

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee
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DRAFT MINUTES OF July 29, 2015 MEETING (HELD VIA PHONE CONFERENCE)

Attendance:

Members and Alternates

David Snyder, City of Falls Church, Chair
Brienne Nadeau, District of Columbia Council Member, Vice Chair
Michael DeMarco, City of Fairfax, Vice Chair
Jason Groth, Charles County
Redella "Del" Pepper, Council Member, City of Alexandria
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Ram Tangirala, District Department of the Environment
Brian Hug, Maryland Department of the Environment
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation
Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County
Lisa Feldt, Montgomery County
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
Gretchen Goldman, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

Other Attendees

Molly Berger, Maryland Department of the Environment
Colleen Turner, M Baker Int., representing Maryland Department of Transportation

Staff

Amanda Campbell, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)/ Department of Environmental Programs (DEP)
Maia Davis, COG/DEP
Jennifer Desimone, COG/DEP
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Eulalie Gower-Lucas, COG/Department of Transportation Planning (DTP)
Ron Milone, COG/DTP
Brandon Fox, COG/DEP
Dusan Vuksan, COG/DTP
Steve Walz, Director, COG/DEP

1. Public Comment Period, Approval of Minutes, Chair's Remarks

Vice Chair DeMarco called the phone conference to order at 12:05pm.

Members approved the minutes from the May 20, 2015 meeting, and the current meeting agenda.

2. Committee Reports

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), *Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP on behalf of Tad Aburn, MDE*

At TAC's last meeting on July 7, 2015, members heard presentations on the ozone season. The group discussed issues related to the 1997 PM2.5 Maintenance plan revisions, including updated mobile emissions budgets being developed with MOVES2014, and the timeline if the committee wishes to update emissions data from other sources. TAC discussed whether to update the draft Reasonable Further Progress plan that was initiated last year in case the region does not meet the current ozone standard. In addition, the group heard about new regulatory and voluntary control measures that would help meet the PM2.5 standard if transportation buffers are triggered in future inventories. TAC discussed updates to state and local measures in the Regional Action Plan and follow-up actions.

Mr. Walz briefed members on Kanti Srikanth's (COG/DTP) testimony on behalf of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations to the Senate Environment and Public Works committee on the implications of the proposed Ozone Standard. TAC was briefed on the follow-up letter that Dave Snyder sent to the Senate committee on behalf of MWAQC.

TAC heard a presentation on the Carbon Monoxide (CO) monitoring network and conformity issues; CO monitoring is expected to end in 2016. Finally, TAC heard a briefing on the Mercury and Toxics Rule (MATS) court decision.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), *Gretchen Goldman, Vice Chair*

ACPAC has been focusing on judging the Climate & Energy Leadership Awards applications – 33 were received which is twice as many as last year. Results will be available soon. ACPAC is interested in pursuing new topics and other ways to be involved. The group created a subcommittee on environmental justice and hopes to hear from more speakers from local community groups.

Chair Snyder said he looked forward to hearing more about environmental justice at the next MWAQC meeting. Ms. Hawkins-Nixon asked if local jurisdiction staff could participate in the environmental justice subcommittee. Mr. Walz responded that COG staff will share the workgroup meeting information if interested MWAQC representatives wish to participate.

Clean Air Partners (CAP), *Jennifer Desimone, Managing Director*

Clean Air Partners' summer media campaign is well underway, including online and transit ads to raise awareness of CAP and AirAlerts. CAP's online ads are sponsored in partnership with AOL. Transit ads run May through September, on Metro and local bus services, and others. The popular YouTube video series featuring Larry and Lola Lung has been posted on CAP Facebook page for two weeks. CAP has an active social media presence on Facebook and Twitter.

In partnership with WGL and Commuter Connections, CAP launched a new promotional campaign, Clean Air Deeds Concert. The promotional event includes a concert ticket give-away targeting residents within the greater metropolitan Washington, D.C. region and asks residents to perform and post/share clean air "good deeds" for a chance to win a pair of concert tickets. Spokesperson participated in a numerous interviews such as WJLA, NewsChannel 8's Let's Talk Live, among others. The summer education team has been busy reaching 4,000 children in summer camp programs – 1,000 more than last year. CAP elected new board members from a

variety of fields of expertise.

3. Ozone Season Update, Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP

Mr. Kumar reported that so far this season the region has seen 77 code green air quality days, 88 code yellow days, and only one code orange day. On the code orange day, June 11th, ozone levels reached 88 parts per billion (ppb). The high levels were likely due to winds from the northwest that typically transport ozone to the region along with clear skies, light winds, and higher temperatures. Smoke from Canada wildfires may have also contributed. Similar conditions during the two days prior caused ozone to build up in the region.

Annual ozone exceedances have shown a strong downward trend since 1997. The region has not seen a code red air quality day since 2012, and the number of annual code orange days is falling as well. Before 2006, days with high temperatures over 90 degrees always resulted in an ozone exceedance. Since 2006, the air is cleaner, and days over 90 are no longer destined to result in an ozone exceedance. Many federal, state, and local emissions control programs have led to the improvement in air quality.

Ozone design values for the region have been declining as well. The 2012-2014 average was 76ppb, which is just above the current (2008) standard of 75ppb, but above the proposed ozone standard of 65-70ppb.

Fine particle (PM2.5) levels in the region have resulted in many code yellow and green days this season, but no code oranges. Canadian wildfire smoke may have contributed to the frequency of code yellow days. The region has shown good progress in reducing PM2.5 exceedances over the last 15 years, and readings are well below the standard. The region is currently in maintenance for the 1997 PM2.5 standard. The standard was recently revised to 12micrograms/m³, but the region is well-positioned to meet the new standard.

In response to questions, Mr. Kumar explained that clear skies, light winds, and winds coming from the northwest that transport emissions to the region can contribute to code yellow air quality. This season, when winds were from the northwest, there have often been cold fronts with rain that have mitigated its effects. Also, upwind emissions have been generally lower.

Mr. Walz reminded the committee of the Clean Air Partners AirAlerts that publish air quality forecasts for the next three days.

4. Recent Court and EPA Rulings

A. Supreme Court Decision on the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard (MATS) Rule, Jeff King, COG/DEP

Mr. King explained that mercury is emitted by coal power plants and is a potent neurotoxin. In 1990 Congress directed the EPA to develop a study of mercury air toxics under the Clean Air Act. In 2000, EPA made a determination that it was “appropriate and necessary” to regulate air toxics from coal and oil-fired electric utilities. In 2004, a rule was issued that was later vacated by the courts. A new final rule came into effect in 2012 that established emissions limits with a 3 year compliance period and a 1-year extension option. The 2012 rule was litigated up to the Supreme Court, which decided in June that EPA did not adequately take into account the cost of the MATS rule and remanded it to the Court of Appeals. Mr. King believes that it is likely that there will be a delay in implementation but

the rule will remain in effect while the court asks EPA to more thoroughly analyze costs. In our region, it is expected to have little or no impact since power plants are already limiting mercury through various state level initiatives such as SO2 scrubbers.

B. EPA Findings on the Good Neighbor State Implementation Plan, Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP

On June 30, 2015, EPA issued a finding that 24 states have failed to submit complete “good neighbor” State Implementation Plans (SIPs). These plans must demonstrate how the state will address air pollution that is transported across its border and interferes with other states’ ability to meet and maintain ozone standards.

When EPA had issued the 2008 ozone standard, states were required to submit a good neighbor SIP within 3 years, but many did not, partly due to confusion over legal developments related to the Cross State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR), lack of data, and lack of guidance from EPA. Now EPA is working with states to develop Good Neighbor SIPs, including Virginia. Mr. Walz added that part of the difficulty in developing good neighbor SIPs has been the lack of modeling data to support the plans. Mr. Kumar clarified for the group that the states needed to know their emissions obligations for the Good Neighbor SIPs – how many ppb of ozone were coming to their state from upwind, and their contribution to downwind states. The Ozone Transport Commission had completed modeling with 2007 as a base year, and is now working on a new model for a 2011 base year.

Mr. Ballou shared that Virginia has participated with EPA in efforts to address the statute that EPA had neglected and develop the needed emissions inventories. Virginia, like many other states, has continued to take actions to reduce emissions, and is working out how to address the provision now.

5. Ozone NAAQS: Testimony/MWAQC Letter to Senate Committee on Environmental and Public Works, Steve Walz, COG/DEP

Mr. Walz explained that at the request of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Kanti Srikanth, COG/DTP testified on the proposed ozone standard regarding what resources and actions would be needed to address the new standard. Chair Snyder sent a letter on behalf of MWAQC that highlighted the actions being taken, along with a copy of the Regional Action Plan’s state and regional measures to show what was being done to bring the region into compliance with current and future standards.

Mr. Walz added that the US Chamber of Commerce recently issued a report on energy issues that presented the National Capital Region’s air quality in a negative light, using incorrect data. He is working with the CoC which agreed to correct the data. The National Association of Manufacturers drafted a report with similar-type inaccuracies; COG is providing them with correct data. If members would like more information, contact Steve Walz at swalz@mwacog.org.

Ms. Nadeau suggested that MWAQC communicate the issues to other local chambers as well. Chair Snyder agreed and suggested communicating the progress the region is making to set the record straight.

6. State and Local Air Reports

Virginia

No report.

District of Columbia

Mr. Tangirala reported that the District of Columbia is developing two rules - one for low sulfur home heating oil fuels. A hearing will be held next week. The second rule proposed is an anti-idling rule for off-road vehicles.

Maryland

Mr. Hug reported that Maryland continues to make progress on the NOx rule for Maryland power plants.

7. The next meeting will be scheduled in September at a date to be determined.