

# Maryland Commission on Climate Change

## **Mitigation Working Group**

**August 2, 2018 10:00AM - 12:30PM**

### Minutes

*Attendance:* Secretary Grumbles, Mike Powell, Stuart Clarke, Tom Ballentine, Drew Cobbs, Jana Davis, Colby Ferguson, Ben Hobbs, Gerrit Knaap, Les Knapp, Anne Lindner, Arjun Makhijani, Lisa McNeilly, Susan Payne, Chris Rice, Jim Strong, Tamara Toles O’Laughlin, Colleen Turner, Tom Walz, Rachel Marks (for Elliott Campbell), Lauren Burke (for Joe Uehlein), Tom Killeen (for Larry Kasecamp), Delegate Stein, Luke Wisniewski (MDE), Sara Via (presenter), Margie Brassil (office of Delegate Stein), Ian Ullman (office of Senator Pinsky), Susanne Brogan (office Treasurer Kopp), Cheryl Arney (Citizen’s Climate Lobby), Larry Liebesman (CCL and Climate XChange), Donald Goldberg (Climate Law & Policy Project), David Costello (IEER), David Smedick (Sierra Club), Lindsey Mendelson (Sierra Club), Brian Ditzler (Sierra Club MD), Ruth Alice White (HoCo Climate Action), Cameron Morris (HoCo Climate Action), Charlie Goedeke (HoCo Climate Action), Shari Glenn (League of Women Voters), Katherine Catalano (Union of Concerned Scientists), Astrid Caldas (Union of Concerned Scientists), Maria Cecilia Pinto de Moura (Union of Concerned Scientists), Jeff Silva (unaffiliated), Gerald Jackson (AFL-CIO), Tod Wickersham (Beneficial Results LLC), John Mosheim (GHG Engineering), Hans Schmidt (MDA), Bihui Xu (MDP), Earl Lewis (MDOT), Dorothy Morrison (MDOT), Chris Beck (MDE), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Erick Thunell (MDE), Megan Ulrich (MDE), Scott Zacharko (MDE), Jess Herpel (MDE)

*Phone (members only):* Tad Aburn, Tom Dennison, Tom Weissinger

### **10:10AM MWG Meeting Called to Order**

#### **Item #1: Welcome and Introductions**

- Luke called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the room, and by members on the phone.

#### **Item #2: Public Comment**

- Donald Goldberg: [To Dr. Sara Via] has any work been done on time trajectory of carbon sequestration in soil, and how long will that continue to accrue? Can there be too much carbon in the soil for farmers? [Dr. Sara Via will address in her presentation; there cannot be too much carbon in the soil]. Carbon Tax should be included in the modeling; urged someone in MWG to take the initiative to begin developing the model run they were offered.
- Brian Ditzler: Commended initial set of recommendations from Stuart, Gerrit, Arjun, Lisa McNeilly, Tamara, and Joe Uehlein; was pleased to see some incorporated in the “Straw Man”, particularly market-based transportation program, ZEV school and public transportation, and increased RPS. He would like to see public transportation investment expanded.
- Jeff Silva: The greatest source of GHGs is surface transportation, and registered on-road vehicles are a large portion. Proposed a fee for gasoline vehicles to be incurred during registration.
- David Smedick: Specificity is needed in the recommendations, in order to guide policy and program development. It is risky to go for the easy generalities in the straw man. Consensus should be the goal, but if needed, different discussions/minority reports should be considered.
- Lindsey Mendelson: Support the recommendation for a transportation cap and invest program noted in the “Straw Man”. Regarding the GCC listening session in August, there should be additional sessions, during better hours, and made more accessible to ensure that all who want to, especially those traditionally underserved, can participate in the process.

#### **Item #3: Update on the Healthy Soils Initiative**

- Dr. Sara Via’s presentation is available on the Commission website under today’s meeting materials.
- Questions from MWG Members and Discussion followed the presentation. The following were clarifications made by Sara Via:

- Sara Via was not suggesting that we incentivize turning prime cropland into woodlands; the mechanism would need to be developed to ensure that only marginal land was converted due to the program.
- Programs can be prioritized based on the economics; while this is not her area of expertise there has already been a large amount of work done on this (including some cost/ton analysis), particularly by the Natural Resources Council, and these studies are available online.
- Soil type does impact the carbon retention. Not as much information is known about sandy soils such as those on the Eastern Shore, which would be less effective, but we could approach that either by discounting the national or regional studies, or by performing studies on this soil type to get more specific numbers.
- There are several ways to do easy/inexpensive test on soil that will provide information on carbon content; soil organic matter has been shown to be a suitable proxy. Currently farmers are required to test annually for this under other programs, but are not required to publish these numbers, which could theoretically show us historical changes.

#### Item #4: Discussion on Recommendations

- Mike Powell introduced the process, suggesting that we go through each and see if there are any objections, reserving the right to request that they be strengthened or added to.
- Stuart explained the background of the recommendations, that there was the MDE straw man, a set from Stuart Gerrit, Arjun, Lisa McNeilly, Tamara, and Joe Uehlein, and a set from State agencies that chose to submit for consideration.
- [General Process Discussion]
  - Delegate Stein suggested that since the recommendations are in part for legislators to consider what needs to be done, more specific is better; a minority dissenting opinion, if one exists, would also provide helpful information.
  - Secretary Grumbles stated that consensus is important to presenting meaningful recommendations, and we should strive for it as much as possible along a continuum, but we will not be beholden to unanimity.
- [2018 Draft GGRA Plan, "MDE Straw-Man"]
  - Stuart requested some clarification as to whether we were discussing if we support these as statements or recommendations. He stated that while he does not disagree with the statements, he does not believe that they reflect this year's conversations or that they have potential for influence or impact. He would like to see stronger recommendations that urge parties to engage in actions they were not already planning to do. He is concerned to say that he agrees with these statements and, at the end of the process, they are the only consensus items. Tamara and Arjun generally agree.
  - Mike Powell noted that, on the other hand, if we object to everything then we have nothing left to recommend. If we can agree to the existing language, reserving the right to request that it be made stronger, then we at least have something to work from.
  - Chris Rice supports the first seven recommendations.
  - Colby Ferguson expressed that in his opinion these do not really recommend anything, but perhaps could be used as a synopsis of the plan. They are goals, since they do not express "how" they are to be accomplished. We should get into the minutia and determine what we have data to recommend; those things that we do not have data on should be moved to the 2019 work plan.
  - Jana Davis and Stuart Clarke agreed that these could be used generally as an introduction.
  - Mike Powell reiterated that more specificity could be added.
  - Tad Aburn expressed that these are important statements to include.

- Colleen Turner agreed that the statements have value, as it is important to understand as well as possible what is going on. Could be an effective background but not the meat of the recommendations.
- Tom Walz suggested that, organizationally, we could also move the more specific recommendations to underneath each of these goals, providing both the background/context and the specificity.
- [First bullet under “Straw-Man” Recs]
  - Gerrit expressed concern that there may be programs out of that 100 that are no longer active, which would preclude building from them. It was noted that most of the programs are legislation, and all still exist; some may be under different names.
  - Drew questioned what we know about how well each of the programs functioned. Luke clarified that, while we have a general idea of the program performance, we will not have numbers until 2021, since they are currently through 2020 and analysis will occur the following year.
  - Colleen requested that the language “control measures” be changed to programs.
- [2020 Manufacturing Study, “MDE Straw-Man”]
  - Chris Rice notes that, regarding offshore wind, we have the property/space in port of Baltimore for these jobs.
  - Regarding the apprenticeship programs, Colby asked about specifying “state-certified” programs, noting that since the recommendation was just to “explore the general feasibility of...”, we should perhaps recommend looking at all potential programs.
  - Mike Powell suggested “state-certified or otherwise accredited”, which was generally agreeable.
- [“Additional Submitted Recommendations”, bullet #1]
  - Ben Hobbs suggested broadening scope of “University System of Maryland” (excludes private institutions); “Maryland academic institutions” was agreed upon.
  - see general note below regarding additional State agency consultation/collaboration.
- [“Additional Submitted Recommendations”, bullet #2]
  - Drew Cobbs requested clarification on the final sentence, that “proposed 40 by 30 programs and strategies are compatible with achieving zero net emissions in the 2050 to 2060 timeframe”; noting that we should still consider strategies that only get us to 2030/2040.
  - Luke Wisniewski suggested that the intention was more is preferable, when comparing two program options; Tad agreed.
  - Colleen asked for clarification on what “net zero emissions” means. Arjun suggested we can clarify that we mean net zero emissions within the framework of the State’s GHG inventory. He will send suggested wording.
  - Drew Cobbs is also going to propose language for the “net zero emissions” portion.
- [“Additional Submitted Recommendations”, bullet #3]
  - Tad noted that this is still under discussion at TCI and has not yet been finalized.
  - Earl Lewis agreed, noting that he and Secretary Grumbles were at the TCI listening session in NY last week.
  - Drew Cobbs would like “regional” changed to “broad regional”, or otherwise clarified that the program should be larger.
  - Colleen Turner proposed that the “2019 Plan” language from the “Straw-Man” related to TCI may be more appropriate here (first bullet under “Transportation and Land Use”).
  - Les Knapp agreed.

- [“Additional Submitted Recommendations”, bullet #4]
  - Colby Ferguson noted that there are some sectors for which EV is not feasible, such as agriculture. There should be programs/incentives to take very old tractors out of use and replace them with something more fuel-efficient. EV/mass transit focus is not helpful for the rural community, who would then also bear the brunt of a carbon fee. It was suggested that we may add a sub-bullet regarding this.
  - Chris Rice noted that the final sub-bullet should include alternative fuel school buses.
  - Les Knapp agrees regarding alternative fuel being added. He also stated that the specific date on the final sub-bullet was concerning, since cost and timeline need to be taking into account. It will be necessary to clarify that the strategy should be assessed by 2035, not that it will be implemented by then. Furthermore, we should add something to recommend local government consultation.
  - Arjun Makhijani objects to the inclusion of alternative fuel as an option; new subsidies for fossil fuels should be avoided. He added that there is no technical issue for this, but we can discuss how local school districts would be able to afford the upgrades. Additionally he states that non-road EV is feasible and long-distance EV semi-trucks exist.
  - Earl Lewis stated that they are okay with the first three sub-bullets, but the other two need word-smithing.
- [“Additional Submitted Recommendations”, bullet #5]
  - Earl Lewis expressed a concern with the specific 2%/year goal of increased transit ridership. Colleen suggested looking to some of the recommendations proposed by MDOT that addresses strategies designed to enhance transit ridership.
  - Stuart asked whether there was any percentage increase goal they would be comfortable with, and Earl clarified that they need more information before understanding what a good goal would be. MDOT will craft language.
- [Additional Comments]
  - Ben Hobbs does not support any recommendation on storage unless the PATHWAYS model shows that it makes an impact. Luke Wisniewski clarified that MDE is targeting results for August 30, but cannot guarantee they will be ready then.
  - It was generally agreed that, in the bulk of the “Additional Submitted Recommendations”, there were many instances where just MDE was noted as the actor and the language should instead reflect “MDE, in collaboration with other State agencies...”

#### **Item #5: New Business**

- Upcoming Meeting (August 30th)
  - It was agreed that we would lengthen the meeting, with a lunch break, to provide enough time for continued discussion on recommendations (must be finalized by end of next meeting). The DNR update on forest carbon sequestration may need to be moved.
  - MDE will set up a matrix to send out to members, who could indicate support, opposition, or a desire for additional discussion on given recommendations, in order to guide next week’s meeting. The results of this will be distributed prior to the next meeting.
  - Details will be finalized by the MWG Steering Committee on their upcoming call (08/10).

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:45PM**