

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
March 8, 2022, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Present:

Tad Aburn, Chair, Maryland Department of the Environment
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Chris Voigt, Virginia Department of Transportation
Courtney Grimes, District Department of Energy & Environment
Dan Goldberg, George Washington University
Dan Salkowitz, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County
Demetra McBride, Arlington County
Gregory Beacot, EPA R3
James Boyle, Maryland Department of the Environment
Jenny Willoughby, City of Fredrick
Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
Joel Dreessen, Maryland Department of the Environment
John Kinsman, Edison Electric Institute
Kari Snyder, Virginia Department of Transportation
Kate Walker, City of falls Church
Kristen Stump, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Marcia Ways, Maryland Department of the Environment
Mathew Gaskin, District Department of Transportation
Mike Kiss, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Nicole Hebert, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Richard Dooley, Arlington County
Roger Thunell, Maryland Department of the Environment
Samuel Gaber, Fairfax County
Scott Fincham, Loudoun County
Sonya Lewis-Cheatham, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Staff:

Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Dusan Vuksan, COG/DTP
Jane Posey, COG/DTP
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Jen Desimone, COG/DEP
Jinchul Park, COG/DTP
Leah Boggs, COG/DEP
Mark Moran, COG/DTP
Tim Masters, COG/DEP
Wanda Owens, COG/DTP

1. Call to Order and Review of Meeting Summary

Tad Aburn chaired and called the meeting to order at 10 am. The February 8th meeting summary was approved without any changes.

2. FY2023 MWAQC Work Program & Budget

Jen Desimone discussed the final FY2023 MWAQC work program and budget. Tad asked how the work for the 1-hour ozone standard maintenance plan for Virginia is going to be funded. Jen said that COG staff is currently assessing the exact details of that work. Once that is done there are a couple options to fund that work. First, it could be funded by a supplemental fund from Virginia or the second option is to use the carry over fund if MWAQC approves it.

Tad mentioned that Maryland considers Environmental justice as significant. While considering control measures for ozone, we consider environmental justice as co-benefits. Therefore, we should consider including environmental justice language in the work program and budget. Jeff said that equity is also a high priority for COG Board so we could add some language to address that. Demetra asked how we define overburdened communities in this area. Tad said that those communities are areas that have a lot of emission sources that are businesses (e.g, mill shredders, aggregate plants) but also has a lot of mobile sources (e.g, roads, bus terminals, warehouses, trucks) along with economic factors. We think in terms of air pollution. Kelly supported the idea of including COG's equity language in the work program as Environmental Justice is a part of equity. Tad asked COG staff to develop a language to address that.

3. Short-Term Emissions Control Measures

Tim Masters discussed a memo on "Solicitation of Priority Measures and Supporting Documentation including Short-Term Emissions Reduction Measures."

Last year, COG staff held a number of Control Measures Workgroup meetings, reviewing a master list of measures and developing a list of priority control measures for inclusion in the SIP. The Priority List included several existing strategies which may provide the region with the necessary emission reductions to attain the 2015 Ozone NAAQS. The Control Measures Workgroup added a few potential strategies to the Priority List. These measures were proposed for inclusion by workgroup members to provide further emissions reduction benefits.

As a next step, COG staff are requesting any additional proposed measures for inclusion in the priority list. In addition, state and local representatives are requested to provide more detailed information on each of their proposals. COG staff request that proposed measures are provided back to staff in the format of the attached template. States and local representatives should provide a brief description of the control measure, how the measure would be implemented in the metropolitan Washington region, where it is currently implemented (if applicable), the estimated emissions reduction benefit from implementation of the measure, as well as the estimated cost of implementation.

Tad suggested a workshop for local governments to discuss specific control measures such as, anti-idling and anti-tampering. Jeff said that COG staff will do that. He also mentioned that other related work is being undertaken by many local governments in the area, which could also be discussed in the workshop.

4. Air Quality Forecasting Changes – A Compromise Proposal

Sunil discussed a memo on "Changes to the Air Quality Forecast Procedure for the Washington Region and Other Areas within the State of Maryland". The purpose of this memo is to brief members on upcoming changes to the forecasting procedures for the metropolitan Washington region and the State of Maryland. He highlighted issues and challenges related to the air quality forecasting changes proposed by Maryland.

The changes to the forecasting process in Maryland will involve sub-dividing jurisdictions

served by COG and Clean Air Partners into smaller areas and further issuing different forecasts and color codes for these smaller areas. This proposed change will result in different forecasts (color codes) for the areas within the metro Washington area communicated to the public including displays on web sites – those provided by COG using its process (described above) and one by Maryland following their proposed changes. The public will be receiving multiple daily forecasts and real-time alerts on Code Orange and Red days from COG and Clean Air Partners. Since people commute across the subregions within metro Washington and across the Baltimore-Washington region, dealing with multiple forecasts and alerts could be quite confusing and challenging. Clean Air Partners provides outreach to the media as a benefit to COG and the state air agencies. There are a few subregions that cover both Washington and Baltimore media markets – this will require outreach to media in advance to explain the changes and avoid confusion. There is concern that the pending changes to the forecast protocol may result in an implication that transport between areas is either not an issue or unimportant; it may also undermine the commitment to take voluntary actions at local levels – two elements that MWAQC members have stated is a priority. In addition, portions of the metro Washington region that experience the most unhealthy air days are typically disadvantaged communities of color and are impacted by pollution transported from upwind areas.

COG is proposed a resolution that there will be a one-year delay in implementing the proposed changes for the metro Washington region. Maryland will proceed with its proposed changes for other regions within Maryland. This will keep the Washington nonattainment area as one forecast region and avoid confusion and challenges for public. In addition, as mentioned above, it will also help people in upwind areas with relatively better air quality in the region keep helping people in downwind areas with bad air quality on high ozone and fine particle days.

During the next one-year period, COG staff and the state air agencies will work with local governments, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), MWAQC, and Clean Air Partners on changes to the forecasting protocol for the metropolitan Washington region for 2023. This is vital to ensure resource and time is available to convey any changes to the public and media and make any needed changes to COG and Clean Air Partners websites. Tad agreed to delay the implantation of forecast changes by one year for the Washington region.

Richard asked if the Northern Virginia region will be one jurisdiction for forecasting purposes. Sunil said that is the case. Richard also asked if the general public understands the difference between code orange and code red. Sunil said that the clean air partners has an outreach program that teaches public about different color codes. Tad said that it is an issue for environmental justice so we need to think about it. Sam asked how alerts will be handled for four different subregions. Sunil said that alerts will be sent through in Enviroflash and the National Weather Service for different subregions. the only difference will be that there will be multiple forecasts and alerts issued for different subregions.

5. Other Business

Jane give a heads up on a joint MWAQC/CEEP/TPB comment letter on EPA heavy duty vehicle emissions standards. Tad said that you can also include light duty vehicle and other rules. Jane said that TPB already sent letters for those rules. Tad suggested including a paragraph mentioning those rules in the letter. Kelly asked about the timeline for the letter. Jane said CEEP will approve on March 23rd, TPB steering committee on April 1st, and the MWAQC Executive Committee on April 13th.

6. State & Local Updates

There were no updates.

The conference call ended at 11:30 am.