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## **METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)**

May 27, 2020  
12:00 P.M. – 1:40 P.M.  
Conference Call

Chairman: Brandon Todd, District of Columbia

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

#### **MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES**

Brandon Todd, District of Columbia (Chair)  
Kenny Boddye, Prince William County  
Michelle Davis-Younger, City of Manassas  
Michael DeMarco, City of Fairfax  
Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County  
Penny Gross, Fairfax County James  
Peter Kovar, City of Takoma Park  
Sara Love, Maryland House of Delegates  
Leta Mach, City of Greenbelt  
Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church  
James Walkinshaw, Fairfax County  
Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County  
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
Alex Brum, Maryland Department of Environment  
Patty Bubar, Montgomery County  
Kelly Crawford, District Department of Energy and Environment  
Tina Casey, District Department of Transportation  
Brian Hug, Maryland Department of Environment  
Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation  
Kari Snyder, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Collen Turner, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Ram Tangirala, District Department of Energy and Environment

#### **OTHERS**

Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Joseph Jakuta, District Department of Energy and Environment  
Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation

#### **COG STAFF**

Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs  
Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs

Erin Morrow, COG Department of Transportation Planning  
Jinchul Park, COG Department of Transportation Planning  
Jane Posey, COG Department of Transportation Planning  
Kanti Srikanth, COG Department of Transportation Planning  
Dusan Vuksan, COG Department of Transportation Planning  
Steve Walz, COG Department of Environmental Programs

## **1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES, CHAIR'S REMARKS**

*Brandon Todd, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Todd called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. There were no public comments.

The February meeting summary was approved without any changes.

Steve Walz informed Chair that the required quorum for approving the FY 2020-2021 MWAQC Work Program & Budget and for authorizing the MWAQC-Executive Committee to approve the Base Year 2017 Emissions Inventory along with the response to any comments received till date and during the second round of public hearing and comment period (for the District of Columbia and Virginia) is present.

## **2. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Tom Ballou

The MWAQC-TAC held a call in May to discuss the following:

- Members discussed the status of the public hearing and comment processes currently underway for the base year 2017 emissions inventory. They also discussed the issue of including technical corrections to the inventory during this process. This inventory is being developed for EPA submittal to meet the 2015 ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard requirements.
- Staff briefed members on the 2020 air quality forecast protocol, ozone season data, and impacts of COVID-19 related restrictions on air quality.
- Staff briefed members on a joint MWAQC/TPB/CEEPC comment letter on EPA's final SAFE Vehicle rule published in March 2020.
- Final MATS Rule – Staff briefed members on the final MATS rule published in April 2020. EPA's revised analysis for this rule did not include co-benefits from particulate matter (PM) while the analysis for the 2012 MATS rule did. This rule could also have implications for the cost-benefit analysis for developing revised standards for criteria pollutants.
- Proposed PM2.5 NAAQS - EPA proposed on April 30, 2020 primary and secondary PM2.5 NAAQS. EPA is proposing to retain current 24-hour (35 ug/m3) and annual (12.0 ug/m3) primary standards for PM2.5. EPA is also proposing to retain current 24-hour (150 ug/m3) primary and secondary standards for PM10 (There are no annual primary or secondary standards for PM10).
- 2020 State of the Air Report (American Lung Association) - American Lung Association (ALA) published their 2020 annual State of the Air report in April 2020. ALA combined the metropolitan Washington and metropolitan Baltimore areas in its metro area rankings. Combined metro Washington-Baltimore CSA ranks
  - 20th for ozone pollution out of 228 metro areas rated (16th in 2019 report)
  - 64th for 24-hour particle pollution out of 217 metro areas rated (Not on top 25 list in 2019)
  - 49th for annual particle pollution out of 203 metro areas rated (Not on top 25 list in 2019)

### Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) – Leah Boggs

ACPAC met in March and May to discuss the 2030 Regional Climate and Energy Action Planning issues.

- COG is following the guidance provided by the Global Covenant of Mayor’s (GCoM) to develop a 2030 Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan, including updated regional mitigation and adaptation-related actions. Members discussed findings from the greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and business-as-usual (BAU) projections, as well as the findings from the Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA). They also discussed a potential 2030 GHG reduction target and climate adaptation goals for the region. COG Staff provided an update on the outcomes of the mitigation and resilience webinars held for the GCoM 2030 Climate Planning Effort. COG Staff also discussed the Methodology Report and GHG Inventory Input-Output Summary.
- COG Staff briefed members on the base year 2017 emissions inventory and the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions on the air quality and greenhouse gas emissions in the Washington region.
- In addition, members watched a documentary titled “Unbreathable: The Fight for Healthy Air” created by American University’s (AU) Center for Environmental Filmmaking, in partnership with the American Lung Association and AU’s Center for Environmental Policy.

### Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – Steve Walz

CEEPC met on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

- The FY2020-2021 CEEPC Work Program & Budget was approved.
- COG Staff briefed members on the impact of COVID-19 related restrictions on energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Committee members presented summaries of their respective climate and energy action plans as guidance for what actions could be included in the regional 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan.

## **3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES**

### *Local Members and State Air Agencies*

- Kelly Crawford (DOEE) said that the Title V fee updates will be finalized shortly. A lawsuit for \$125,000 was settled with Greyhound related to emissions.
- Alex Brun said that MDE did not have any updates.
- Tom Ballou (DEQ) said that the Virginia governor signed a legislation approving Virginia to participate fully in the RGGI program. This will allow Virginia to raise funds for Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy measures. These funds will be allocated for electric vehicle charging and school and transit bus engine replacement programs.

## **4. 2015 OZONE NAAQS BASE YEAR 2017 INVENTORY**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Principal Environmental Engineer*

Sunil Kumar discussed the base year 2017 emissions inventory.

- He mentioned that the largest source of VOC, NOx, and CO emission for the 2017 are nonpoint (57%), on-road (38%), and nonroad (49%) sources respectively.
- He informed members that Virginia planned to include technical corrections to the inventory. EPA’s final NEI2017 emissions were made available recently and Virginia wanted to include them. The District was also planning to include technical corrections to their inventory for the same reason. The inventory version presented to MWAQC included corrections provided by Virginia whereas the District’s corrections are awaited as of May 27<sup>th</sup>.
- There were no comments received till date (May 27<sup>th</sup>, last date for Virginia’s initial public

hearing & comment process) on the inventory as part of the ongoing initial public hearing and comment process.

- Virginia and the District need to hold another round of public hearing and comment process after they have incorporated planned technical corrections to the inventory. Since Maryland does not plan to include technical corrections, they would not need to hold another round of public comments.
- If the District and Virginia receive any comments during the second round of public hearing and comment process, the MWAQC-Executive Committee will review the response to those comments prepared by COG Staff and state air agencies and approve the inventory and its appendices for EPA submittal.
- Steve Walz said that the MWAQC by-laws allow MWAQC to authorize the MWAQC-Executive Committee to approve the inventory for EPA submittal. Following this, MWAQC unanimously approved a resolution (R1-2020) authorizing the MWAQC-Executive Committee to approve the response to comments and the inventory for EPA submittal by state air agencies.

Chair Todd asked if COVID-19 related changes in the air quality data would affect the chances of attaining the 2015 ozone standard.

- Steve Walz replied that improvements have been observed in data, but it is too early say at this time if that would help attain the standard.
- Brian Hug mentioned that MDE is working with the University of Maryland on the impact of COVID-19 on air quality. He said there is not much decrease in emissions from power plants. The air quality has been good thus far this year and that the weather also has played a role in this.
- Kelly Crawford said that DOEE is looking at traffic and air quality data in the District and holds a monthly call with several stakeholders on that issue.
- Tom Ballou said that VDEQ is also looking at traffic and air quality data in Virginia and that it is too early to say if improvements seen thus far would help attain the standard.

## **5. FY 2021 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

*Steve Walz, COG Environmental Programs Director*

Steve Walz discussed the proposed FY2020-2021 MWAQC Work Program & Budget. He mentioned that the document had been reviewed and approved by the Budget and Technical Advisory committees. He noted the following priorities for MWAQC for FY2020-2021:

- Track designation and data for the 2015 ozone NAAQS;
- Prepare groundwork to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS. This would be needed in the event the Washington region does not meet the ozone NAAQS by 2021;
- Work with members to identify and implement initiatives to reduce air pollution;
- Review & comment on transportation conformity assessments;
- Communicate to regional and local leaders and the public on the need for actions to reduce emissions and improve air quality; and
- Develop and publish updated Trends report.

Steve also described core work areas for FY2020-2021. These are:

- Emissions Inventory Development;
- Regional Control Measures;
- Transportation Conformity/Mobile Emissions Analysis;
- Public Participation;
- MWAQC Support; and
- Program Management.

MWAQC approved the FY2020-2021 MWAQC Work Program & Budget unanimously.

## **6. OZONE SEASON UPDATE AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON REGIONAL AIR QUALITY**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

Sunil Kumar provided an update on the current ozone season and also briefed on a preliminary analysis of the impact of COVID-19 related behavior changes on the regional air quality.

- As of May 17<sup>th</sup>, there were only two Code Yellow days for ozone, rest all were Code Green days. For PM2.5, there was only one Code Yellow day, rest all were Code Green days.
- NO<sub>2</sub>, ozone and PM2.5 levels generally seemed lower after COVID-19 lockdown though it is too early to tell if all of that happened due to lower emissions. Role of weather needs to be investigated to determine how much that contributed towards lower pollutant levels. Ozone is usually low in March and April as weather is generally not very conducive for ozone formation in those months. Ozone and PM2.5 levels generally seem higher from 2nd week of May onwards. Favorable weather, increased traffic, and activities might have played a role here.
- Air quality impact of lockdown is expected to be more visible in summer, if it gets extended to those months.

Dave Snyder asked if COG Staff could prepare talking points for the general public in an understandable format. He also wanted to know if Staff has any recommendations for jurisdictions based on this presentation related to COVID-19 and air quality.

- Steve replied that the Staff would work on the talking points.
- He said that Staff recommends the actions could be taken to ensure light-duty vehicle traffic remains lower. There should be a tougher emission control rule for the heavy-duty vehicles. Clean sources should be used to a greater extent for the electricity generation.

## **7. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 pm.