

DRAFT Minutes.

## COMMUNITY PATHWAYS FOR ENGAGEMENT (CPE) COMMITTEE



### Meeting Agenda

DATE: Thursday February 19, 2026

TIME: 6:00 - 7:30 PM

LOCATION: Delaware Center for the Inland Bays  
39375 Inlet Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Remote via Zoom:

Topic: DEIJA Committee Meeting (Center for the Inland Bays)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83871927116>

Meeting ID: 838 7192 7116

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Meeting called by: Marlene Saunders, Committee Chair

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Attendees: Marlene Saunders, Claire Simmers, Christophe Tulou, Bryan Ochs, Shannon Clark

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Welcome / Call to Order - 6:02 PM

M. Saunders

- Land Acknowledgement read by B. Ochs

Introductions

M. Saunders

Meeting Agenda Review

M. Saunders

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

M. Saunders

Old Business

- Committee renaming approved by the Board and incorporated into bylaws- Marlene addressed how many committees across the country are changing their name due to the current administration. There is still a need for money and support so we can move forward with the mission. She opened the discussion about this topic focusing on building resilience and agency.
- C. Tulou- The needs haven't changed but it opens an opportunity for setting an agenda for resiliency. With our democracy under threat, we should prepare for the future/voting in 2028.

- We are not alone in dealing with use of money to force compliance with the White House's anti-DEI policy. -
- For example:
  1. How does the White House eliminating environmental justice impact CIB's Community Engagement Committee
  2. Black Summit 2026 will address negative environmental impacts on Black communities in DE. Support from CIB enables a successful program on September 9th and planned post-Summit action groups planned after the conference throughout the state.- Marlene explained that the Summit will address problems and issues that directly impact Black communities, which impacts everyone. This gives space to Black communities to come together and make an agenda. Part of the agenda is to look to allies who are willing to join in the effort to address the injustices that Black communities have faced and injustices other minorities have experienced. Looking for a Rainbow Coalition.

“Let the Truth be Told” newsletter. The Black Summit 2026 is not just a one time event but it will be an ongoing project . C. Tulou agreed that The Center will support this mission. Part of the agenda of the Black Summit 2026 will be environmental issues.
- [What's Left of Federal Environmental Justice? | Environmental Law Institute](#)



**BLACK AGENDA GROUP**  
Presents  
**Black Summit 2026**

Let Your Voice Be Heard: Join Us

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026**

**8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

**DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY  
MARTIN LUTHER KINGS, JR., STUDENT CENTER  
2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
1200 N. DUPONT HIGHWAY, DOVER, DE 19901**

Admission Includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch

Visit our website  
[www.blackagendagroup.net](http://www.blackagendagroup.net)

At our summit, you'll have the opportunity to:

- ✓ Discuss issues that matter to the African American Community
- ✓ Share your ideas and suggestions

**SAVE THE DATE**



Marlene explained that DNREC denied approval of the Delaware Data Center. Should we address this issue to DNREC? Did we offer any response? C. Tulou said no just because it is geographically distant from us here in Sussex but we could address the water and power effects on homeowners, property owners, business owners and how that creates competition for energy sources.

B. Ochs- The one data center is possibly equal to about 1/2 of the energy needed for Delaware's homes.

C. Simmers- The next move is DE bills to require the data centers to provide their own power and stay off the public grid.

Major theme of resiliency- CACs themes for 2026- Reaching out to see if Marlene could help find someone to speak on the panel in October to talk about resiliency. How do we as a community be resilient as much as possible, preventing and helping to remediate issues that have already happened aside from weather events. How do you bounce back from lack of job opportunities or other community challenges? I.e. our vulnerable communities such as Millsboro/Longneck near the Mountaineer. (Marlene share an example of the lack of health benefits for Black communities.....the solution was supporting Black doctors)

C Tulou also mentioned approaching members of state legislature regarding ICE detention centers/warehouses in our state.

B. Ochs- How can we help with attendance for these meetings? Claire- Could we have an action item/activity to help with attendance? (example was the Sierra Club made Valentines for the legislature)

Marlene- Could we have a bi-partisan speaker to include in a meeting. Also, ask members what we can do to attract attendance? A survey perhaps?

Public Comment- NA

All

Adjourn- 6:43pm Clarie- so moved

Christophe- 2nd

M.

Saunders