

**Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee
777 North Capitol St., NE, 3rd Floor, Board Room
Washington, D.C. 20002**

DRAFT MINUTES OF April 25, 2012 MEETING

Attendance:

Members and Alternates

Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)
Hon. Joanne Benson, Maryland General Assembly
Hon. Robert Day, College Park
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Diane Franks, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Hon. Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Hon. Leta Mach, Greenbelt
Rene'e Hamilton, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Caroline Petti, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Hon. Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ram Tangirala, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
Didian Tsongwain, Prince George's County

Staff

Amanda Campbell, COG/DEP
Anant Choudhary, COG/DTP
Elena Constantine, COG/DTP
Jen Desimone, COG/DEP
Stuart Freudberg, COG/DEP
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Ron Kirby, COG/DTP
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Eulalie Lucas, COG/DTP
Jane Posey, COG/DTP
Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP
Dusan Vuksan, COG/DTP

Others

Scott St. Onge, Clean Air Partners
Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
Jessica Daniels, District Department of the Environment
Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)

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

Leta Mach, past chair, called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm in place of Chair Mendelson. The March 28, 2012 minutes were approved with no changes. The agenda was approved with no changes. Mr. Mendelson arrived.

Chair Mendelson remarked that the American Lung Association released a report on air quality. The report rated the Metropolitan region 13th worst in the nation for ozone, although the region improved for ozone and fine particles over time. Air Quality Awareness Week is the week of April 30. The Greater Washington Clean Cities Coalition (GWCCC) launched a new venture to support alternative non-petroleum fuels in the region. The 1st annual Alternative Fuels and Advanced Technology Expo will be held in Springfield, VA on May 22nd, co-hosted by GWCCC and Washington Gas. Compressed natural gas, hydrogen, ethanol, and electric cars will be on display. The national GHG inventory report found that emissions increased 3.2% over previous year, and 10% over the last decade.

2. Committee Reports

A. Technical Advisory Committee, Thomas Ballou, VDEQ

Since no meeting was held, there are no updates to report at this time. Members were involved in working group discussions regarding mobile budgets.

B. Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee, Caroline Petti, Chair

Ms. Petti noted that ACPAC opposes adding the margin of safety to the PM_{2.5} and NO_x levels in the redesignation plan.

Joan Rohlfs added that there is a letter in member's packets to Chair Mendelson from various environmental organizations urging MWAQC to reject the Transportation Planning Board's proposed margin of safety and adopt a more conservative limit instead.

C. Clean Air Partners, Scott St. Onge, Managing Director

Mr. Onge reported that Clean Air Partners participated in several public events including Earth Day at Fort Meade. Last month CAP added their widget to the Montgomery County website. The AirAlerts are currently undergoing a redesign, which will include local images from around the region. The new design will be launched next month. CAP is notifying winners of the poster contest, and has identified science fair winners in the region. The nominating committee is identifying new members. CAP's annual celebration will be held May 8th.

3. Mobile Budgets Task Force and PM_{2.5} Redesignation and Maintenance Plan

3a) Mobile Budgets Task Force Report, Hon. Leta Mach, State Air and Transportation Agencies

Hon. Leta Mach reported that the Task Force held two calls to discuss options. The Task Force is continuing to gather information and is making progress. The Task Force plans to hold another call, and hopes to find a solution soon.

3b) PM_{2.5} Redesignation and Maintenance Plan, Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP, State Air Agencies

Joan Rohlf explained that three of the options, A, B and C, incorporate a margin of safety. Option D contains a modest margin of safety for PM_{2.5} but none for NO_x. Option C implements a tiered approach in which wider margins of safety would be triggered in the event of model and input changes. Option E is a compromise between several of the other options.

Tom Ballou elaborated that the Task Force is now working out the details of options E and C. They will need to consult with the EPA to ensure the solutions are workable. Linda Smyth asked if Baltimore is part of the Washington nonattainment area. Diane Franks explained that mobile emissions from the DC area affect air quality in the Baltimore region. Baltimore has not met the 85 ppb standard. In the past, DC and Baltimore were classified the same, but now DC will be in attainment, but Baltimore will not be in attainment due to emissions from mobile sources.

Chair Mendelson clarified that the three DOTs in the task force may be looking at larger regions or states, but not to the point of changing the scope of this task.

4. Ozone Nonattainment Area Designation Proposals: Update

Joan Rohlf, COG/ DEP and State Air Agencies

EPA is concluding the ozone designation process this spring. After litigation was resolved, states updated their nonattainment designation recommendations to EPA using the most recent 2011 air quality data. In December, 2011 EPA responded with their 'Five Factor Analysis.'

In March, 2009 states made their initial recommendations on the ozone non-attainment boundary. EPA released preliminary recommendations in December. This spring states had another opportunity to respond in 120 days. Only Maryland responded with comments. Maryland recommends that the Washington DC-MD-VA region and Baltimore region nonattainment areas be combined, largely because Washington and Maryland could not address pollution transported from out of the area alone.

EPA concluded that Washington DC-MD-VA and Baltimore nonattainment areas should continue to be separate. This preserves the unique multi-state air quality planning process and is consistent with MPO organizational boundaries, but may not fully address the DC area's contribution of emissions to the Baltimore region. EPA Region 3 consulted with each state and will announce the final designation by June 1st.

Chair Mendelson said that it could be argued that Ohio and/or the entire east coast should be part of our region, but governance would be a challenge. The 126 petition can be undertaken regardless of governance structure.

Diane Franks said MDE recommended keeping same governance structure, but create an additional overarching committee made up of county representatives. The 126 process only applies to stationary sources; the DC region has few stationary sources to control.

5. NOAA Budget Issue: Forecast Model (ACTION)

Sunil Kumar, COG/ DEP

Sunil Kumar presented a letter in support of continued funding for NOAA's National Air Quality Forecast Capability program. States across the U.S. have relied heavily on this sophisticated forecasting model for years. The program allows staff to produce accurate forecasts for the area. The letter was approved with no changes.

6. State and Local Air Reports

State representatives had no updates to report.

7. Adjournment

The next meeting date is tentatively set for May 23, 2012, 12 noon - 2pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1pm.