



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
STATE HOUSE ▪ ROOM 373
BOSTON, MA 02133

TEL: (617) 727-2040
FAX: (617) 727-2779
www.mass.gov/eoaf

Meeting Minutes

**Federal Funds Equity & Accountability Review Panel
Equity Metrics Subcommittee**

**Wednesday, May 18, 2022
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

In accordance with Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted, and open to the public, via Zoom and Teleconference:

Zoom URL: <https://mass-gov-anf.zoom.us/j/89331749361?pwd=aVZFWFZaMlVqUE0Z2V5alFyU1piQT09>

Password: 417786

Teleconference Line: 713-353-7024, **conference code:** 319738

A meeting of the Federal Funds Equity & Accountability Review Panel was held via teleconference on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, in accordance with Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

Meeting was called to order at 10:03AM

Panel members comprising a quorum:

Marie-Frances Rivera, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Inc.
Elizabeth Weyant, Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies
Bill McAvoy, Supplier Diversity Office
Geoff Foster, Common Cause Massachusetts
Kristina Johnson, Chief Data Officer
Shaheer Mustafa, Massachusetts Nonprofit Network, Inc.
Joe Kriesberg, Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporation

Members Absent:

Yasmin Padamsee, Commission on the Status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
Bishop Tony Branch, NAACP New England Area Conference
Gabrielle King Morse, Center for Women and Enterprise, Inc.
Joe Curtatone, Northeast Clean Energy Council, Inc.

Others in attendance:

Jose Delgado, Deputy Chief of Staff for Access and Opportunity, Office of the Governor
Nicole Obi, Coalition for an Equitable Economy
Kelly Govoni, Executive Office for Administration and Finance, Panel Secretary
Robert Braza, Executive Office for Administration and Finance
Danielle Littman, Executive Office for Administration and Finance

1. Administrative Matters

- I. Ms. Govoni conducted the roll call for the meeting. Co-chair Rivera called the meeting to order and went over some housekeeping items for the meeting.
- II. On a motion from Ms. Rivera and duly seconded, the Panel members voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the April 22, 2022, meeting minutes.
- III. Materials used during the meeting: Equity Metrics PowerPoint presentation.

2. Discuss Tentative Plan to Achieve Draft Allocation Goals

- I. Ms. Rivera provided a progress update on the subcommittees work so far and a timeline moving forward:
 - i. 5/18 Equity Metrics Subcommittee agrees on conceptual methodology to ground the “draft allocation goals”
 - ii. By 5/27 the ARPA Panel co-chairs have plan in place to address data analysis limitations
 - iii. Once data analyst capacity is in place, the Equity Metrics Subcommittee develops and votes on methodology (Proposal: develop need tiers and a simple formula to determine the percentage of funding that a community in a particular tier should receive per capita).
 - iv. By 5/27 public comment period is designed and ready to launch
- II. Ms. Weyant then went over the development of tiers by need. Ms. Weyant noted that they spent time looking around the country to see what other places are doing and they were impressed by the dashboard that LA County put together. Ms. Weyant noted that they identified populations of highest need, high need, moderate need, low need and lowest and determined how much of the dollars should be allocated to these tiers. Ms. Weyant noted that this could be an important threshold to show that a good amount of the dollars should go to populations with the highest need and the next step is to figure out and identify the populations of the highest need. She then explained that the state has done a lot of work to identify high need populations including environmental justice communities, and the social vulnerability index. Ms. Weyant noted that they are essentially proposing that the Panel overlay some of these data sets on top of each other to help identify which populations have the greatest need and then urge the state to allocate accordingly and get a sense of where those dollars have already been invested. Ms. Weyant noted that it’s important to make sure we are not just identifying zip codes, which could be too board but also that we are not just getting to the smallest population size just by using the census tracts that are identified in the legislation itself. Ms. Rivera explained that when they did the exercise around data collection, they looked at a lot of different things and they went back to the legislation and the minimum requirement that the Panel must look at are environmental justice communities that score in the top half of the social vulnerability index.

Mr. Kriesberg asked if the Panel is required to connect need to COVID risk, or is it more generalized need risk based on socio-economic factors? Ms. Weyant noted that the language that created the Panel gives them latitude to make some of those decisions and it needs to be related to COVID, but it can be talked about in broad senses if needed. Ms. Weyant also noted that the Panels charge gives them room

to talk about the fact that people that were disproportionately impacted by COVID were also disproportionately affected by systematic factors prior to COVID so they can lean into that and is part of the reason the social vulnerability and its information dating back to pre-COVID is useful. Mr. Kriesberg explained that he is worried about shooting too low, for example the \$500 million that was earmarked for low-wage workers, 100% of that should be going to low-wage workers and some of the people who receive those funds may live in EJ communities and some might not, but by definition they are still economically vulnerable people because they are low-wage workers. He then asked how those people would be captured by just a geographic analysis. Ms. Rivera responded that he is pointing out some of the challenges around data collection and what the unit of analysis is. An example is the Premium Pay Program, where privacy restrictions may limit the amount of data the Panel can collect from recipients and thus the Panel may only be able to get an aggregate amount based on the number of people in a municipality who received funds, rather than at the individual level. Mr. Braza noted that it's important to think about the data and consider that there are four programs that have already started, and that money is going out, and there are two where the programs have already been completed. With those, ANF created a matrix that talks about some of the metrics that the Panel wants in their data and looked at if it's possible to get the data requested on those programs. For a lot of the metrics, the data is not available and so the Panel and ANF will have to think about how to backtrack and get those data points.

Ms. Rivera asked the subcommittee their opinion on using the EJ communities and social vulnerability index with the tiers as a framework to identify communities. Mr. Kriesberg noted that he thinks a strictly geographic analysis is incomplete and that the Panel also needs a population level analysis where it's possible, especially for programs that are specifically targeting low-income populations. Ms. Weyant noted that she thinks that's part of where the tiering approach comes in.

Ms. Rivera outlined the factors that define an Environmental Justice Community (EJ Community) which are:

- Annual medium household income is not more than 65 percent of the statewide annual medium household income;
- Minorities comprise 40 percent or more of the population;
- 25 percent or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
- Minorities comprise 25 per cent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 percent of the statewide annual median household income

The subcommittee then reviewed an interactive map that outlines the EJ communities across the state. Ms. Rivera explained that if you take the EJ communities and look at the SVI that has 15 different variables and measure them from a 0-1 scale then you can create the tiers. She noted that any communities that

are over .5 would be part of the Panel's scope of high need communities and then some sort of data analysis would have to happen to further segment those communities into the different tiers. She explained that what they did in LA is that they developed a methodology to segment all of the communities in LA County and then they developed a formula for how they wanted to allocate those dollars to each of the tiers (highest, middle, lowest) and what it yielded was that the communities in grey would be in lowest and they recommended these communities receive very little money based on the formula they created and the highest need received the bulk. Ms. Johnson asked if the proposal is a dichotomous indicator of EJ communities, versus non EJ communities and then setting particular allocation goals for EJ communities. Ms. Rivera noted that the proposal looks at EJ communities and non EJ communities and takes the EJ communities that are in the top half of the social vulnerability index. Ms. Rivera noted that the subcommittee will need to figure out how those three categories of communities will be segmented into tiers of need. The next step would then be establishing the tiers in order to determine what would be an equitable distribution of money within the tiers. Ms. Rivera asked if the subcommittee is in favor of this approach, and members agreed that they are.

Ms. Johnson asked if they have a sense of how many EJ communities don't fall within the top half of the SVI. Ms. Rivera noted that they do not and there does need to be some data analysis done. Mr. Delgado noted that he brought it up to ANF and they are looking into their resources and if possible, the pot of funds allocated to the Panel can be used. Ms. Obi asked if the subcommittee can consider what the minimum is for tracking requirements versus the ideal scenario with all of the necessary resources available. Ms. Weyant noted that any lowest common denominator that they pick will be missing something, but it might make sense to choose a lowest common denominator and acknowledge that it may be missing some pieces. Ms. Weyant also agreed with Mr. Kriesberg thoughts on taking a non-geographic approach to programs that are essentially already defined and thinks that the subcommittee can do some work to put details behind what that analysis would look like and identify which programs fall into that. Ms. Rivera asked if the subcommittee approves of using the EJ communities layered on top of the social vulnerability index as a measure with the hope of tiering communities so that there is some geographic analysis. The subcommittee approved that approach.

3. A&F Update

Ms. Littman provided an update from ANF. Ms. Littman explained that the Administration filed legislation on April 21st, which is a \$3.5 billion dollar bill but \$2.3 billion are federal funds. Ms. Littman explained that there are 614 projects, and \$750 million would go to clean energy investments, \$318 million in downtown projects and then whatever is adopted in the future is in the purview of this Panel. Ms. Littman reiterated that for ARPA 1.0, 4 of those programs have been completed or are in progress, and there are a lot of programs still in the

design phase. She explained that the Essential Worker Pay Program round 1 went out, Fiscally Strained Hospitals is complete, and the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund Transfer is complete as well. Essentially half of the money is spent or out the door and housing is one of the biggest in the design phase currently. Ms. Littman explained that the grant management system is being developed right now and the last two to three weeks has been in the discovery phase and ANF is hoping to have a product by mid-summer. Ms. Littman explained that ANF is going to include data that the Panel is looking for into their monthly exercises and in the long-term they will incorporate any data the Panel is seeking into the grant management program. Ms. Littman noted that some of these programs are already complete, and they will have to go back and retrospectively ask for data. Ms. Littman then went over a matrix to show the programs where money has already been spent, and the feasibility of getting the data that the Panel has preliminarily decided on. Ms. Rivera asked if there are any major challenges in collecting the data, and Ms. Littman responded that depending on who the “they” is, it could create some obstacles. For instance, there may be limitations in getting individual data due to privacy concerns and noted it’s something to consider.

Ms. Rivera then moved on to discuss the public comment period. Mr. Delgado noted that something will need to go on the website where individuals can send messages to. The Panel could also utilize one of its meetings as a public comment period, but it would need to be discussed with the full Panel and the ANF team.

Ms. Johnson noted that this was a good discussion today but there seem to be two open questions from the discussion. The first is around programs that lend themselves to geographic measurement versus programs that don’t and maybe have built-in requirements that are at the individual level. She explained that they had talked earlier about looking at that from a program project by project perspective and she would raise for consideration a somewhat different approach because programs can change over time. She explained that she would suggest looking at it first by the expenditure category and in the slide deck that ANF provided, it is laid out and every project has to be assigned to one of those expenditure categories. Ms. Johnson explained that it’s easier to look at the category and see which ones are individual, institutional, etc. and it might be cleaner and more consistent to keep it at the expenditure category level. Additionally, there might be some programs where the best reporting data is at the municipal level. The question would be how they might take the formula using the EJ communities and SVI indicators and determine if there is a way to create those indicators meaningfully at the municipal level. Ms. Johnson noted that you could look at the share of census tracts within a municipality that fits the criteria and create a municipality indicator. The third piece is around where the analytics capacity is going to come from, and Ms. Johnson noted that is something the Data & Technology Subcommittee can take on and they can put together a budget for that. Ms. Weyant noted that she agrees with looking at the expenditure categories. Ms. Rivera asked how the Equity Metrics Subcommittee can best be helpful to the

Data & Technology Subcommittee. Ms. Johnson noted that this subcommittee could be helpful by reviewing the list of expenditure categories and determining what the categories are to focus on and which ones lend themselves to the geographic lens mentioned earlier. Ms. Johnson noted that the Data & Technology Subcommittee can take on the work with ANF to understand where the reporting sits today and what the challenges might be around getting to the right level of geography.

Mr. Delgado asked what is meant by data analysis. Ms. Weyant noted it's the overlay piece with the EJ communities and the SVI. Ms. Johnson suggested overlaying gateway cities, EJ communities, SVI and Vaccine Equity communities and see where the overlaps are and where they are not. Ms. Johnson noted that she could put this analysis together and present it at the next Equity Metrics Subcommittee meeting. Ms. Weyant and Ms. Rivera agreed with that approach.

4. Next Steps

- I. The next Equity Metrics Subcommittee meeting will be on May 31st from 12-1PM.

5. Adjournment

- I. Meeting adjourned at 11:35AM