

Air Quality Public Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 13, 2006
Room 3
5:00 P.M.-7:00 P.M.

Members Present:

Jill Engel-Cox, Joint Center for Earth Systems Technology
Bill Butler, Mirant
Jim Clarke, Washington Regional Network of Livable Communities
Julie Crenshaw, Episcopal Stewardship of Creation
Charlie Grymes, Virginia Rural
Brian Holmes, Maryland Highway Contractors Association
Rodney Livingston, District Interracial Com. Environmental Equity (DICEE)

COG Staff

Joan Rohlfs, Air Quality COG staff

1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda

Chair Jill Engel-Cox called the meeting to order. After the decision to postpone Item 5 on the agenda ("City of Austin Plug in Hybrids"), the Agenda was adopted.

2. Approval of Minutes

The February 13, 2006 minutes were approved after two editorial revisions for clarity.

3. Staff report on MWAQC and TAC

The February 22 MWAQC meeting discussed legislative initiatives in Virginia and Maryland. The Virginia air emissions control act passed, limiting sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and mercury. Cap and trade for regulated facilities was authorized, except in nonattainment areas. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is required to conduct a detailed assessment of mercury deposition by October 2008.

The Clean Power Rule in Maryland was changed to have an emissions cap, not emissions rate. If an existing plant shuts down, total emissions cap is not reduced – but any new plant must apply Best Available Control Technology (BACT) under New Source Review rules. The Healthy Air Act also includes the smaller Allegheny Power plant in Maryland.

Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) attainment modeling for Northeastern states was more optimistic than expected; only one Arlington station would exceed limits at the 2009 date for attainment. Modeling suggests that the Washington region will also meet the annual particulate standard.

Photochemical modeling shows a decrease in NO_x emissions of 40 tons/day is required to drop ozone level 1 part per billion. The February 22 meeting of the OTC identified special “action items.” Model rules should be proposed in June. Implementation of all local control measures would produce a NO_x reduction of 6-21 tons/day, so region may need EPA to look at other “weight of evidence” that indicates attainment will be achieved. Region could request delay in attainment to 2010. Implementation of measures already adopted due to earlier classification of “severe” for 1-hour standard, plus heavy-duty engine rule and the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), would trigger additional reductions in 2010.

Air quality projections are an inexact science. Models have 2002 baseline year, and have been validated by local air quality control offices. Weakest data is for emissions inventories and assumptions about power plant emissions. Favorable meteorology could also help region reach attainment one year after 2009 deadline.

Monitoring locations are being re-evaluated to measure air quality where people are concentrated. Maps showing locations (plus two other presentations at last MWAQC) will be added to website.

SIP completion dates expected to be delayed about 3 months (“SIP slip”), and Interstate Air Quality Council (IAQC) now expected to get plan in June 2007.

MWAQC budget includes funding for core program (\$455,401) and local government initiatives (\$157,000). There was an increase in budget compared to last year due to additional non-road transportation equipment survey costs.

Subgroup on control measures is meeting via conference calls, and Jill is on e-mail list. AQPAC members may also participate if they wish.

4. Updates on MD Clean Power Rule, MD Healthy Air Act, and VA CAIR Rule, and VA Clean Smokestacks

Maryland Air Quality Control Advisory Council has reviewed Clean Power Rule. NO_x emissions in Maryland will be reduced in two phases, if non-attainment requires a second phase. Mercury emissions will also drop in two phases, based on baseline to be defined by measurements in January 2007 - June 2008. The Healthy Air Act still in discussion at Maryland General Assembly.

Virginia CAIR rule will be finalized soon; Joan will circulate a copy. Governor of Virginia has not signed Virginia Clean Smokestacks bill yet.

DC could accept a Federal Implementation Plan (FIP). This time, it would involve no sanctions, and could provide an extra 12 months for attainment.

5. Revised TAC membership letter

New draft of letter was provided. After revision of “From” line, motion to approve letter (Motion – Grymes, Second - Clark) passed unanimously.

6. New Business

“Sharing the City for 21st Century” document by National Capital Planning Commission circulated by Rodney. Document has no commentary on air quality. The committee discussed potential of educating groups about air quality concerns so future documents have air quality component.

7. Next meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. The next meeting is April 17. Jill will attend MWAQC (March 22) and Julie will attend TAC (April 14).