

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee
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DRAFT MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2008 MEETING

Attendance:

Members and Alternates

Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Hon. John Britton, City of Rockville
Hon. Sharon Bulova, Fairfax County
Jessica Daniels, District of Columbia Department of Environment
Hon. Cathy Drzyzgula, City of Gaithersburg
Hon. Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Hon. Leta Mach, City of Greenbelt
Pam Parker, Montgomery County Department of Environment
Mark Rawlings, District Department of Transportation
Hon. Redella Pepper, City of Alexandria
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation
Hon. Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church
Hon. Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
JoAnne Sorenson, Virginia Department of Transportation
Roger Thunell, Maryland Department of the Environment
Larry Zaragoza, Air Quality Public Advisory Committee

Others Present:

Bhesh Dhamala, Fairfax County Department of Health
Deirdre Elvis-Peterson, Maryland Department of the Environment
Doris McLeod, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation
Harriet West, Clean Air Partners

Staff:

Mike Clifford, COG/DTP
Stuart Freudberg, COG/DEP
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Ron Kirby, COG/DTP
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Eulalie Lucas, COG/DTP
Erin Morrow, COG/DTP
Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP

1. Call to Order, Public Comment Period, Approval of Minutes, Announcements

Chair Snyder called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

The meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

There were several announcements. In July the District Circuit Court vacated the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), a rule that affects air quality plans of states in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, southeast and Midwest. The MWAQC Executive Committee has been discussing possible risks to the region and possible responses to this court action. COG released the Climate Change Steering Committee's report for public comment in July. In July an MWAQC/AQPAC Review Committee was appointed to look at revitalizing the Air Quality Public Advisory Committee and expand its outreach to the community. At the July MWAQC meeting, MWAQC voted to send a letter to the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board asking the Commonwealth to lower its opacity standard from 20% to 10% to be more stringent and consistent with the District and Maryland. There is a notice of a comment period on Virginia's Regulatory Town Hall. The comment period on the proposed opacity standard begins next week on September 29 and ends on October 20. EPA notified the states in the Washington region that EPA is recommending that the states are in attainment for the 2006 24-hour fine particle (PM2.5) standard. The attainment designation is based on 2005-2007 air quality monitoring data. EPA will issue final designation by December 18, 2008. EPA is holding a public comment period on the proposed designation and there may be opposition from the environmental community. EPA's proposal is a recognition that air quality is improving thanks to our collective efforts.

2. Committee Reports

A. Report of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Mr. Thunell reported on the September 9 meeting of the TAC. Both the PM and ozone SIPs, recently submitted to EPA, include reference to the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), and as such may not be approvable by EPA because of the CAIR vacatur. Options being considered in response to the CAIR Vacatur include requesting a clean data determination for the PM SIP, and revising the ozone SIP to remove references to CAIR. States are also discussing the possibility of requesting redesignation to attainment for the 1997 PM standard. A maintenance plan will be required that would establish new base year, interim year, and outyear emission caps and motor vehicle emission budgets. The COG Board approved release of the Climate Change Report for public comment. Comments are due by September 30.

B. Report of the Air Quality Public Advisory Committee (AQPAC)

Mr. Zaragoza reported on the recent meeting of AQPAC. AQPAC is in the process of preparing a comment letter on COG's Climate Change Report. AQPAC is also reviewing the proposed revisions to the bylaws, and will begin the process of soliciting new members.

C. Report of the Clean Air Partners

Linda Smyth reported on activities of Clean Air Partners. COG staff will give a summary of the 2008 ozone season as part of today's agenda. The number of participants receiving AirAlerts doubled again this year, from approximately 1,200 in 2007 to more than 2,500 in 2008. The 2008 public awareness campaign concluded at the end of July 2008. PRR is in the process of compiling information on the overall results of the campaign in preparation for sponsor meetings to be conducted in October/November 2008. The Education Program Manager continues to disseminate the curriculum and outreach materials to schools throughout the region. Three

aqueous parts washer rebates have been processed, one for an auto repair facility in Woodbridge, VA and two for a large commercial printer in Rockville, MD. The rebate program will continue in FY 2009 and the program will be marketed through various means including direct mail, presentations at meetings, and outreach to trade associations and equipment vendors. The final Prince Georges County Air Quality Strategic Outreach Plan project report has been submitted to the County and is undergoing internal review. The report includes 15 recommendations which support Phase 1 of the County's Air Quality Outreach Strategic Plan (employee participation programs). Tracey Fun (Washington Gas) will continue as Chair of Clean Air Partners in FY 2009 with Gary Allen (Center for Chesapeake Communities) serving as Vice Chair. New Board members include Montgomery County Councilmember Roger Berliner (COG's Climate Change Steering Committee), Brian Holmes (Maryland Highway Contractors Association), Kristen Lupin (University of Maryland), and Jim Williams (John Hopkins University). Clean Air Partners is actively recruiting elected officials from the District of Columbia and Baltimore to fill two vacancies.

3. Ozone Season Summary

Sunil Kumar presented the ozone season summary. To date, there have been 3 code red, 13 code orange, and 51 code yellow days. He reviewed the days with the highest 8-hour ozone levels. On July 17, 15 monitors exceeded the standard, the highest concentration was 112 ppb. On June 12, 13 monitors exceeded the standard, the highest concentration was 102 ppb. On July 18, 13 monitors exceeded the standard, the highest concentration was 97 ppb. On June 12 and July 17, back trajectories showed that pollution transport was from the northwest. On July 18, a recirculation pattern occurred with transport from the south. There were 3 days with potential exceedances of the new daily PM standard of 35 ug/m³ on June 14, July 18, and July 29.

In response to a question, Sunil Kumar said that the three days in 2008 that exceeded the 2006 PM daily standard are not presented as code orange days because EPA has not yet adjusted the AQI to reflect the new lower standard.

Virginia DEQ will be investigating the possible PM exceedances as exceptional events due to wildfires south of the region.

4. PM_{2.5} Clean Data Determination Request (ACTION)

Joan Rohlf provided background information on a possible request to EPA for a clean data determination for the 1997 PM_{2.5} annual standard. EPA may not be able to approve the PM_{2.5} State Implementation Plan (SIP) submitted to EPA in April 2008 because of the recent vacatur of the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR). A possible course of action for the region is to request that EPA issue a clean data determination for the region. If EPA finalizes such a determination all planning requirements associated with the 1997 PM_{2.5} NAAQS would be suspended. The next step would be for the region to revise the SIP to remove references to CAIR and include substitute control measures or to request redesignation and prepare a maintenance plan. A clean data determination request would also serve to protect the region from possible transportation sanctions. Members said that it will be important to develop clear public education messages to explain the situation. A motion was made and seconded to 1) request that EPA issue a clean data determination, 2) continue work on developing a revised SIP for the PM_{2.5} standards, and 3) request that EPA take steps to resolve the situation with the CAIR vacatur. The motion was approved with no objections.

5. AQPAC Bylaws Amendment

Leta Mach provided information on the AQPAC bylaws amendment. A committee was formed to amend the AQPAC bylaws. Members include Leta Mach, Phil Mendelson, Jay Fisette, Larry Zaragoza, and Peter Owen. The group has met twice to consider amendments. The goal is to revitalize AQPAC and expand membership. The amended bylaws are not yet completed so will be presented to MWAQC for action at the next meeting.

6. COG Climate Change Report: MWAQC Comments (ACTION)

Jeff King provided background information on the COG Climate Change Report and presented a draft MWAQC comment letter for approval. The COG Board of Directors approved a draft Climate Change Report on July 9 for public comment. The public comment period ends September 30. The MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee approved a draft comment letter. The letter supports the recommendations in the report and urges early action and adoption of measures that provide multipollutant benefits. A motion was made and seconded to approve the comment letter. The motion was approved with no objections.

7. Other Business

Members discussed the pending EPA designations for the 24-hour PM_{2.5} daily standard. EPA proposed that the entire Washington, DC Metropolitan area be designated as attainment based on the 2005-2007 monitoring data. Designations will be finalized in December 2008. There is a public comment period and EPA may receive adverse comments. There was no consensus on whether MWAQC should submit a comment to EPA about the proposed designations.

8. State and Local Air Agency Reports

Roger Thunell reported for Maryland. Maryland's Climate Action Report was approved and is available on the MDE website. The regional haze SIP has been sent to federal land managers for review and comment.

Jessica Daniels reported for the District. The District is developing a regional haze SIP and is preparing a Climate Action Plan.

Tom Ballou reported for Virginia. The Virginia Climate Change Commission is developing a climate change report that will identify ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. More information can be found on the Virginia DEQ website.

9. Date for Next Meeting and Adjourn: The next meeting will be held on December 10, from 10:00 - 11:30am. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.