

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 September 28, 2011 MEETING

Attendance:

Members and Alternates

Tad Aburn, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA DEQ)
Cecily Beall, District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
Randy Carroll, Maryland Department of the Environment
Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
Stan Edwards, Montgomery County
Hon. Jay Fiset, Arlington County
Mike Lake, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Hon. Leta Mach, City of Greenbelt
Hon. Ron Peppe, City of Falls Church
Hon. Redella "Del" Pepper, Chair, City of Alexandria
Hon. Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Didian Tsongwain, Prince George's County

Staff

Amanda Campbell, COG/DEP
Maia Davis, COG/DEP
Jen Desimone, COG/DEP
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Eulalie Lucas, COG/DTP
Gerald Miller, COG/OPA
Jane Posey, COG/DTP
Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP
Elena Constantine, COG/DTP
Kyle Hosley, COG/DEP

Others

Barbara Hardy, Fairfax County
Bill Skrabak, City of Alexandria
Scott St. Onge, Clean Air Partners

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

The meeting was called to order at 12:32 pm. The minutes from the June 22, 2011 meeting were approved with no changes.

2. Committee Reports

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Tad Aburn, MDE, reviewed the September 13th TAC meeting. Two key issues were the PM2.5 redesignation and maintenance plan, and ozone transport. The Ozone Transport Commission discussed looking at control measures for the 13-state transport region. Cars, power plants, locomotives, and airplanes and other sources would be involved in reducing transported emissions. The committee also discussed the implications of the planned closing of the GenOn coal plant.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

Maia Davis, COG DEP Staff, reported on the September 19th ACPAC meeting. The committee heard updates about the ozone standard and Potomac River power plant closure. ACPAC will hold a session to help provide members more detail about air quality reporting process. The committee will report on outcomes of this session at the next meeting. COG staff gave the committee a draft sustainable living checklist to test and review.

Clean Air Partners (CAP)

Scott St. Onge, Managing Director, presented program updates. The committee heard updates on the agreement reached to acquire Weatherline, a phone-in weather hotline, with the potential to reach 10-40,000 customers daily. Also, social media helped make Car Free Day a success, with 12,000 people pledging to go car free or car light. CAP is developing a social media task force.

An air alert survey conducted showed eighty-four percent of respondents limited their exposure when AQI was poor.

The media campaign July 18-25th reached 16 million residents. The summer outreach program visited 28 camps in the area, reaching 100 campers in DC, 740 in Maryland, and 610 in Virginia. Members have also begun working with science and English teachers to promote clean air education and to integrate with the poster contest. Clean Air Partners submitted a proposal for EPA's "Clean Air Excellence" award. CAP is currently reviewing their education program and bylaws.

3. 2011 Ozone Season and Regional Air Quality Trends

Jen Desimone and Sunil Kumar, COG DEP, reported on this year's ozone season and trends in ozone and particulate matter in the region. More than half of this year's summer season was rated code green. 19 days were Code Orange and 2 were Code Red. The region endured two four-day ozone events.

Ozone levels have been declining unevenly in the last 30 years. Data shows that there is a strong relationship between temperature and ozone. After 2006, ozone continues to track temperature, but the link between ozone and temperature has weakened. Now it takes higher temperatures to create ozone exceedances. This is good news, reflecting emissions reductions due to state, federal and local level programs. When the effects of temperature and wind are removed, evidence shows emissions have plummeted. The most recent measured ozone level for the region is 81 ppb which is below the 1997 standard of 84 ppb, but above the current 2008 standard of 75 ppb. High pressure leads to higher ozone since it does not mix and disperse. West winds bring dirty air from Ohio, and clear skies allow ozone to form.

In the area, there have been many green and a few yellow PM days. Levels of fine particles have greatly reduced in the area. The region's monitors show attainment, but a plan must be submitted to EPA to

officially be in attainment. The latest measurement was 27 micrograms per cubic meter, below the 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 2006 standard.

4. EPA Update: Ozone Standard (NAAQS)

Joan Rohlf, COG DEP, reported on the latest updates regarding EPA's ozone standard. The Clean Air Act regulates six pollutants including ozone. EPA must review the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) every five years.

In 1997 the region was in non-attainment for ozone. MWAQC and the States submitted an ozone State Implementation Plan (SIP) in 2007, but EPA has not yet acted on it. The attainment year in the plan was 2009. The region has been below the ozone standard (in attainment) for 1997 since 2009. A new, tighter standard was proposed in 2008 of 75 ppb. Science advisors recommended 60-70 ppb because there was concern that the standard of 75 ppb was still not low enough to protect health.

In 2010, EPA Director Lisa Jackson proposed to reconsider the standard since it did not follow the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee's (CASAC) advice. On September 2, 2011 the Obama Administration withdrew the reconsideration and said the 2008 standard would be reviewed in 2013 according to schedule. This action garnered a negative reaction from air quality agencies, the environmental community, and some members of the public. The decision was commended by those that claim the standards cost jobs and harm the economy.

In summary:

- 1) The region meets the 1997 but not the 2008 ozone standard.
- 2) This fall EPA plans to issue implementation guidance for the 2008 standard (which had not been issued previously). States will have 120 days to respond.
- 3) EPA proposes to designate the Washington region as "marginal" nonattainment.
- 4) EPA expects marginal areas to attain by 2015.

Questions remain about when the ozone SIP will be due, and whether the House will alter or nullify the Cross-State Air Pollution Control Rule.

Mr. Ballou noted that the 2008 rules will likely be very different, with less modeling required. How will 2013 revisions feed into this? What if more stringent regulations are coming? Even with the delay, air quality has improved. Now most of Virginia is in attainment except for the DC area.

Mr. Aburn pointed out that the big federal control programs such as Cross-State Air Pollution Control Rule, tier 3 vehicles, and power plants will continue.

Mr. Fisetto inquired as to what is most likely practical impact of the standard on the region. Staff responded that the change will affect conformity analysis in the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). The region must demonstrate that the plan complies with the budget, which is only a concern when modeling transitions to MOVES. The new output would become part of the maintenance requirements. There is no tangible impact on the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at this point because there is no ozone mobile emission budget. Mr. Aburn commented that if the emissions budget were lower than the model output once established, perhaps today's decisions would make it harder to comply in the future. It seems reasonable to act early and incorporate the new standard in the planning process. Mr. Freudberg suggested that the "What Would It Take" analysis could be done for ozone standards by the transportation team at COG.

One member inquired as to how many monitors are in the region. Staff responded that there are 14 ozone monitors, which meets EPA criteria. Mr. Ballou added that new ozone monitoring rule will not have any effect. TPB has already been voluntarily analyzing the stricter budgets that have not yet been approved.

Mr. Aburn noted that Baltimore routinely exceeds ozone standards, partly from pollution that travels from DC. MDE measured ozone at 80 ppb at western Maryland sites during summer. Local governments need to work to reduce mobile emissions.

5. Agreement to Close the Potomac River Power Plant

Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services in Alexandria, Virginia presented the GenOn coal plant closure process. GenOn's permit includes several hundred tons of NO_x emissions, some of which occur during ozone season. The plant did not have strong NO_x controls; it was running on the hottest days when the region needed stricter NO_x. The plant also emitted SO₂ and PM_{2.5}, so the region should see some improvements on these measures, as well. Most of the replacement power will come from natural gas and three other plants that were upgraded to Maryland's standards.

GenOn sent a letter to PJM confirming its October 2012 closure. Mr. Skrabak anticipates the closure to occur on time.

Chair Pepper added that the plant closure was the result of a grass-roots effort. Citizens complained about dust everywhere as a public nuisance, but there were also health factors. To succeed, they needed to be able to prove the health issues. Two researchers put together a health study, and the city followed up with its own study. They tried everything, from working through VDEQ, the legislature, local rezoning, and the court system, but finally GenOn proposed closure and return of \$32 million remaining in escrow.

Staff noted that it may be hard for monitors to isolate the effects of the plant's closure, but a continued downward trend of PM emissions is expected. Mr. Ballou responded that it would be in the 2013 SIP. On-the-ground differences should be observable immediately.

6. PM_{2.5} Redesignation and Maintenance Plan: Status Report

Sunil Kumar, COG DEP presented an update on the redesignation and maintenance plan. The area must demonstrate continued maintenance of standards. This requires developing emissions inventories for all milestone years. Emissions from point sources, area sources, nonroad sources and onroad sources are estimated for 2002, 2007, 2017, and 2025. Onroad sources will be estimated by the MOVES model by 2012. The three pollutants that need to be inventoried—NO_x, SO₂ and PM_{2.5}—already show a downward trend from 2002 to 2007. Projected emissions continue to be lower than the base year. The biggest drop is from point sources, mostly industries.

Mr. Aburn added that in the DC area, the biggest SO₂ emitter is power plants. Maryland passed a law to reduce SO₂ emissions that included \$3 billion for pollution control. The state should see benefits of the law soon.

7. District Energy Project Report

Jeff King, COG DEP, provided an overview on community energy planning, combined heat and power (CHP), district energy, and consultant FVB Energy's latest report. Bringing power generation closer to

where power is needed can increase efficiency, and reduce emissions. CHP involves using thermal and electrical products of energy generation. Normally, CHP delivers steam, hot water, and/or chilled water through pipes to several nearby buildings. It is widely used in university campuses.

With conventional power plants, entities pay for 100% of the fuel but 60% is wasted as heat. One Texas project increased efficiency by 40%. One difficulty is opposition from incumbent utilities. It is difficult for CHP to compete because it is a much smaller enterprise. Utilities essentially have a franchise monopoly right. These issues are worthy of further study due to efficiency benefits, fuel flexibility, and reduction of peaks in summer.

COG has held study tours and workshops and is planning more. FVB's final reports on district energy are due in November. FVB Energy has reviewed policies and the business case of the technology. Preliminary recommendations include removing barriers to district energy, enhancing incentives, and developing community energy working groups. FVB found that the region should see improved air quality.

COG has a database of all the CHP facilities in the region. There are several notable centers in the region, including the FDA White Oak facility. The DC Convention Center is built to enable district energy. One question that arose was whether renewable portfolio standards give credit for CHP.

8. State and Local Air Reports

Cecily Beall reported that the District is finalizing submission of documents to EPA. Last week the District held a public hearing on the new VOC regulations. In two weeks there will be a hearing on revisions to the regional haze SIP. DDOE is revising Title V permit for Pepco to document the shutdown to meet the spring deadline for the SIP. Next month, the District will finish installing 800 'no idling' signs near the mall and schools.

Tom Ballou reports big transitions in power generation in Virginia. Two plants in western Virginia are fully or partially closing and one is transitioning to natural gas. Dominion Power is closing two coal plants in the Tidewater area. Four smaller coal plants are converting to biomass.

Tad Aburn reported that Maryland's Climate Change Plan legislation requires 25% reduction in pollution by 2020. MDE's draft plan is due in December. It will have net positive impact on economic investment and jobs. The Ozone Transport Commission passed two new initiatives -- 1) reducing mercury from stationary sources 2) low sulfur home heating oil.

9. Set Date for Next Meeting, Adjourn:

The next meeting date is tentatively set for October 26, 2011. The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 pm.