanked Matt Holmes for his efforts in coordinating the conversation on Assembly Bill 1757 Natural and Working Lands.

An EJAC satisfaction survey has been created and, after review from EJAC, will be sent out to assist CARB in its planning and strategy for the upcoming year.

A calendar of topics has been developed as an additional planning tool and is being reviewed by the Co-Chairs. It will be sent to all members once it has been finalized.

EJAC Co-Chair Dr. Catherine Garoupa continued with opening remarks:

EJAC Co-Chair Dr. Catherine Garoupa stated that she was pleased to see everyone on her first day back from her split sabbatical.

John Kevin Jefferson III talked about the need to update the CARB Environmental Justice (EJ) policy.

EJAC Co-Chair Martha Dina Argüello talked about the importance of the appliance standard as a means of ensuring that there are equitable ways to decarbonize buildings. She commended CARB for its commitment to keeping its environmental justice programs.

Agenda Item #3: Quarter 3 February 13, 2025, EJAC Public Meeting Minutes

The facilitator, Leading Resources, introduced the topic with the goal of EJAC motion and approval of the meeting minutes after public comment. Jane Harrington asked for discussion from the Committee.

Dr. Catherine Garoupa added a few minor edits to the minutes, reading them into the record before the vote.

Agenda Item #4: Public Comment

Public comment was held on agenda item 3. No members of the public provided comment.

Agenda Item #5: EJAC Motion to Approve the February 13, 2025, EJAC Public Meeting Minutes

Dr. Catherine Garoupa motioned to approve the minutes. Kevin Jefferson III seconded the motion. Voting members who were present voted on Agenda Item #5. Eight members voted yes. Four members were absent. The motion passed.

Agenda Item #6: CARB Presentation on Zero-Emission Space and Water Heater Standards

Emma Lawrence Tome provided an overview of the development of zero-greenhouse gas emission standards for new space and water heaters and offered ideas on how EJAC and CARB might work together. Emma was joined by Jennifer Gress, Division Chief, and Melanie Zauscher, Supervisor, from the Sustainable Transportation and Communities Division.

Agenda Item #7: EJAC Questions on the CARB Presentation

Kevin Jefferson III asked where the goal for a number of homes originated and what the current progress on that goal is. There was discussion on this question. Emma Lawrence Tome and Melanie Zauscher stated that the Governor's office created the climate ready and climate friendly homes goals, and that they will follow up to provide a written progress update on zero-emission heating to the Committee before the next EJAC meeting.

Luis Olmedo asked if CARB had identified high HVAC permitting costs as a barrier to low-income individuals. There was discussion on this topic and recognition that permitting costs can create a barrier.

Matt Holmes asked if the cost benefit analysis included public health impacts. He also asked about CARB's communication with air districts around potential rules. There was discussion on this topic.

Matt Holmes asked how committee members can enrich the research process. Emma Lawrence Tome shared that members could be invited to participate in advisory committees and their participation would be valued.

Emma Lawrence Tome responded to the question about air districts. Matt Holmes expressed some concerns and suggestions on this topic.

Jill Sherman-Warne suggested including data from the Office of Native American Programs for HUD and also working with HOAs. She expressed concern about regulations. Emma Lawrence Tome explained that there had been some helpful participation from members of HOAs in a recent contracted research project.

Dr. Catherine Garoupa made comments about the definition of a “climate ready home” and her concerns. Emma Lawrence Tome stated that the focus for this initiative is on mitigation and lowering building emissions. Jennifer Gress added that it is about buildings being ready to install zero-emission equipment.

Jill Sherman-Warne asked if they had consulted with the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to access data on the types of energy being used. Emma Lawrence Tome replied that they had not and would follow up on that.

Kevin Hamilton echoed Kevin Jefferson III’s request for a progress report and suggested that CARB could benefit by partnering with utilities.

Martha Dina Argüello appreciated the interagency collaboration and affirmed that although the whole healthy homes approach may take longer, the impacts would be better in the long run.

Kevin Jefferson III asked that the percentage of AB 32 and fence line communities be added to the report he had requested earlier.

Chanell Fletcher asked Kevin Jefferson III and Matt Holmes to clarify requests. She agreed with Kevin Jefferson III’s comment that collaboration between CARB and the Air Districts allows for building on each other’s work. CARB will continue to discuss Scoping Plan implementation as it relates to EJAC and the development of a progress report

Thomas Helme highlighted that the San Joaquin Valley is an area that is extremely hot and has extreme air pollution problems. He believes that it is more efficient to do multiple projects at once rather than using a piecemeal approach.

Emma Lawrence Tome stated that the foundation for the next conversation would be to present the zero emission heating data along with the more detailed location data that had been requested. Emma invited the members to participate in their public expert group and mentioned that there will be opportunities in the future to co-host outreach events with CARB.

Martha Dina Argüello asked if there will be work on standards for any other home appliances or gas appliances. Emma Lawrence Tome replied that the scope of the state SIP strategy was space and water heaters.

Kevin Jefferson III asked what other areas they decided not to include in the study. Emma Lawrence Tome replied that they had decided to include pool heaters, but to leave out end uses like cooking and clothes drying.

Agenda Item #8: EJAC Discussion on Assembly Bill 1757 Natural and Working Lands

Matt Holmes presented a summary of the work that had been performed by the AB 1757 Expert Advisory Committee (EAC). He reviewed the EAC's goals, definitions, and study areas and presented an overview of their recommendations.

Kevin Jefferson III suggested an analysis of which experts could be utilized and that these experts be invited to share their projects so decisions could be made by Community Benefits Fund to provide funds in a way that they would be used properly to make changes.

Matt Holmes discussed an issue between the State not having planning guidance and the regional Air Districts not being in alignment.

Martha Dina Argüello asked for a sense of how far along the working groups' work is and when a critical time for that collaboration would be. Matt Holmes responded that the advisors would be coming in as individuals after the end of their work on the committee because this collaboration with CARB could not be coordinated during that performance period.

Radhika Majhail asked if CARB would be inviting the experts as individuals to this group to participate in a discussion.

Matt Holmes expressed a desire to invite agency representatives from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to share planning documents.

Martha Dina Argüello asked how the Committee could emphasize the efficacy and the multiple benefits of these Natural Working Lands methods. Matt Holmes recommended sequencing agriculture, urban greening, wetlands, and water security.

Kevin Hamilton stated that it is critical for the group to compare the carbon reductions from Natural Working Lands interventions to other interventions like carbon sequestration. Matt Holmes affirmed that these natural methods are known to work and that they need to be implemented in compliance with other plans. There was discussion on this topic.

Rey León requested a visual representation of data regarding the current reduction of carbons to discern what needs to be done to achieve those goals.

Dr. Catherine Garoupa stated that the Committee has recognized the importance of focusing on natural sequestration. She asked for clarification regarding the goals and the timeline for the Committee. Matt Holmes requested sessions to allow this scientific input to direct the scoping of this current implementation phase so that the Committee can request a resolution from the Board. Thomas Helme gave some

examples of local issues. Dr. Catherine Garoupa suggested offline preparation on Natural and Working Lands. Martha Dina Argüello asked if the Natural and Working Lands subcommittee could provide a set of recommendations.

Radhika Majhail asked about recommendations and Matt Holmes confirmed that the AB 1757 EAC had already released its recommendation. Radhika asked about the next steps. Kevin Jefferson III stated that the working groups will gather data to create a one-page document to bring to the leadership team.

Matt Holmes asked the group to vote to exclude topics from the discussion. Jane Harrington stated that no vote could be taken as this item was not on the agenda. Radhika Majhail suggested that this motion be added to the agenda of the subgroup meeting.

Agenda Item #9: Public Comment

Three members of the public provided comments.

Agenda Item #10: CARB Announcements

CARB provided reminders of upcoming meetings and events as they relate to AB 32 program implementation.

Radhika Majhail presented a slide depicting upcoming meetings in April through June 2025. She stated that this table will also be emailed to all EJAC members following the meeting.

Radhika acknowledged receipt of a letter from CVAC that had been re-sent by Thomas Helme and that CARB will review and respond.

Radhika offered to meet with Martha Dina Argüello to discuss strategies for EJAC to support CARB staff by creating co-learning spaces and by bringing in carbon removal solutions experts. Martha Dina Argüello added there may be a way to include Natural and Working Lands goals.

Agenda Item #11: Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Dr. Catherine Garoupa thanked everyone for their active participation in the meeting. She reminded everyone that the May 2025 meeting will feature a discussion with members of the Building Energy, Equity, and Power Coalition about Building Decarbonization and guest speakers from Stanford on Cap-and-Trade.

Kevin Jefferson III stated that he had created a report card for natural working groups based on recommendations given in the Scoping Plan and how it can go further and that he will submit the report to the committee so that members will be able to fill it out and go from there.

Martha Dina suggested that the Natural and Working Lands group meet offline to develop a Resolution or recommendations. Martha Dina also requested learning more about when the CARB presentation on AB 617 is occurring. Dr. Catherine said

she believes it's in June based on CARB Staff but takes no ownership on this item. Kevin J. and Matt agreed to assist in coordination on next steps for Natural and Working Lands.

Tom Helme suggested that EJAC tackle Landfill Methane regulations and encourages CARB Staff to move forward on these regulations sooner rather than later. Tom stated it's been 15 years since CARB's methane regulations and new technologies are more readily available since then.

Radhika Majhail thanked everyone for a wonderful meeting. Radhika stated she will reach out to Kevin H and the Charter subgroup members to discuss next steps for the EJAC Charter if the goal is to take it to the Board in May.

Jane Harrington announced that the next EJAC meeting is planned for May 15, 2025, in Sacramento.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 PM.