

# Air Quality Public Advisory Committee

Suite 300, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Washington, DC 20002-4239 (202) 962-3360 Fax: (202) 962-3203  
<http://www.mwcog.org/environment/committee/>

The Air Quality Public Advisory Committee (AQPAC) is an advisory body to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC).

**DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 16, 2009

Room 1

5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

## **Present:**

Bahri Aliriza, Bill Butler, Tim Duggan, Sally Kane, Deron Lovaas, Lauren Milone, Linda Murphy, Caroline Petti, Josh Silverman, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet, Larry Zaragoza, Leon Koshishian, Rick Reiss, Beverly Fourier

**Staff:** Jeff King, Joan Rohlf, Sunil Kumar

## **1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes**

Larry Zaragoza, Vice Chair opened the meeting at 5:40 pm. Introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda. The minutes of the February 2009 meeting were approved with no changes.

## **2. Staff report on MWAQC, TAC, and CCSC**

Jeff King reported on recent meetings of MWAQC, TAC, and the CCSC.

The TAC met on March 10. The main items of discussion included status of SIP commitments, annual reporting for local government voluntary initiatives, air quality monitoring in Fairfax County, the court remand of 2006 annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS, an exceptional events submission, and new diesel funding available from EPA.

With the exception of Virginia's OTC VOC rules (Consumer Products Phase II, Portable Fuel Containers Phase II, and Industrial Adhesives and Sealants) and possibly pending regulations in the District, all state commitments will be implemented before the May 1, 2009 start of the ozone season. The District is currently working to adopt its CAIR and OTC VOC rules.

Staff have collected annual reports of progress in implementing local voluntary commitments, including energy efficiency, green power purchases, and tree canopy programs. Overall, the region is on track in meeting its commitments in the voluntary bundle. One outstanding item is for states to retire NO<sub>x</sub> allowances commensurate with the emission reduction credits for renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.

The proposed Fairfax County budget includes elimination of funding for the Fairfax County operated air quality monitors. A public hearing on the proposal will be held on March 30, 31, and April 1. The monitors are used to track concentrations of ozone and fine particles.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia remanded the 2006 annual fine particle standard back to EPA. The court found that EPA did not adequately explain why the standard of 15 ug/m<sup>3</sup> is sufficiently protective of public health with an adequate margin of safety.

Virginia DEQ has submitted an exceptional events package to EPA asserting that several days of high pollution levels recorded at monitors throughout Virginia were impacted by large forest fires in North Carolina and the Great Dismal Swamp. If approved, the action will affect Design Value concentration calculations in Loudoun County.

The recent stimulus package contains significant new grant funding for diesel emission reduction projects. EPA will issue the request for applications in March. Proposals will be due in April. Awards will be made in May. Projects must be completed by September 2010.

MWAQC met on February 13 and heard a report on the new 2008 Ozone Standard (<75 ppb), including the schedule for designations, SIPs, and attainment. MWAQC also heard a report on local voluntary measures and new control measures being developed through the OTC process. The states have recently received guidance from EPA regarding the designation process for the 2008 8-hour Ozone NAAQS. Recommendations from the states are due to EPA by March 2009. EPA must make final designations by March 2010.

The CCSC met on February 27. COG staff provided updates on federal, state and local climate change initiatives affecting the region. Chair Floreen announced that the COG Board took action to approve the Climate Change Report at its November 12, 2008 meeting. Other announcements included a Montgomery County Sustainability Initiative, the Virginia Climate Commission Report, the Greater Washington Board of Trade Green Committee, a street light efficiency project, and a Green Affordable Housing Conference. The committee also heard a report from Ken Brown, Executive Director of Climate Communities on the outcomes of the federal stimulus bill concerning energy conservation and promotion of renewable energy, and preview expected federal climate and energy legislation during the current session of Congress. Given time constraints the deliberation and approval of the COG Climate Change Work Program for FY 2009/FY2010 and the Recommendation to COG Board on Climate and Energy Policy Committee was deferred until the next meeting.

### **3. Stimulus Package (ARRA): Local Projects**

Members discussed potential local projects that could be funded using federal government stimulus funding. Joan Rohlf said that it is early in the process so there are not a lot of concrete projects to report. Some of the ideas being pursued include Bus Rapid Transit, alternative fueling infrastructure for fleets, diesel retrofits, and workshops on energy efficiency block grants. Deron Lovaas said that funding can be used for intercity rail, it's not just for highway projects. Members recommended that the AQPAC report to MWAQC include mention of the importance of the DOTs doing the necessary studies to inform transportation project decisions.

### **4. Fairfax County Propose FY 2010 Budget: Cut AQ Monitors**

The proposed Fairfax County budget includes elimination of funding for the Fairfax County operated air quality monitors. A public hearing on the proposal will be held on March 30, 31, and April 1. The monitors are used to track concentrations of ozone and fine particles. Sunil Kumar presented data on the monitor locations and historical air quality data from each monitor.

In response to questions, staff provided additional information on the situation in Fairfax. The County is facing a significant budget shortfall and by law must balance the budget. The air quality monitoring program involves a budget of \$230,000 with four staff. The county is aware that the Mt. Vernon monitor is a lead Design Value monitor and cannot be eliminated as required under EPA regulation.

The Fairfax County Environmental Committee has established preserving the monitors as a number one priority. Larry Zaragoza suggested several important points to highlight: the monitors are important for modeling, air quality assessment, to identify patterns/trends, and to determining violations. Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet said that many families make decisions about actions on bad air days by looking at data for the monitors closest to their homes.

Members unanimously agreed to draft a letter for consideration by MWAQC at its next meeting.

### **5. COG Climate Change Work Program**

Joan Rohlf discussed the COG Climate Change Work Program. The work plan reflects a compilation of a variety of projects and programs already funded. Tasks that lacked funding were identified as possible new initiatives. Some of the key tasks included in the work program include developing a plan for meeting the 2012 and 2020 reduction goals, and determining ways to track progress towards meeting the regional goals.

Larry Zaragoza recommended that COG serve as a regional resource clearinghouse for information on what residents and businesses can do to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower their carbon footprint. Joan agreed that such a suggestion could be included in the new initiatives that require funding section of the work program.

**6. Other Business**

Joan Rohlfis said that a representative from the TPB Citizen's Advisory Committee will be invited to the next meeting.

**7. Next meeting, Agenda, and Adjourn.** There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm. The next meeting will be on April 20, 2009.