



AIR AND CLIMATE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 22, 2019
5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

ACPAC MEMBERS (*VIA PHONE)

Ron Rodriguez
Gretchen Goldman
John Howes
Andrew Kambour
Hilary Lewis
Robin Lewis
Sarah Mazur*
Natalie Pien*
Hyon Rah*
Rodney Sobin*
Glenna Tinney*
Tamara Toles O'Laughlin*

GUESTS

Guillermo Ortiz

STAFF

Amanda Campbell
Sunil Kumar*
Tim Masters
Steve Walz

1. CALL TO ORDER, AGENDA, MEETING SUMMARY APPROVAL

Gretchen Goldman, ACPAC Chair

The agenda was approved. The meeting summary was approved with the addition of Hilary Lewis' name to the list of attendees. Chair Goldman shared that she attended the MWAQC Strategic Session which identified several recommendations for improvement. Mr. Walz added that a report will come out later this week for review.

2. AIR QUALITY PROGRAM OUTLOOK

Amanda Campbell and Sunil Kumar, COG Staff

Initial work to develop the region's emissions inventory for the 2015 ozone air quality standard is underway. The members of the Technical Air Quality Committee are waiting to send questions on the requirements to the EPA until after the federal shutdown. Achieving the standard on schedule will depend on summer season ozone data over the next two years. The region may ask for a one-year extension or be bumped up to moderate air quality if the 70ppb standard is not met by 2021. In the meantime, to continue to reduce emissions, COG staff are holding follow-up webinars to the "What We Can Do" report and are evaluating the potential of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs adopted by state and local governments to be counted for credit in future air quality plans.

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

3. GRID ALTERNATIVES

Alexandra 'Andie' Wyatt, GRID Alternatives Policy and Regulatory Manager.

GRID Alternatives is the nation's largest non-profit solar installer. Their focus is on bringing access to renewable energy to low-income households and communities. GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic affiliate has installed over 1,800 kW of solar systems in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The organization also provides weatherization services. Federal, state, and local tax credits and incentives, donations, and volunteer hours help support their work. About half of the trainees that graduated from their program have found long-term jobs. GRID actively works to ensure that consumers rights are protected for the clients they serve. Legislation in DC, MD, and Virginia that increase solar-carveouts and renewable portfolio standards can help create a favorable market for solar. DC and MD have favorable policies, Virginia is moving in the right direction, but there is less focus on solar for low- and moderate-income residences. Community solar is just getting started in the DC metro region.

Robin Lewis added that the first community solar installation in Prince George's County is under construction in Fort Washington. Ms. Wyatt responded to several questions. She said that customers are drawn by the cost savings and the moral motivation to improve the environment. In some cases, homeowner's associations oppose the aesthetics of solar panels; in others, they are encouraged. Community education and engagement is important in building support for larger installations that may require fencing. The solar tariffs have affected their business. After reaching their 20-year lifespan, owners can request that solar panels be removed and recycled. Recyclability and refurbish-ability are increasingly considered in solar panel design.

4. CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Tim Masters, COG Staff

The Maryland General Assembly session runs January 9 to May 29; the Virginia General Assembly convenes January 9 and ends in April. The District of Columbia Council runs year-round. Major developments include:

- CleanEnergy DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018 – passed in December
- MD Clean Energy Jobs Act – proposed
- MD Community Solar Bill – proposed
- MD Green Amendment to the Constitution – proposed
- VA: net metering bills and solar bills – proposed
- VA: RGGI revenues bill – proposed

On the Federal level, a Green New Deal is under development – an initiative that would aim to address climate change and income inequality.

5. MEMBER TIME

Hilary Lewis, ACPAC Member

Ms. Lewis described the mission of her employer, Earthworks. Earthworks helps draw attention to methane and other air emissions from oil and gas industry infrastructure using videos made with a special imaging camera that makes the otherwise clear and colorless gases visible. Their advocacy has helped spur communities to engage their state authorities in enforcing existing regulations on methane leaks to reduce greenhouse gases and public health threats. Methane is 86 times more potent in warming the atmosphere than carbon dioxide.

6. ADJOURN. THE NEXT ACPAC MEETING IS FEBRUARY 11.