



Legislation Text

File #: 18-1113, **Version:** 1

Item:

Amendment to Environmental Affairs Board Structure

Date Of BOCC Meeting: November 5, 2018

Request For Board Action:

The Board is requested to approve an amendment to the City-County Environmental Affairs Board (EAB) Interlocal Agreement to expand the board to include three At-large seats and an Equity/Environmental Justice seat.

The EAB currently has eleven voting seats for residents and seven non-voting ex officio members. All the resident seats are designated to be filled by individuals with issue-area expertise. The City Council and County Commissioners each appoint five seats and the remaining seat is filled by the Soil and Water Conservation Board of Supervisors.

The EAB proposes to add three At-large seats to increase their capacity to address the range of environmental challenges Durham is facing and to allow for more public engagement in these issues.

The EAB also proposes to create an Equity/Environmental Justice seat to bring to the table expertise and a voice for those most affected by environmental degradation and environmental racism. While everyone benefits from a healthy environment, people of color and low-wealth communities often bear the brunt of environmental degradation. This happens for many reasons including the fact that land-uses with higher environmental impacts are frequently cited in low-wealth communities and communities with higher concentrations of people of color. In addition, people with fewer resources are impacted more from pollution because they have less ability to avoid or mitigate pollution in their homes, commutes, and neighborhoods.

These changes will enable the EAB to be more flexible in addressing a wide range of environmental issues over time. The proposal includes recommendations that the City Council and County Commissioners each appoint one At-Large but leaves open the question as to which will appoint the Equity/Environmental Justice seat, and which will appoint the other At-large seat.

Alignment With Strategic Plan: This item aligns with Strategic Plan Goal 2: Health and Well-being for All, Goal 4: Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity, and Goal 5: Accountable, Efficient, and Visionary Government.

Resource Persons: Tobin L. Freid, Sustainability Manager; and Peri Manns, Interim Director of Engineering and Environmental Services

County Manager's Recommendation: The County Manager recommends that the Board approve the proposed changes to the City-County Environmental Affairs Board Interlocal Agreement.

County Manager: _____