



**MEETING SUMMARY**

for the Joint Meeting of the

**Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and the  
Climate, Energy & Environment Policy Committee**

**JULY 26, 2017**

**MWAQC AND/OR CEEPC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE (\*ON PHONE):**

Sharon Bulova, Fairfax County\*  
Konrad Herling, Greenbelt  
Peter Kovar, Takoma Park  
Brienne Nadeau, District of Columbia  
Del Pepper, City of Alexandria (Vice Chair)  
Hans Riemer, Montgomery County (Chair)  
Kathy Smith, Fairfax County\*  
Dave Snyder, Falls Church  
Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County  
Dyan Backe, Gaithersburg  
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County  
Cecily Beall, District of Columbia Department of Energy & Environment  
Nick Bonard, National Capital Planning Commission  
Ira Dorfman, GWRCCC  
Stan Edwards, Montgomery County  
Rene'e Hamilton, Virginia Department of Transportation  
Brian Hug, Maryland Department of the Environment\*  
Shannon Moore, Frederick County  
Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation  
George Nichols, DCSEU  
Tamara Toles O'Laughlin, ACPAC Vice Chair  
Ram Tangirala, District of Columbia\*  
Ted Trabue, DCSEU  
Colleen Turner, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Scott Pomeroy, Scalable Strategies

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Alex Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment\*  
Alexandra Catena, District of Columbia Department of Energy & Environment\*  
Josh Freeman, representing Brandon Todd, District of Columbia  
Mike Lake, Fairfax County  
Dorothy Morrison, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Laura Rogers, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Chris Somers, Arlington County  
Chris Taylor, PEPCO

**COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

Amanda Campbell, COG Environmental Programs  
Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs  
Jen Desimone, COG Environmental Programs  
Jeff King, COG Environmental Programs  
Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Programs  
Ron Milone, COG Department of Transportation Planning

Steve Walz, COG Environmental Programs Director

## **PART 1. MWAQC BUSINESS MEETING**

### **1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES, CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Chair Riemer opened the meeting at 11:32am. The meeting summary from the March 2017 MWAQC meeting was accepted with no changes.

### **2. DRAFT 2008 OZONE REDESIGNATION REQUEST & MAINTENANCE PLAN**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

The region developed a Redesignation Request & Maintenance Plan to submit to EPA for the 2008 ozone National Ambient Air Quality (NAAQS) standard. The Washington region met the 2008 ozone standard based on 2013-2015 data. The Redesignation Request shows attainment, and the Maintenance Plan demonstrates compliance for the milestone years 2014, 2025, and 2030 and sets out contingency measures to be put in place should the region exceed the 2008 ozone standard in the future. The plan also contains air quality data, emissions inventories, and mobile emissions budgets to ensure continued compliance.

The inventory data includes projections for the milestone years for point sources, area sources, nonroad sources and on-road sources. NO<sub>x</sub> and CO emissions are expected to decrease over the period, and VOC emissions decrease initially and rise slightly in the out years.

The plan contains Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets (MVEBs) that set the maximum allowable emissions from motor vehicles. Regional transportation plans must not result in emissions above this level. The plan contains 'Conformity Buffers' that allow for a slightly higher level of future mobile emissions to account for modeling irregularities and unforeseen changes in data or planning assumptions. Mr. Kumar explained that in the past, changes in the emissions models has resulted in a jump in the future emissions estimate; the buffers account for that possibility.

Ms. Turner, Mr. Ballou, and Ms. Beall affirmed that the states discussed the nuances of the buffers through several TAC meetings and transportation conformity calls. The states are in agreement on their inclusion in the plan. Chair Riemer asked about the influence that air quality has on the transportation planning process. Mr. Walz responded that on road NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC emissions are expected to be ratcheted down through the provisions of the plan. The buffer accounts for variables that are beyond the Transportation Planning Board's control.

Mr. Snyder recognized the region's accomplishment in meeting the standard and inquired as how the region is planning for contingencies such as the US Environmental Protection Agency making dramatic changes in regulations. According to staff, if café standards changed, the model would become inaccurate.

Mr. Snyder also said that electric vehicle readiness should be emphasized. Ms. Turner noted Maryland's work to promote EV infrastructure and purchase through the EV Council that meets bimonthly. COG produced a report recommending actions for EV readiness in 2012 and has an ongoing program to continue facilitating alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) implementation.

The Ozone Request and Redesignation Plan was approved unanimously.

Chair Riemer reminded the committee that EPA announced a new ozone standard of 70ppb for which the region will likely be designated 'marginal nonattainment'. EPA announced a 1-year delay of designations under the standard - now October, 2018. Ms. Turner said that DC filed with six other states to become intervenors in the case to support the 70ppb ozone standard. Chair Riemer proposed that staff develop a resolution to set the intention of meeting the 2015 ozone standard on schedule as if it would be designated in October 2017, with attainment year 2020. This would maintain the focus on protecting the health of residents. Several members voiced agreement.

## **PART 2. JOINT MWAQC/CEEPC MEETING**

### **3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, CHAIR'S REMARKS, SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

*Penny Gross, CEEPC Chair*

*Hans Riemer, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Gross called the meeting to order at 12:35pm. Chair Gross recounted that at the recent National Association of Counties conference, two resolutions were introduced – one supporting joining the “We Are Still In” coalition, the other supporting the US President’s withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. In the end, a resolution passed to support willing communities in their transition to a clean energy economy.

Chair Riemer recognized Bill Becker’s contributions to air quality as he retires from an accomplished career leading the National Association of Clean Air Agencies for 37 years.

### **4. MEMBER UPDATES – Mayors National Climate Action Agenda**

*Steve Walz, Director of Environmental Programs*

The COG Board requested that CEEPC provide advice on whether or how the region should respond to the President’s withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. COG staff inventoried state and COG member responses thus far, which include endorsing the response letters posted by the Mayors National Climate Action Agenda and signing the online “We Are Still In” pledge (see handout among meeting materials). A draft resolution was introduced. Mr. Snyder requested that the resolution include support of federal programs and private sector actions. Mr. Agazi asked that the resolution include a reference to the recommendations of the Multi-Sector Working Group. ACPAC’s Vice Chair, Ms. Toles O’Laughlin, said that ACPAC supports a regional resolution. Chair Gross and Ms. Bulova requested that the resolution recommend adoption by the COG Board. With these changes, the resolution passed unanimously. The final version is available on the meeting event site.

### **5. HISTORY OF EMISSION REDUCTION PROGRAMS, AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, & CURRENT OZONE SEASON SUMMARY**

Chair Riemer noted the importance of federal programs in supporting local air quality. He would like to see no unhealthy air days as the focal point for local and regional action.

#### **A. History of Emissions Reductions in the COG Region**

*Steve Walz, Director of Environmental Programs*

Mr. Walz described the history of air quality regulations, starting with the Clean Air Act of 1990 which set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for six criteria pollutants. Regions designated as not meeting or ‘non-attainment’ for the standards are required to develop plans reduce pollution to meet the standards. Ozone is driven by NOx and VOC emissions. The region has recently achieved attainment of the fine particle standard, and has been in attainment for CO for over 20 years. Air quality monitors are located throughout the region that trigger air quality alerts. Alerts and forecasts are available through [cleanairpartners.net](http://cleanairpartners.net).

MWAQC approved the 2008 redesignation and request and maintenance plan today. We are expected to be designated as marginal non-attainment for the new 2015 ozone standard, although EPA announced a 1-year delay of designations under that standard while EPA reviews the standard. Over the last 20 years, the region has achieved great progress in reducing ozone pollution but there is still more to do to reach the new ozone standard. Chair Riemer asked to see a review of the literature behind EPA’s decision to set the 70ppb standard.

Mr. Walz explained that transportation plans must demonstrate conformity and must not worsen air quality or exceed the Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets established in air quality plans. Chair Riemer observed that air quality only rarely functions as a constraint on transportation projects in the region. Mr. Snyder said that emissions from outside the region contribute to our pollution levels, so federal programs are important. The region should do more to ensure EV readiness.

Mr. Dorfman commented that Volkswagen is investing over \$9M in this region to build electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and local jurisdictions should play a role. EV uptake is ramping up: 3% of local passenger vehicles may be EVs by 2020. Chair Gross noted the land use and zoning changes needed to support EV infrastructure. Mr. Agazi noted Fairfax County's journey toward EV readiness – incorporating considerations into the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance, and into capital plans. Local government staff should be involved.

Mr. Walz said that BEEAC will weigh in on local recommendations for EV readiness and identify any actions elected officials could take. Chair Riemer requested that the committee discuss EV issues at a future meeting.

#### **B. Ozone Season Status**

*Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

So far, this year, the region has experienced 8 code orange and 52 code yellow days. Several federal, state and local control programs have resulted in improved air quality in the region.

#### **C. Ozone Transport Commission Modeling Studies**

*Jeff King, Chief, COG Climate and Energy Program*

Mr. King discussed information from the Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) to help frame the magnitude of emission reductions involved with achieving air quality improvement. The OTC was formed under the Clean Air Act to address air quality issues in the Ozone Transport Region (OTR), which encompasses the entire air shed along the East Coast from northern Virginia to Maine. OTC works with others to develop and use regional comprehensive emissions inventories along with sophisticated computer modeling to predict the emissions reductions benefits of emissions control programs and assess whether nonattainment areas can achieve the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) by federal deadlines. The inventories used for the modeling incorporate the effects of on-the-books and on-the-way regulations on emissions.

NOx emissions are the principal remaining challenge to reducing ozone, with the majority of emissions coming from power plants, nonroad engines and on road vehicles. The inventories used with preliminary OTC modeling predict about a 500-750 tons per day reduction in NOx emissions between 2017 and 2023 across all the core states in the OTR. Historical trends show that with a couple hundred drop in tons per day of NOx emissions, the region's design value for ozone can be reduced by approximately 10 ppb. According to one air quality expert working with OTC, an additional 10% reduction in NOx emissions would likely result in very few exceedances in the metropolitan Washington region, not accounting for emissions traveling to our area from outside the region and this region's contributions to air quality degradation in downwind areas. The inventories for this region indicate that NOx emissions from area sources and point sources are expected to stay fairly stable but transportation emissions will drop precipitously through 2030, with an anticipated 115-ton total reduction in NOx between 2014 and 2025.

### **6. OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW STATE AND LOCAL MEASURES**

#### **A. Regional Tree Canopy Strategy Report**

*Michael Knapp, Montgomery County Forester*

Mr. Knapp shared that the Regional Tree Canopy Workgroup, originally formed to provide guidance on implementing the tree canopy measure in the 2007 ozone State Implementation Plan, developed a strategy report. Trees remove many tons of air pollutants annually, reduce urban heat, reduce building energy use, and absorb and store carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas.

Transportation, nursery production, and waste wood are additional considerations in the carbon balance of tree stewardship. In the District of Columbia, trees avoid 2,360 tons of carbon dioxide annually; in Fairfax County, trees mitigate 22,900 tons annually. Trees also provide habitat, improve water quality, reduce stress, crime, and noise, provide food, and increase property values. Strategies to protect and enhance tree cover outlined in the report include adopting urban forest master plans and providing land use planning guidance.

The mission of the workgroup is evolving. To support local efforts to accomplish the strategies in the report, the workgroup recommends creating a standing committee, a Regional Urban Forest Master Plan, and identifying regional tree canopy goals. Comments will be accepted through August 25. Send comments to Brian LeCouteur [blecouteur@mwkog.org](mailto:blecouteur@mwkog.org).

Mr. Knapp clarified that satellite resolution and GIS processes have evolved which has created a difficulty in comparing coverage over time. Spatial resolution at the sub-meter level has been available for 5 years and will probably become the standard. Tree canopy assessment methodologies would benefit from being standardized. Chair Gross inquired about tree species changes from the changing climate. Mr. Knapp said that the Urban Forest Master Plan could identify the types of species that could thrive under a changing climate.

#### **B. GRID Alternatives Low Income Solar Program**

*Ingrid Schwingler, Grid Alternatives*

As Grid Alternatives installs solar, their two main goals are to reduce electricity bills for low-income communities and provide local job training. In Virginia, a 3-year community solar pilot program is in place; utilities will contract from solar farms to sell to customers. Dominion is gathering feedback on RFP design. They are expected to file with the Public Service Commission in December. In Maryland, the community solar generating program was passed in 2015. Maryland has authorized the first set of subscriber organizations, who are now applying for interconnection approval. The pilot program has set capacity limits by year for each utility service territory. In the District of Columbia (DC), community solar was approved in 2012 and was launched in late 2016. DC's Green Bank will play a part in supporting solar. DC's Renewable Portfolio Standard increase also supports solar implementation. The District has a goal to reach 100,000 low-income households.

#### **C. Fleets for the Future (F4F)**

*Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Planner*

COG published an EV readiness report in 2012 and has been actively supporting alternative fuel vehicle adoption. Under the Fleets for the Future (F4F) program, COG, along with four other regional councils, is developing a cooperative purchasing program to aggregate demand for alternative fuel types to reduce the costs to fleets, demonstrate demand to manufacturers, and catalog lessons learned. The Mid-Atlantic Purchasing Team has facilitated the program. Fleets for the Future helps member governments achieve their energy and sustainability goals. Vehicle fuel types include propane, E85, compressed natural gas, heavy-duty hybrid, and electric. The program focuses on public and non-profit fleets – fourteen fleets are participating thus far. Cost savings are maximized when several organizations are interested in purchasing the same model. The program also seeks to aggregate infrastructure purchase. Contracts are expected to be awarded in November.

Chair Riemer asked staff to provide an update on alternative fuel school bus fleet efforts.

Mr. Walz is examining how to include biodiesel in cooperative purchasing programs.

Mr. Trabue said that in addition to working with GRID Alternatives to support community solar, DC SEU recently supported 6 installations on federal buildings as part of the Capitol Solar Challenge initiative. Mr. Herling shared a Knoxville program that he learned of at the Climate Resilience Academy in Denver. The program trained youths to weatherize homes.

### **7. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TOOLKIT**

*Maia Davis, COG Environmental Planner*

Ms. Davis presented the Environmental Justice Toolkit which was developed as a set of resources and approaches for local governments for considering equity in climate, energy, and air quality planning and policies. The Toolkit has been reviewed by the MWAQC-TAC and BEEAC and previous drafts were presented to CEEPC and MWAQC. Mr. Agazi congratulated the group for creating the Toolkit. Ms. Toles-O'Laughlin thanked COG for supporting ACPAC's development of the Toolkit. The Toolkit was unanimously adopted.

### **8. ADJOURNMENT**