



AIR AND CLIMATE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ACPAC)

November 13, 2023
5:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.

DRAFT TELECONFERENCE MEETING SUMMARY

ACPAC ATTENDEES: Julie Kimmel, William Marsh, James Wang, Claire August, Jacqueline Norris, Peter Mecca, Mark Rodeffer, William Washburn

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES: Tiara Lester, Amneh Minkara, George Auburn, Elspeth Callahan

COG STAFF: Leah Boggs, Kelsey Boatwright, Robert Christopher, Jeff King

5:35 P.M. 1. CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS, MEETING SUMMARY APPROVAL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Julie Kimmel, Co-Chair

The meeting was called to order, introductions were made by members and COG staff. The meeting did not have a quorum (6 members) therefore amendments were skipped. Julie Kimmel takes place as co-chair due to absence of chair. Leah Boggs gives announcement about Environmental Justice work and includes the following details:

- MWAQC committee voted to form a Subcommittee dedicated to guiding EJ work.
- The details of how that subcommittee will proceed and guide the ongoing EJ work are still being formed.
- Staff will work to secure a consultant to support that work once details are finalized.
- ACPAC is currently still tasked with conducting the EJ Toolkit update.

5:40 P.M. 2. 2022 UTILITY ENERGY UPDATE

Robert Christopher, COG Staff

COG Staff will provide an update on the 2022 Utility Energy Data update including information on renewable energy system deployment, and electricity and natural gas consumption.

Presentation Summary

- **Initial background information on utility update:**
 - COG send out its annual Utility Energy Data Survey to the nine utilities that serve the region.
 - Survey deadline is end of March, staff then processes and analyzes the data.
 - Analysis includes a quality control with local jurisdictions and utilities.
 - Summaries include tabs for electricity and natural gas data, categorized by jurisdiction, utility year, and sector (residential and commercial).

- **Trends Overview:**
 - A graph presented annual electricity and natural gas trends.
 - Electricity consumption trend showed a steady increase from 2009 to 2022, with a plateau between 2011 and 2017.
 - Natural gas consumption exhibited more variability, influenced by weather and potential COVID-19 impacts in 2020.
- **Residential and Commercial Breakdown:**
 - Another graph detailed residential and commercial natural gas and electricity consumption.
 - Residential natural gas consumption exceeded commercial, contrary to electricity consumption, where commercial usage drove overall growth, especially attributed to data center growth in northern Virginia.
- **Renewable Energy Systems Update:**
 - An update on grid-connected renewable energy systems revealed substantial growth.
 - The region exceeded the 2020 goal of 30,000 systems, with nearly 73,000 systems installed by 2022, boasting a total capacity of 807 MW.
 - The COG Board recently adopted a new solar goal aiming for 250,000 solar systems by 2030.

Discussion

- Qualifications of “microgrid” and how they are quantified
- Data of fossil fueled power plants - managed by EPA, Egrid Database
- 2 largest single carbon emitting sources in MWCOG’s MSA are two different natural gas power plants that were built to power data centers
- Methodology has switched overtime from actual emissions generated to consumption-based

6:00 P.M. 3. EPA’S 2023 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

Tiara Lester, Frederick County Sustainability Program Administrator

Presentation Summary

- **Introduction:** Tiara Lester discussed Frederick County's project under EPA's Environmental Justice Government Program, aimed at addressing historical underinvestment in environmental justice communities.
- **Grant Overview:** Frederick County was one of 88 grand recipients selected for funding under the Inflation Reduction Act. The three-year program supports initiatives impacting communities burdened by environmental harms.
- **Project Title: Building Frederick County Together:** The project aims to tackle issues like heat resilience, energy use burden, poor air quality, and lack of awareness in environmental justice communities.
- **Budget Allocation:** The proposed budget includes funds for community-based organizations, HVAC replacement program, community engagement, staff time, and various project-related expenses.
- **Deliverables and Goals:**
 - Establish an HVAC replacement program for 48 households with median income eligibility by December 31, 2026.
 - Collaborate with internal and external partners for equity-based community engagement processes, reaching at least 5000 community members.
 - Implement a climate equity participation payment process to support residents engaging in public input sessions.

- **Community-Based Organizations' Roles:**
 - Asian American Center: Promote public input sessions, include Division of Energy and Environment programs in annual events, and provide interpreter services.
 - Habitat for Humanity: Develop a referral process, participate in public input sessions, and coordinate program applicants with the Division of Energy.
 - Mobilize Frederick: Develop an informed curriculum, conduct public input sessions, establish air quality monitors, and provide outreach and education programs.

Discussion:

- Low to Moderate Income Energy Efficiency Program - similar to the Weatherization Assistance Program - funded through Maryland Energy Administration.
- Frederick County is working in collaboration with the City of Frederick to create a joint Community Wide Climate and Energy Action Plan.
- Community to determine needs for reducing urban heat island.

6:35 P.M. 4. NOX-EMITTING GAS FURNACES AND WATER HEATERS PHASE OUT *Amneh Minkara, Sierra Club*

Amneh Minkara will brief members on the California Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) newly approved zero-NOx standard for appliances.

Presentation Summary

Introduction: In March, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District approved new rules aimed at eliminating nitrogen oxide emissions from natural gas-fueled appliances.

- These regulations, expected to have a significant impact on air quality and public health, will enforce a ban on the sale of high-emission natural gas water heaters by 2027 and restrict the use of high-emission residential furnaces by 2029, with larger commercial water heaters facing restrictions by 2031.
- To delve deeper into these developments, the presentation covers various aspects of the appliance standards, including their implications, state standards landscape, and federal advocacy.

Key Points:

- **Pollution Standards:** Appliance standards are essential regulatory tools targeting emissions of pollutants from the building sector, particularly nitrogen oxide (NOx), carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and carbon dioxide.
 - While efficiency standards focus on reducing energy consumption, appliance pollution standards directly target the emissions of pollutants, crucial for achieving zero-emission goals.
- **Disproportionate Impacts:** A Sierra Club report highlights the impact of building pollution on public health, emphasizing the disproportionate effects on vulnerable communities, including communities of color, children, and the elderly.
- Analysis of EPA data shows the significant contribution of building emissions to NOx and carbon dioxide levels, underlining the urgency of addressing this issue.
- The Bay Area's recent decision to adopt a zero NOx standard for appliances reflects a growing momentum toward more stringent regulations, with California's CARB and South Coast also moving in this direction.
- **State Implementation Plans (SIPs)** play a crucial role in addressing non-attainment with federal ozone standards, with various regions and states updating their SIPs to incorporate building emissions.
- **EPA Petition:** The Sierra Club, along with partners, submitted a petition to the EPA urging the listing of fossil fuel-fired heating appliances as a category of stationary sources of air pollution, with a proposed zero-emission standard by 2030.
 - Exploring Section 111(g) of the Clean Air Act, the Sierra Club is investigating the potential for governors to petition the EPA, seeking faster responses to address building pollution on a broader scale.

Discussion:

- Strategic stakeholder engagement lowered corporate pushback
- 2030 date is seen as fair amount of time for manufacturers
- Addressing gas appliances through federal advocacy at the Consumer Product Safety Commission
- IRA compromise to include gas furnaces
- PPA to decide whether they will end inclusion of energy star efficient gas furnaces and only include electric appliances for home efficiency rebates
- Regulators with ability to act in the Washington DC region in lieu of having an “Air Quality District”
 - DC DOE, Maryland MDE, Virginia DEQ
 - Each state and DC must propose their own control measure package/plans or be in agreeance

7:10 P.M. 5. NEW OFFICERS SUBCOMMITTEE AND 2024 RECRUITMENT

Julie Kimmel, Vice Chair

Leah Boggs, COG Staff Committee Members

Appointment of Nominating Subcommittee for Chair and Vice Chair Positions

- As the current Chair and Vice Chair approach the end of their terms in January 2024, the committee discusses the formation of a subcommittee responsible for nominating the next leaders.
- The subcommittee, comprising three ACPAC members from Maryland, DC, and Virginia, will develop a list of nominees.
 - The Chair, in consultation with the Vice Chair, is tasked with selecting the subcommittee members.
 - The subcommittee's main responsibilities include assessing member engagement and attendance to compile a diverse list of nominees for both Chair and Vice Chair.
 - Current Chair and Vice Chair terms conclude in January 2024.

Appointment: Subcommittee members selected by Vice Chair Julie Kimmel.

- James Wang from Maryland and William Marsh from Virginia selected by Vice Chair and agree to serve on Subcommittee.
- Subcommittee to present a list of nominations in January.
- Recruitment will include no less than 5 members, possibly 8.
- Vote for new leadership to take place during the January meeting.
- Recruitment period will be from December 1 to January 12.

2024 New Member Recruitment by Leah Boggs

- Six members' term is ending at the end of January 2024.
- The recruitment campaign is December 1, 2023 through January 15, 2024.
- Members received the recruitment toolkit and announcement to assist in outreach and publication.
- COG Staff will do direct recruitment through their stakeholder network.

7:25 P.M. 5. NEXT ACPAC MEETING AND ADJOURN

- **2024 Meeting schedule** (*Virtual meeting only):
January 22, 2024*
March 18, 2024*
May 20, 2024*
July 15, 2024*
September 16, 2024 (Potential hybrid meeting)
November 18, 2024*

Meeting Documents:

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2023/11/13/air-and-climate-policy-advisory-committee/>

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials.
Visit www.mwcog.org/accommodations or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD).

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