



## METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)

May 25, 2022  
12:30 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.  
Webinar

Chair: Takis Karantonis, Arlington County

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

- Takis Karantonis, Arlington County (Chair)
- Kenny Boddye, Prince William County (Vice Chair)
- Peter Kovar, City of Takoma Park (Vice Chair)
- Dr. Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
- Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Tamara Blake-Wallace, Calvert County
- Anita Bonds, District of Columbia
- Collin Burell, District of Columbia
- Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Kelly Crawford, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County
- Lynn Forkell Greene, City of Manassas
- Brandon Gordon, City of Greenbelt
- Penny Gross, Fairfax County
- Jason Groth, Charles County
- Joseph Jakuta, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Keith Levenchenko, Montgomery County
- Kirk McPike, City of Alexandria
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
- John Rigg, City of College Park
- Tom Ross, City of Fairfax
- Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church

- Roger Thunnel, Maryland Department of the Environment
- James Walkinshaw, Fairfax County
- Kristen Weaver, City of Greenbelt

#### OTHERS

- Tara Failey, Air and Climate Policy Advisory Committee
- Samuel Gaber, Fairfax County
- Jessica Gaetano, Calvert County
- Matthew Gaskin, District Department of Transportation
- Demetra McBride, Arlington County
- Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation
- Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment

#### COG STAFF

- Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Jen Desimone, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Tim Masters, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Mark Moran, COG Department of Transportation Planning

- Wanda Owens, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- Jane Posey, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Department of Transportation Planning

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

*Takis Karantonis, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Takis Karantonis called the meeting to order. There were no public comments. The February MWAQC meeting summary was approved without any changes.

## 2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Sunil Kumar (COG Staff)

MWAQC-TAC held a call on May 10:

- TAC held a special session on Regional, State, and Local Agency Engagement on Transportation Electrification on May 10. A number of presenters, as well as state and local representatives had a detailed discussion on federal and state frameworks for electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure funding, the development of a regional EV deployment plan, and other state and local initiatives.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) – Tara Failey (Chair)

ACPAC held a webinar meeting on May 16:

- On Earth Day, ACPAC launched the 2022 Climate and Energy Leadership Awards. The program was launched in full to all categories including government, NGO, and educational institution. With the committee's renewed focus on equity and environmental justice, ACPAC felt it was necessary to put forth some changes to the program that would better emphasize equity. The changes were in the form of short- and long-term recommendations. The awards program runs through June 30.
- Regarding equity, ACPAC had a presentation by COG Staff on equity planning within COG and in the climate and energy programs at the May 16 meeting. At future meetings, ACPAC hopes to hear and learn more about examples of how equity can be achieved in energy and climate planning in order to provide value added feedback from the community's perspective to enhance COG's work.
- The next ACPAC meeting is July 18.

Clean Air Partners – Jen Desimone

Clean Air Partners have been involved in the following:

1. Air Quality Awareness Week, May 2 – May 6:
  - Clean Air Partners launched their summer campaign during Air Quality Awareness Week. Each day during the week featured a different theme with associated social media challenges. Daily themes included: Plants and Trees, Air Quality and Health, Sensors and the Air Around Us, Food and its impact on air and climate, and Clean Air Transport. Campaign activities included:
    - Media Relations and Meteorologists – Clean Air Partners engaged reporters and meteorologists to share Clean Air Partners activities and tips.
    - Organic Social Media – Organic posts through Clean Air Partners Facebook, Twitter, Instagram pages and partner social channels.
2. Upcoming Campaign Activities:
  - Monthly Partner Toolkit – Clean Air Partners provides monthly toolkits with pre-written social media posts. Posts focus on clean air tips.

- Ozone Action Month (August) – Eco-Driving events across the Baltimore-Washington region
  - Car bubble emissions demo (2)
  - Pop up events (4)
- Car Free Day – September
- 3. Poster Contest
- The Clean Air Partners annual Poster Contest was held for students in grades 4 through 8 residing in the Baltimore-Washington region. The winners are as follows:
  - Category 1 (grades 4-6): Simon Elementary School, Washington, DC
  - Category 2 (grades 7-8): Magothy River Middle School, Anne Arundel County, Maryland

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – Maia Davis

CEEPC held a webinar meeting on May 25:

- The May 25 CEEPC meeting focused on EV charging deployment, similar to the last MWAQC-TAC meeting. COG members are encouraged to support and participate in an effort to complete local projections for EV ownership and assess the priority EV charging zones across the region (down to the site and parcel level). Part of the goal of the 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan is to build out the EV charging network in the region. This is also good timing, as funding is coming down the pipeline through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- This week, COG staff started promoting a subscription campaign for the DMV Climate Clips. This is a weekly e-newsletter where COG staff share the latest local and national climate news, funding opportunities for local communities, job opportunities, events and trainings, as well as resources for residents, The [DMV Climate Partners](#) website also provides climate and energy information.

### 3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES

#### *Local Members and State Air Agencies*

- Virginia Burke (Maryland Department of Transportation) said that Maryland submitted a nomination for alternative fuel corridors to be designated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This is an opportunity for states to designate certain highway corridors for alternative fuels. MDOT submitted four corridors and one of them (the Intercounty Connector/Maryland Route 200) is for EVs. The other highways have been nominated as hydrogen corridors including the I-95, I-695, and the I-495. The infrastructure is not in place for hydrogen, but MDOT is signaling that these highways could be suitable for build out of hydrogen infrastructure based on truck and freight traffic volumes in those corridors. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law may also have an impact on funding for these corridors.
- Chair Takis Karantonis (Arlington County) said that Arlington County's Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management and the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) is developing an urban heat island initiative that will develop urban heat island mapping metrics and climate projection analysis. The county is also working on a transportation decarbonization master plan, as well as an update to the county's anti-idling ordinance.
- Vice Chair Kenny Boddy (Prince William County) said that Prince William County brought on their first Environmental and Energy Sustainability Officer, Giulia Manno. The county has hosted a few community meetings as they begin work on creating the county's first Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan (CESMP). The county is also working on updates for the mobility, land use and housing chapters of their comprehensive plan. The county is beginning to move away from car-dependent infrastructure and focus more on land use, housing and mobility policies that promote walkable communities and public transit use. The county's public transportation agency, OmniRide, is undertaking a zero-emission vehicle study looking at different fuel alternatives and zero emission vehicle infrastructure, as well as different ways that they can partner with neighboring jurisdictions and install more EV charging stations.
- Tom Ballou (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality) said that VDEQ recently announced their second round of electric school bus grants under the [Volkswagen Settlement Agreement](#).

This is \$14 million worth of grants and included in the grantee list is the City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, and Loudoun County.

#### **4. OZONE SEASON UPDATE**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

The ozone season started on March 1 and will end on October 31. Most of the ozone exceedance days occur between the end of April and the first week of September. So far this season, the region has had only 13 code yellow days and the rest are all code green, with no code orange or code red days. Part of the cause for this is that the weather has been relatively mild so far this year. In terms of ozone exceedance days, the trend from mid- and late-nineties through to May 15, 2022, shows a significant drop in the total exceedance days. For the past decade the number of exceedance days has plateaued, except for 2020, which had fewer exceedance days due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Historically, there has been a strong relationship between ozone and temperature; in general, the higher the temperature the higher the ozone levels. However, in recent years this pattern has changed, and ozone exceedance days have stayed low despite high temperatures. The 8-hour ozone design values have also decreased consistently over the past few decades, declining from over 100 parts per billion (ppb) in the late 1990s to around 70ppb since the early 2010s. Based on the 2019-2021 data, the region has just attained the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) with a design value of 70ppb. The region did not attain the standard last year, which was the deadline. The reason that the region has made such good progress in reducing the ozone design value is due to a number of emission control programs that were implemented at the federal, state and local levels. A similar trend can be seen for particulate matter (PM2.5) emissions, where the region has consistently attained the 2006 24-hour PM2.5 Standard since the mid-2000s.

Recently, forecast regions have been revised to provide the public with more localized information. According to data provided by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), these changes better reflect local conditions and provide more accurate forecasts. People can tailor email notifications to receive forecasts and alerts for each region through EPA's [Enviroflash](#). Outreach to the public and media will occur to explain proposed changes such as, how they can receive forecast emails and alerts and how to interpret multiple forecasts in the region. COG staff and Clean Air Partners will be reaching out to the public and media to explain these changes and how to interpret the multiple forecast regions. Before this change, there were four forecast regions that covered all of Maryland, parts of Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The metropolitan Washington region was included as one subregion with a single forecast. The change increases the four forecast regions to 11 forecast regions, which cover the same area. The Washington region is no longer included as a single subregion. Instead, there are four subregions that cover the Washington region. From next year, the Washington region will get four separate forecasts for those different subregions, which will provide better accuracy. This change will not change the way the region reports Air Quality Index (AQI) values.

#### **5. AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES – TRANSPORT COMMENT LETTER**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

The metropolitan Washington region was initially designated as a Marginal Nonattainment Area (NAA) for 2015 Ozone Standard. The region failed to attain by the deadline (August 2021) based on 2018-2020 design value (DV) data. EPA recently proposed bump up to Moderate NAA. The Moderate NAA SIP would be due on January 1, 2023, and the deadline to attain will be August 3, 2024, based on 2021-2023 DV. Certified 2021 data shows ozone NAAQS attainment (70 ppb). EPA intends to issue Clean Data Determination after the end of ozone season (Fall 2022). Currently, COG staff are working on developing components of both Attainment and Maintenance Plans. An Attainment Plan is expected to be submitted in June 2023 (deadline Jan 1, 2023). This delay in plan submittal may result in EPA issuing a "Finding of Failure to Submit" starting an 18-month SIP submittal requirement. However, the

June 2023 submittal would stop this clock, so delay is not expected to affect anything adversely for the region.

If the 2022 ozone season puts the region back into nonattainment, EPA would not issue a CDD and the region would be required to submit an Attainment Plan. If the 2022 ozone season keeps the region in attainment, EPA would likely issue a CDD and the region would have the option to submit a request to redesignate it to attainment (submission of a Maintenance Plan would also be required). The Maintenance Plan submittal has no time limits, but the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) needs approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets (MVEBs) based on the latest available on road emissions model sometime by the end of 2023. TPB currently uses MVEBs based on an old model (from the 2008 ozone Maintenance Plan). The latest EPA approved model (MOVES3) produces higher NOx emission estimates in comparison, which may pose difficulty in demonstrating conformity. The region will work with EPA to get new MVEBs (either from the Attainment or Maintenance Plan) approved by the end of 2023 for use in the future conformity analyses. COG staff will be monitoring 2022 ozone season and tracking EPA's action this year on the bump-up proposal and CDD. The region is working on developing control/contingency measures, that could be used in an Attainment or Maintenance Plan respectively. Two special MWAQC-TAC sessions were held in April and May to discuss such measures.

*Tim Masters, COG Environmental Planner*

COG staff have drafted a comment letter in support for the proposed Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) addressing regional ozone transport for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS. This action proposes FIP requirements to address 26 states' obligations to eliminate significant contribution to nonattainment, or interference with maintenance, of the 2015 ozone NAAQS in other states. The EPA is proposing this action under the "good neighbor" or "interstate transport" provision of the Clean Air Act (CAA). The Agency proposes establishing NOx emissions budgets requiring fossil fuel-fired power plants in 25 states to participate in an allowance-based ozone season trading program beginning in 2023. The Agency is also proposing to establish NOx emissions limitations applicable to certain other industrial stationary sources in 23 states with an earliest possible compliance date of 2026. The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on April 6 and the comment deadline is June 21. COG staff presented this comment letter to MWAQC-TAC in April and received no additional comments or revisions to date. Unless there are any revisions from MWAQC, COG staff will submit this comment letter immediately upon approval.

Discussion:

- Regarding the ozone transport comment letter, a request was made to include further explanation and quantification of the impact upwind states' ozone emissions impact the metropolitan Washington region. Also, a request was made to include language clarifying the specific types of pollutants being addressed (ground level ozone and its precursors). The comment letter was approved by MWAQC on the understanding that it would be amended based on the suggested revisions and sent to the Chair for final approval.

## **6. FY 2023 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

*Jen Desimone, COG Air Program Chief*

In coordination with the Budget and Technical Advisory committees, the MWAQC work program and budget has been developed for fiscal year 2023. The work program and budget covers work that will be completed between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. The priorities of the work program include the development of an attainment SIP and/or Maintenance Plan/Redesignation Request for the 2015 ozone NAAQS, tracking and monitoring data and EPA actions to determine the area's designation status for the 2015 ozone NAAQS, working with members to identify and implement initiatives to reduce air pollution, tracking regulatory actions related to transport of pollution and providing comment when appropriate, reviewing and commenting on transportation conformity assessments for ozone, and communicating to regional and local leaders and the public on improvements to air quality and the need for actions to reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Funding for the work program comes from three main sources: COG member jurisdictions, state transportation agencies and the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), as well as state air agencies. Each of these three funding sources provides roughly a third of the total funding. To address budget constraints, COG staff is requesting the funding from the state air agencies remain at FY 2022 levels and be covered from the reserve funds. What that means is invoices/payments for the air agencies will be at FY 2022 levels. Local contributions will also remain at FY 2022 levels. Pending approval, contributions from transportation will be at FY 2023 levels. There are six core work areas for FY 2023 that will split the funding accordingly: Emissions Inventory Development (9 percent of total funding), Regional Control Measures (23 percent), Transportation Conformity/Mobile Emissions Analysis (33 percent), Public Participation (10 percent), MWAQC Support (19 percent), and Project Management (6 percent). Technical work attributes to 65 percent of the total budget. Public participation, committee work, and administration make up 35 percent of the total budget.

Regarding the approval process and next steps, the Budget Committee reviewed the work program and budget on February 10, 2022. The MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee discussed the work program and budget on March 8, 2022, and signed off for MWAQC approval. COG staff have brought the FY 2023 work program and budget to MWAQC for final approval.

**Action: MWAQC approved the FY 2023 work program and budget.**

## **7. ADJOURN**

*Takis Karantonis, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Takis Karantonis adjourned the meeting. The next MWAQC meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2022.