Message

From: Chergo, Jennifer [Chergo.Jennifer@epa.gov]
Sent: 6/20/2019 10:15:40 PM
To: Aviles, Jesse [Aviles.Jesse@epa.gov]
Subject: Re: Difficult VB/I-70 CAG meeting

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 20, 2019, at 7:48 AM, Aviles, Jesse <Aviles.Jesse@epa.gov> wrote:

Ok. Maybe this is a little softer.

Last night Bridget call us racists. The facilitator will call out such accusations in the next meetings. If the accusations continue, the person will be asked to leave. If the person doesn't agree to leave, EPA will leave the meeting. Race does not restrict our dedication.

From: Chergo, Jennifer
Sent: Thursday, June 20, 2019 07:36
To: Aviles, Jesse <Aviles.Jesse@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Difficult VB/I-70 CAG meeting

Hi. I think it's a little strong, but it's your call. If you send it, I would change it to say the facilitator will call it out and we (EPA) will leave, rather than just you, so it's not all on you. I would maybe change the "it's on you" phrase to something softer. Thanks for trying to defend us.

I will set up a quick call with Joe. I'll check your calendar. I'm off to Canon City. Have a great day.

-jc

From: Aviles, Jesse
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2019 12:50 PM
To: Chergo, Jennifer
Subject: RE: Difficult VB/I-70 CAG meeting

This morning I drafted an email regarding the accusations. I am not sure about sending it so I'm asking for your opinion.

Hello Bridget and Kim:

Last night Bridget accused us of racism. Next time I hear this accusation, I will call it out. If Bridget, or anyone else, continue the accusations, I will ask the person to leave. If the person decides to stay, I will leave the meeting. We are the ones doing the work. If the CAG does not want to acknowledge the actions we have performed to include the community, that's on you. Race does not restrict our dedication to it.

Also, will you ask Joe for a debriefing next week?

Jesse

From: Chergo, Jennifer
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2019 12:10
To: Apostolopoulos - CDPHE, Fonda <fonda.apostolopoulos@state.co.us>; jeannine.natterman@state.co.us; Doug Jamison <doug.jamison@state.co.us>
Cc: Aviles, Jesse <Aviles.Jesse@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Difficult VB/I-70 CAG meeting

Hey everyone. Fonda, thanks for sharing this. I've copied Jesse as well. Sorry about that exchange with Bridget last night, Fonda. She was in the middle of calling me and EPA racist because CDPHE doesn't put CAG info. on the website and for some broad, non-specific feeling that this CAG is treated differently, with a friendly smile on her face, when you walked up and her accusations transferred to you. Anyway, I'm just wondering what you all mean when you refer to providing "operational support" below? EPA is providing for translation, facilitation, and advertising of meetings for the CAG, but on a quarterly, rather than monthly basis. Jesse has provided the CAG access to draft documents, exclusive to the CAG on a SharePoint site, as well. So, as of now, we do recognize them as the VB/I-70 CAG. (sidenote: Jesse and I are planning on having a discussion with them at one of their upcoming monthly meetings to remind them that they need to be representative of the affected communities, show some evidence of sharing VB info. out to the broader community, and keep their monthly agendas to VB/I-70 issues in order to continue to be recognized by EPA as the VB/I-70 CAG). The quarterly meetings are meant as CAG meeting, but where others on our contact list and in the community are invited. So, you may want to adjust that point below about operational support, or not, depending on what you mean...

Hope that helps. Have a good day all,

-jc

From: Apostolopoulos - CDPHE, Fonda <fonda.apostolopoulos@state.co.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2019 9:09 AM
To: jeannine.natterman@state.co.us; Doug Jamison; Chergo, Jennifer
Subject: Difficult VB/I-70 CAG meeting

Jeannine/Doug.

Bridget was making a lot of exaggerated statements last night at our CAG meeting, one of which I feel we need to address explicitly.

Before the meeting started, she asked me why CDPHE is treating this CAG differently than all the other CAGs in Colorado. I told her that Jeannine had responded to her question and explained why we won't post the VB/I-70 CAG (citizens CAG) agendas or other documents on CDPHE's web page. She said that she never saw the response, and then went on to say to me that she believes it's because their CAG is in a "brown" community and that CDPHE is racist. I responded by saying that when she says things like that it's very difficult to not take her comments personally. She said I shouldn't. I then asked her how she would feel if someone said because the realty company she works for doesn't have any listings in "brown" areas, she must work for a racist company. She said that's not the same and that I should go see my therapist before I come and attend the meetings.

Jeannine, you sent an email back on Feb. 28th explaining the differences (see below). Do you have anything else to add to this response in order to make it more clear, as I want to send this out to the CAG members (again) to make this as clear as possible?

Fonda

Bridget and Chuck,

Jennifer Opila asked me to follow up with you on your questions.

As you know, EPA is the lead agency at VB/I70 Superfund Site, and works together with CDPHE and Denver in following the Superfund process. The VB-I70 CAG was supported operationally and initiated by Denver for the surrounding communities of VB/I-70 OU2, to inform the communities of the infrastructure project which impacts OU2. Now that the portion of the infrastructure project in OU2 has been completed, Denver felt that there was not enough

information/data being created to maintain monthly associated meetings. The CAG may disagree, but that was Denver's decision. The state and EPA are still available to be points of reference in helping the CAG with questions you may have pertaining to the Superfund Operable Units of VB/I-70, and the process.

Community Advisory Groups are not exclusively associated with Superfund Sites. In fact, CAGs can be formed for a variety of community based private or public projects - from infrastructure projects to where to put a daycare center. The project benefiting from CAG formation does not make it more or less "official." The VB-I70 CAG falls into this category - community members who are staying organized to discuss issues in their community.

CDPHE is more than willing to support the CAG in terms of helping you acquire documents and information you can't find, being a point of reference for the history of the area, explain how we interpret data and where it comes/came from, and many other types of information to help communities.

However, because none of the agencies provide operational support to your CAG, we cannot maintain a CDPHE sponsored web-based platform to post CAG business items such as minutes, independent findings/reports/videos.

Any incorporated (non-profit, 501.c.3, etc) can apply for a TAG from EPA. There is considerable overlap in Superfund CAGs and groups that have been awarded TAGs, as in the case of Lowry Landfill Superfund Site CAG. The TAG that was awarded at Lowry Landfill is not managed by the entire Lowry Landfill CAG. In fact, a subset of Lowry Landfill CAG community members organized, shared the expense and paperwork to become registered in the state of Colorado as a non-profit, and applied for and was awarded a TAG. The state of Colorado does not post documents from the Lowry Landfill TAG on the state's website.

I hope this helps.

Jeannine

--
Mr. Fonda Apostolopoulos, P.E.
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246

303-692-3411
Fonda.Apostolopoulos@State.co.us