

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

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<http://www.mwcog.org/environment/committee/>

The Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) is an advisory body to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

Draft Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 16, 2012
Room 4/5
5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

ACPAC members: Sarah Bunn, Bill Butler, Brian DiNunno, Beverly Fourier, Andrew Kambour, Daniel Lee, Caroline Petti, John Reed, Kyle Todd, Larry Zaragoza

Staff: Joan Rohlf, Maia Davis, Jeff King, Jen Desimone, Julia Allman

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:33pm. The agenda and minutes from March 19, 2012 were approved with no changes.

2. Interagency Sustainability Working Group (Sarah Jensen, US Department of Energy)

Sarah works for the Federal Energy Management Program at the US Department of Energy. Part of the program is coordination of the Interagency Sustainability Working Group which exists to help federal agencies achieve and surpass sustainable building laws, regulations, executive orders and policies. The federal government is the largest energy user in the country and as such has significant opportunity to increase energy efficiency, reduce reliance on international resources and lead the marketplace by example. Five guiding principles for high performance sustainable buildings have been established and must be met by federal agencies. The guiding principles include the use of integrated design, enhance indoor environmental air quality, reduce environmental impact of materials, optimize energy performance, and protect and conserve water. Each of the five guiding principles contains many sub-goals.

There were many questions for Sarah about the number of agencies involved, the type of staff person involved from each agency, resources for energy efficiency projects, offsets, barriers to solar financing, and other challenges. Over 45 agencies are involved in the working group. Larger agencies may have sustainability or energy staff but there are many smaller agencies will have a staff person involved whose primary responsibility isn't the environment. Some larger agencies believe meeting all the guiding principle goals is more challenging than smaller agencies, especially if they have a large number of buildings and since no funding has been provided to meet the goals of the 5 guiding principles. The guiding principles include renewable energy goals; however, renewable energy credits are not included. There is regulation that may make it difficult to enter into solar contracts it is sometimes feasible to incorporate solar into energy performance contracts. In some cases there is a lack of contracting expertise on how federal agencies can move forward with solar installations. A major challenge is that an agency may work really hard to meet the guiding principles but if they only meet 4 of 5 guiding principles it is still considered failure.

3. Diesel Emission Reduction Program (Jeff King, COG DEP Staff)

EPA Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grants are grants to retire high emitting diesel engines through engine replacements, exhaust filters, purchasing new vehicles and engine upgrade kits. DERA is funded through formula grants to states and competitive grants. COG is eligible for competitive grants and has been awarded

grants including over \$600,000 in 2009 to do engine upgrades to approximately 20 pieces of non-road highway construction equipment. The second cycle of grants awarded included controls on landfill equipment in Prince William County and charter boats in Georgetown and on the southwest waterfront (this includes Spirit of Mt. Vernon and the Odyssey). The current third cycle includes partnering with Amtrak at Union Station to repowers of 2 locomotive switch car engines from the 1960s. Amtrak is proving a 25 percent match and a contractor is about to be hired for the repowers. The next round of grants is this fall and COG is currently looking for partners. If anyone has ideas let Jeff know. One ACPAC member question was if the PM2.5 redesignation would affect the ability to receive DERA grants. Jeff responded that it would not, especially since the region is still in ozone non-attainment.

4. Commercial Driver Idle Recognition Program (Jen Desimone, COG DEP Staff)

The Driver Recognition Program acknowledges and rewards those “Idle Reduction Ambassadors” who set a good example for other bus and truck drivers by complying with the region’s diesel idling laws. Program Goals include elevating awareness of the diesel idle reduction laws in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia; promoting idle reduction as a positive behavior that helps bus and truck drivers to avoid fines, save money, and cut fuel costs; and engaging and involve frontline personnel who ultimately make the decision to let their vehicles run or to turn off their engines. Street Teams have scheduled events each spring and summer to nominate drivers for monthly dinner for 2 drawings and to educate drivers about idling laws. ACPAC members interested in volunteering at a street team event can contact Jen Desimone. Jen will also provide assistance to community organizations that are interested in organizing a street team event in their community.

5. Climate and Energy Legislative Updates (Julia Allman, COG DEP Staff)

Julia has been working with the CEEPC Legislative Advisory Committee to track and comment on climate and energy legislation. At the federal level a letter was submitted supporting the Federal Housing Finance Committee on Residential PACE Programs. A letter for a House bill in Virginia was submitted in support of purchases from net metering sellers and in Maryland letters for 5 bills were written in support of offshore wind, community energy, street lighting, electric vehicle charging stations, and utility energy efficiency on-bill financing. The only bill that passed this session that the Committee supported was the Maryland bill on electric vehicle charging stations that exempts stations from being considered electric utilities.

A discussion followed Julia’s briefing. It was commented that objective summaries are useful for citizens and elected officials and www.opencongress.org tracks all bills at the federal level with a synopsis that includes which industries support or do not support the bill. It suggested ACPAC should be promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency bills and that moving forward perhaps ACPAC could have a pre-legislative session brief and submit comments to COG for consideration in COG’s legislative priorities for the session as well as have the opportunity to submit comments on specific bills during the session.

6. Member Time (Kyle Todd, University of Maryland Energy Research Center)

The University of Maryland Energy Research Center is an interdisciplinary initiative that develops technology and policy for a clean, secure, and sustainable future. The center was established 2 years ago as an umbrella organization to integrate energy technology and policy efforts at the University of Maryland. This includes the Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center, the Joint Global Change Research Institute, the Center for Integrative Environmental Research, the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, the Environmental Finance Center and the National center for Smart Growth Research and Education. Research includes solar, wind, biofuels, combustion and gasification, carbon capture and sequestration, nuclear, energy efficiency, electrochemical energy storage and conversion as well as and policy, economics, and climate change. Kyle tracks funding opportunities and promotes the center at events such as trade shows.

7. MWAQC and CEEPC Updates (Jeff King, COG DEP Staff)

At the last MWAQC meeting, a task force was created work on developing a margin of safety budget that can be agreed upon. The task force will be writing up 4-5 options for consideration. At the last CEEPC meeting, the Progress Report was reviewed and CEEPC provided staff guidance for developing the next addition of the Regional Climate and Energy Workplan. Staff has collected input from all the committees and has begun researching new measures for the workplan. Jeff announced an upcoming Energy from Sewage event that COG is hosting with the German Embassy on May 1, 2012.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Next meeting: May 14, 2012 – 5:30pm – Room 4/5
