

**Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee**  
**Suite 300, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002-4239**  
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**DRAFT MINUTES OF December 18, 2013 MEETING**

**Attendance:**

**Members and Alternates**

George "Tad" Aburn, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)  
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) (via phone)  
Cecily Beall, District of Columbia, Dept. of Environment  
Hon. John Cook, District Supervisor, Fairfax County (via phone)  
Hon. Robert Day, Council Member, City of College Park  
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Hon. Jay Fisette, Arlington County Board of Supervisors  
Diane Franks, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)  
Hon. David Grosso, Council Member, District of Columbia  
Hon. Leta Mach, Council Member, City of Greenbelt  
Hon. Redella "Del" Pepper, Council Member, City of Alexandria  
Caroline Petti, Chair, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee  
Hon. Hans Riemer, Council Member, Montgomery County  
Hon. David Snyder, City of Falls Church  
Ram Tangirala, District of Columbia Department of the Environment

**Other Attendees**

James Banks, for Councilmember David Grosso, District of Columbia  
Jessica Daniels, District of Columbia Department of the Environment  
Andrew Kambour, Vice Chair, ACPAC  
Sally Kane  
Joe Kruger, Bipartisan Policy Center

**Staff**

Amanda Campbell, COG/DEP  
Jennifer Desimone, COG/DEP  
Stuart Freudberg, Senior Director, COG  
Matt Kroneberger, COG/OPA  
Jeff King, COG/DEP  
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP  
Isabel Ricker, COG/DEP  
Joan Rohlf, COG/DEP  
John Swanson, COG/DTP  
Bob Griffiths, COG/DTP

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

Chair Mach called the meeting to order at 12:10pm. The minutes from the September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting were approved with no changes. The agenda was approved with no changes.

Chair Mach noted that several local developments regarding actions that may impact air quality in the region occurred since the last Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) meeting, including deactivation of coal-burning units at local power plants, the Supreme Court heard arguments regarding EPA's Cross State Air Pollution Rule on December 10th, and several New England and Mid-Atlantic states petitioned EPA requesting that nine upwind states be added to the Ozone Transport Region.

## **2. Committee Reports**

### ***Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Cecily Beall, DDOE.***

TAC last met on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013. TAC discussed the development of Base Year 2011, Reasonable Further Progress Year 2017, and Attainment Year 2018 emissions inventories for the 2008 Ozone Standard State Implementation Plan (SIP). As part of an agreement in the fine particle maintenance plan, states decided to develop a Reasonable Further Progress plan in anticipation of reclassification from 'marginal' to 'moderate' ozone attainment. Part of this plan entails developing an emissions inventory for 2017. In addition, states decided to include the development of an emissions inventory for 2018—the moderate ozone attainment year -- in the MWAQC FY15 work plan.

TAC also heard a presentation on EPA's proposed greenhouse gas rule for power plants, discussed the draft Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, and discussed the status of state rules and data regarding distributed generators.

### ***Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), Caroline Petti, Chair***

ACPAC met three times since the last MWAQC meeting. In October, ACPAC heard a presentation on smart growth and transit, viewed a bicycle outreach video, and discussed Maryland's and District of Columbia's greenhouse gas plans. In December, APCAC learned about renewable portfolio standards and a presentation on diesel generators and their impact on air quality. The committee filed comments on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, emphasizing the need to address climate change and air quality challenges. ACPAC has a new Twitter account: @airandclimate. ACPAC celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November, and will welcome new members in 2014.

### ***Clean Air Partners, Jennifer Desimone, Acting Managing Director***

Clean Air Partners' 2013 media campaign included radio, online, and transit advertisements, leveraging funds to create a total value over six times the campaign's budget. WBAL-TV interviewed Clean Air Partners' Vice Chair, Brian O'Malley about holiday tips to improve air quality. CAP's third annual slogan contest winners are:

Grades 4-6: *We can't stop breathing it – so let's start cleaning it!*

Grades 7-8: *Ride a bike, take the bus, cleaner air is up to us.*

## **3. Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, John Swanson, COG Transportation Planning**

Chair Mach said that COG Senior Director Ron Kirby presented the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan to MWAQC at their September meeting. Mr. Kirby had just completed comments

on the plan when he tragically passed away in November. The revised plan is out for public comment until January 11<sup>th</sup>. COG is hoping that the TPB will adopt the plan in January. MWAQC's Conformity Subcommittee and TAC will prepare comments on the plan and share them with MWAQC members before the January 11<sup>th</sup> deadline for comments.

Mr. Swanson said that the revised Regional Transportation Priorities Plan will be published Thursday. The connection between transportation and air quality is woven throughout the plan. Goal 1 (provide a comprehensive range of transportation options), two (promote a strong regional economy, including a healthy regional core and dynamic activity centers), and five (enhance environmental quality, and protect natural and cultural resources) contain aspects that influence air quality positively. Many of the seventeen strategies outlined in the report relate to reducing auto-dependency, such as promoting electric vehicles (EVs), funding transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit-oriented development. The electric vehicles strategies, such as implementing public charging stations, tax credits, HOV priority, and EVs in public fleets, were informed by COG's EV work.

The plan aims to identify high-level strategies that are in reach and address significant transportation challenges. The strategies aim to take the region in the right direction, but are not necessarily measurable. The key purpose of the report is to help planners consider regional priorities when implementing projects: think regionally; act locally.

Ms. Rohlfs said that MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will provide a comment letter for the Executive Committee to review before submitting.

#### **4. Role of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Climate Change Policy, Joe Kruger, Director for Energy & Environment, Bipartisan Policy Center**

Mr. Kruger said that the EPA's greenhouse gas rules will have more bearing on long term emissions, and are pointing to a possible fundamental shift in the relationship of federal to state and local policy.

Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA proposed greenhouse gas standards for new power plants in 2012, and again in 2013, and is expected to release performance standards for existing power plants and modified/reconstructed power plants in June, 2014. President Obama's National Climate Action Plan sets a timetable for EPA to work with states, industry, and stakeholders to develop carbon pollution standards that build on state leadership and provide flexibility.

EPA's performance standards reflect the degree of emissions achievable through the application of the 'best system of emission reduction', taking into account cost, health & environmental impact, and energy requirements. Under the Existing Source Standard, states are responsible for developing, implementing, and enforcing the standards. If states fail to do so, EPA steps in. The process is similar to developing a State Implementation Plan, but operates under a different authority. There is potential for states to tap into a spectrum of greenhouse gas reduction options from efficiency upgrades to combined heat and power. Local governments could play a role in emissions reductions.

States may choose to apply the standards per unit emissions, averaging between affected units, or system-wide. EPA has not yet defined how new standards will interact with current state

greenhouse gas or ozone (co-benefit) activities. State plans for existing power plant emissions are tentatively due June 2016, but compliance timelines are still unclear. Going forward, Congress and/or the courts may modify these controversial rules. The Supreme Court declined to review a challenge to EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases, but agreed to review a permitting issue. Another question is how power company compliance will be affected by other trends such as the shifts in the energy market from coal to natural gas.

Members discussed the changing market forces that caused a shift from coal to natural gas, carbon capture and sequestration, and cap & trade programs such as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in the northeast.

In response to Mr. Reimer's question, Mr. Kruger said that new sources of natural gas that have become more accessible due to hydraulic fracturing have contributed to the lower cost of natural gas and the shift of plants, like NRG's, from coal to gas. Several members noted the air quality benefits of natural gas, but acknowledged other consequences of extraction practices.

Mr. Fisette asked about the role of carbon capture and sequestration (CCS). Mr. Kruger explained that three projects in the US have demonstrated its availability, and that the New Source standards would require new coal plants to implement CCS.

Mr. Kruger said that many states support a cap & trade, mass-based, market-based systemic approach. Mr. Ballou said that Virginia is waiting to see how best to approach the greenhouse gas rules and whether or not cap & trade is a viable option legally. Mr. Aburn added that RGGI's 'cap and return' approach, in which revenues are invested in homeowner programs that reduce citizens' bills, could prove to be an effective strategy.

#### **5. Nominating Committee Report, Election for Officers for 2014, Chair Leta Mach**

All present unanimously approved of the proposed MWAQC 2014 slate of officers (see Memo: Proposed Slate of Officers for 2014). Chair Mach welcomed the 2014 officers.

#### **6. State and Local Air Reports**

##### ***Virginia***

Mr. Ballou reported that Virginia is finalizing the package for EPA to request a SIP revision for removal of the stage 2 vapor recovery requirement in Virginia. EPA guidance was redundant; the revision identifies a path to upgrade to newer control technologies if it can be demonstrated that the method accomplishes equivalent reduction. The revision is out for public comment in January.

##### ***Maryland***

Mr. Aburn said that in Maryland, coal plants that were not operating on as many days overall found it was possible to run on a few days during the ozone season without controls and avoid reaching their emissions limit. Maryland has a proposed rule to require these plants to run controls during the ozone season.

Mr. Aburn reported that several states including Delaware, Connecticut, and Maryland are involved in challenging EPA's refusal to create a 15-state attainment area for ozone. Maryland and Delaware are challenging Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and West Virginia's

claim that they are not required to include Good Neighbor demonstrations in their State Implementation Plans.

MDE is proposing a collaborative partnership with 28 states to address the air quality transport issue. Mr. Aburn said that 70% of air pollutants originate upwind from the DC area. Maryland's stage 2 program creates incentives for electric vehicle infrastructure. MDE is also implementing the new RGGI program. The governor's priorities for the 2014 legislative session include renewable portfolio standards, Empower Maryland, and a zero waste initiative. The zero waste initiative is a long term, aspirational statewide goal.

Ms. Petti pointed out that the Air Alerts reported particulate matter based code yellow and orange days in December. Mr. Aburn responded that particulate matter may have been caused by fireplaces. Fine particles are trapped near the surface by temperature inversions that contribute poor air quality in winter.

### ***District of Columbia***

Ms. Beall reported that the District of Columbia is lacking the near-road monitors needed for the particulate matter attainment status documentation, without which the state would be designated 'unclassified'.

The District of Columbia, having no point sources, is focusing on new projects such as identifying, inspecting and permitting body shops, following the taxicab effort which phases out taxicab vehicles older than seven model years by 2018.

### **7. Staff Report, Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP**

Chair Mach expressed the bittersweet tone with which the air quality community commends Joan Rohlfs' outstanding service and wishes her well in retirement.

Mr. Freudberg said that Ms. Rohlfs started at COG in 1988 in charge of the recycling program, and became Chief of Environmental Resources in 1997. She has authored dozens of plans, reports and regulatory analyses. A few years ago, she began overseeing COG's new climate change, energy, and green buildings programs. Ms. Rohlfs provided valuable leadership in DEP and in the region, and has thoroughly trained her staff team to continue the great work that Ms. Rohlfs began.

Mr. Fisette explained that Ms. Rohlfs has been well-known for being reliable, responsible, and respectful. Ms. Beall praised Ms. Rohlfs ability to convey complex information and serve as an effective arbitrator. Mr. Aburn observed that over her tenure, air quality has improved substantially. Mr. Ballou presented Ms. Rohlfs with a certificate, noting that COG, MWAQC, and air quality benefited from her leadership. Ms. Petti read an ACPAC resolution that extolled Ms. Rohlfs accomplishments. Ms. Pepper commended Ms. Rohlfs' knowledge, patience, skill, and tact.

Chair Mach presented Joan with a 'Gold Book' commemorative scrapbook and a gift. Ms. Rohlfs thanked everyone for their comments and said she has greatly enjoyed working with everyone to improve the environment in the region.

### **8. Set Date for Next Meeting, Adjourn**

The next meeting date is February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014.