

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Mitigation Working Group

December 6, 2018 10:00AM - 11:30AM

Meeting Minutes

On the Call: Secretary Ben Grumbles, Mike Powell, Stuart Clarke, Tad Aburn, Ben Hobbs, Tom Ballentine, Mike Remsberg, Lisa McNeilly, Christine Conn (for Elliott Campbell), Tom Weissinger, Chris Rice, Les Knapp, Audrey Lyke, Susan Payne, Colleen Turner, Brian Hug, Treasurer Nancy Kopp, Earl Lewis (MDOT), John Mosheim (GHG Engineering), Larry Liebesman (CXC and CCL), Donald Goldberg (CLPP), David Costello (Climate Action Now), Bihui Xu (MDP), Ken Choi (MDP), Will Candler (Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis), David Smedick (Sierra Club), Cecilia Moura (UCS), Mike Siers (Towson/RESI), Nick Wetzler (Towson/RESI), Anne Bristow (Garrett County), Pam Kasemeyer (Schwartz, Metz & Wise), John Kumm (ECO Rep), Jeff Silva, Peter S., Lisa Nissley (MDE), Hannah Brubach (MDE), Jess Herpel (MDE), Luke Wisniewski (MDE), and 9 unidentified callers.

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Brian called the meeting to order and recorded role. He briefly introduced the goal of the meeting as the 2019 work plan (WP).
- Stuart thanked MDE for the time and the work to compile the potential WP items into a useful format.

2. Public Comment

Brian asked that, since many comments are likely aimed at the 2019 WP, if there are specific suggestions brought up in public comment that MWG members are sympathetic to or support, they should bring them up when we start the WP discussion.

- Donald Goldberg (Climate Law & Policy Project) - Concerned that carbon pricing is not in the proposed work plan, which seems to him like a disjuncture from the work we did last year. [after prompting with a question] Upcoming work could be discussing investment of revenues.
- John Mosheim (GHG Engineering) - Supported addressing emissions from the transportation sector, considering renewable and low carbon fuels, and working with other regions for input.
- David Smedick (Sierra Club) - Supports the new proposal on ensuring quality job creation (#3). Also supports the first item on transportation (#5), noting that it should be an ambitious and innovative policy. In terms of energy, finding a way to combine the first item (#11) is a good starting point. Believes it is worth getting specific, and the fossil fuel transition conversation should focus on coal capacity and ensuring an equitable transition in that space; looking to the examples from other states.
- Will Candler (Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis) - Approves of the fracking ban and supports stopping any new fossil fuel infrastructure construction in Maryland, including pipelines. Supports thorium molten salt reactors as the most promising source of fossil free energy.
- Ann Bristow (Garrett County) - transition of coal power plants should not be the transition to natural gas, which is the current plan.

3. Discussion on 2019 Work Plan

- Treasurer Kopp expressed concern that MWG is not going to address all the items in the minority report, and asked whether we will create additional working groups to tackle them. Brian noted that we will do our best and hope to be able to at least touch on each of the items in 2019.

[The text of the discussion document that was sent out follows at the end of this document, with the bullet points numbered for ease of reference in the meeting minutes. Notes from discussion are in red.]

4. New Business - 2019 Schedule and Upcoming

- It was suggested that we may want to consider extending all meetings to 3 hours, depending on discussion needs.

- Brian laid out the schedule upcoming. MDE has taken notes on what was said today and provide a revised draft before the Christmas holiday. We will then finalize the work plan at the Jan 15th MWG meeting, and also put the meeting topics in the order of approach.
- Brian asked whether everyone was generally okay with Tuesday morning meetings, noting that we would send out a schedule with the updated work plan draft. There was no disagreement voiced.
- Brian stated that, for those who have been interested in following the GGRA modeling progress, we will probably be setting up another webinar soon (no date currently), where we will go through the results of Policy Scenario 2.
- Secretary Grumbles noted that he looks forward to sharing his experiences on COP24 in Poland as well as some important developments regarding RGGI, and working closely with MDOT on TCI. He thanked everyone for their thoughtful input and engagement in the 2019 WP process.

Potential Meeting Topics for the 2019 MWG Work Plan

General

1. Enhancing existing efforts to track key data and other indicators of GHG reduction strategies to monitor progress and ensure that the State is achieving the goals of the GGRA.
2. Continuing to analyze and support State efforts to challenge changes being proposed at the federal level that weaken key national programs to reduce GHG emissions. Examples include: changes to the Clean Power Plan, changes to federal fuel efficiency and vehicle standards and changes to methane emission reduction initiatives at new and existing facilities.
3. Ensuring *quality* job creation in Maryland through strategies and policies in the GGRA plan. Quality jobs are defined as those which provide (1) family-sustaining wages and benefits; (2) a pathway for workers to form a union and engage in collective bargaining without fear of harassment or reprisal; (3) hiring opportunities for disadvantaged communities; (4) training and advancement opportunities.
4. The GGRA Plan should include programs to assess and address equity issues.

Ben Hobbs expressed that it was good to hear about efforts that Maryland can lead to strengthen and extend RGGI in terms of other sectors and geographically, or in terms of tightening it. He proposed that we might move that up to the “General” meeting if we are looking to expand into transportation, or a general (systemic) carbon pricing program. The discussion should focus on ways that we might be able to execute such a program.

Chris Rice asked how we will define quality jobs; noting that MWG has had discussion on jobs and quality jobs at a number of meetings.

- Stuart Clarke stated that he does not feel we have had much conversation about the extent to which the jobs we are creating are high quality. He proposes that such a meeting wouldn’t exclusively be talking about a definition, but trying to come to some consensus on what quality job creation looks like and then exploring what strategies we might employ to create them.
- Mike Powell expressed that there is enough interest in this topic that it should be included.

Mike Powell noted that several topics have to do with state procurement, but thus far we have separated it into different subjects like transportation. He proposed instead that we have just one discussion about state procurement overall, and DGS may provide information.

Susan proposed that when we address equity, we need to address overall cost to the general public as well.

Transportation and Land Use

5. Increasing efforts to analyze the concepts being developed through the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) to implement a market-based program to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector while returning direct benefit to Maryland consumers.
6. Continuing to work through the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council (EVIC) and the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) MOU partnership to increase electric vehicle (EV) refueling infrastructure and EV sales in Maryland and on the East Coast. Maryland is one of the leaders on the East Coast in this area and should work to maintain that leadership role.
7. Continuing to research and evaluate the GHG emission reduction potential of vehicle and infrastructure technologies, including connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV), EVs, and system operations. The evaluation effort should consider safety, congestion, and equity issues including public health, economic, and workforce impacts.
8. Continuing to enhance travel demand management (TDM) strategies and other strategies linked to smart growth and land use, active transportation, and inter-city travel. [Or, MDE should include strategies and programs in the GGRA Plan that will be sufficient to increase average daily public transportation ridership in each major transit center in the State by 2% or more per year through 2035. We further recommend that MDE specifically assess an expansion of public transportation investments including existing WMATA and MTA funding as well as in projects that integrate transportation and more sustainable land use planning (e.g. Corridor Cities Transit, Red Line, MARC expansion initiatives)].
9. Continuing the effort to review and update state fleet procurement procedures and practices, and to provide direction on EV procurement and EV charging station installation guidance and targets.
10. Researching and analyzing the costs and benefits of deployment opportunities of ZEV school and transit buses in Maryland. The analysis should include: (1) capital, maintenance and operating cost comparisons; (2) research into the viability of ZEVs as well as hybrid and alternative fuel technologies; and (3) emissions reduction benefit summaries.

Chris Rice stated that he did not believe we will be able to fit all these topics under one meeting, and proposed the following priorities: (#7) continuing to research and evaluate GHG emission reduction potential of vehicle and infrastructure technologies, including connected/autonomous vehicles; (#9) continuing the effort to review and update state fleet procurement procedures and practices.

Earl Lewis agreed, and also wanted to follow up on the last topic (#10), noting that it includes some capital investment decisions related to infrastructure installation.

Tom Ballentine asked which other market-based programs would fall under item #5.

- Colleen Turner stated that TCI-specific conversation is market-based, but there is an opportunity to look at some other solutions (e.g., ASHTO). It is not just a mileage-based user fee; they are looking at multiple avenues.
- Tom stated he was interested to unpack the TCI market-based opportunities.

Tom Ballentine expressed concern that we need to be selective about what we will look at, since each this topic has a large number of dense items.

- Brian Hug agreed that it is a lot to digest, and proposed that we might consider setting this up as a longer meeting, possibly three hours. Colleen agreed.

Energy

11. Developing a conceptual schedule (sometimes referred to as “the bridge”) for the energy and transportation sectors to identify the timing of transitions in both sectors between 2019 and 2050. These transitions should include fossil fuel to renewable energy generation and fossil fuel to electric or other zero emission transportation strategies. [Or, MD should develop a plan for transitioning from Maryland’s six large-scale

coal electricity generators by 2030, and the use of natural gas without carbon capture in the electricity sector by 2040, while maintaining reliable power]. The bridge strategies and the timing of the bridge strategies should take into account: climate change; air quality; environmental and public health benefits; and impacts to both underserved or environmental justice communities and fossil fuel dependent workers. [Or, MD should also develop a plan for the establishment of programs that protect communities and workers traditionally reliant on these fossil fuel facilities before the coal plants are closed]. This effort should also identify tools to make these transitions as timely and economically productive as possible.

12. Continuing to encourage the State to work with other states to improve and expand RGGI.
13. Investigating an enhanced renewable portfolio standard.
14. Charging MDE, MDP, MDA, MEA, and the PSC to collaborate with each other and public stakeholders in the development of a Solar Plan for the state that would describe goals and a preferred path for the State's solar build-out. This plan should include recommendations for the optimal blend of rooftop, community solar, and utility scale solar; as well as recommendations for preferred sites and siting considerations. This plan should get the state to 20% in-state solar by 2030.
15. Ramping up of efficiency in the EmPOWER Maryland program to 3% per year by 2025 and maintaining that pace until at least 2030. This efficiency target should be exclusive of conversion of fossil fuel transportation and fossil fuel heating in buildings to efficient electric systems for which a separate efficiency and GHG reduction accounting should be done.

Audrey Lyke noted that she would prioritize discussion on the transition 2030/2050 (#11).

Ben Hobbs proposed to focus on effective ways to move forward rather than starting out with a specific target for any particular technology.

Buildings

16. Developing a recommendation on building codes and other energy efficiency upgrades, including the establishment of annual residential and commercial building retrofit targets and opportunities to expand government and utility supported programs, the requirement that all new residential and commercial buildings be carbon neutral by 2030; and an expansion of government and utility supported efficient electric heating and cooling system policies and programs.
17. Identifying and analyzing new programs to encourage combined heat and power (CHP) and other strategies designed to incentivize the transition of heating systems for the residential and light commercial building sectors from fossil fuel to electric heat pumps and other low carbon systems.
18. We recommend that the General Assembly and the Governor require the Public Service Commission to model a policy or program that drives at least \$100 million in the 2020 – 2025 period to incentives for switching from oil, propane, or natural gas heating systems to efficient electric heat pumps in the residential and light commercial building sectors. If analysis of the model proves out, it should be implemented.

Ben Hobbs again recommended that specific targets not be pre-selected, but perhaps experiment to determine what those targets might be; if we try to determine what's cost-effective and go from there.

Tom Ballentine agrees, noting specifically an issue with item #16, requiring all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2030. He stated that we should look at ways to improve the pathway but that there's nothing at this point that tells us this specific goal will be feasible or cost-effective.

Land Use and Conservation

19. Identifying and analyzing opportunities to implement more climate friendly agricultural practices, including regenerative agriculture and other practices that sequester carbon by improving soil health. Also analyze the potential for linking renewable energy opportunities to climate friendly agricultural practices.

20. Identifying and analyzing opportunities to achieve net forest and tree canopy gains in Maryland. This effort should include consideration of forest management and tree planting programs and identify a target time frame for achieving net forest and tree canopy gains.
21. The General Assembly and the Governor should enact, by 2020, a sustainable agricultural land preservation law which permits/facilitates the deployment of joint renewable energy and regenerative agriculture development, in order to simultaneously maximize the reduction and sequestration of carbon emissions while improving soil health.
22. The General Assembly and the Governor should require net forest and tree canopy gains in Maryland by 2025 through the enactment of various forest management and tree planting programs and initiatives; including a strengthened Forest Conservation Law.
23. The General Assembly and the Governor should enact, by 2022, more aggressive and explicit compact development and sustainable growth incentive and management programs and regulations.

Susan Payne stated that she does not see any significant difference between item #19 and #21, other than that the second one calls for specific legislation. She requested an explanation of #21, noting that current laws generally cover this, but it has not been utilized thus far.

- Lisa McNeilly suggested that this question would be explored and answered at the meeting when we have the experts presenting. Lisa further noted that laws and regulations can be changed, and so this is a request to evaluate whether or not we should change the law. Susan countered that she believes this is all covered in item #19, and that we do not need a separate item. The land that's put into easements is prime farm land, and it's a matter of food security.
- Stuart suggested that we need to set a distinction between setting an agenda for the meeting and having the discussion at the meeting, but that we can combine these items.

Christine Conn proposed that for the tree canopy gains, we try to link with Chesapeake Bay goals. There is a new strategy being considered that includes conservation and nutrient/sediment reduction that often goes hand-in-hand with carbon. We should align these two goals.

- Ben Grumbles noted that he and Mark are in conversation regarding this, and he agrees that it's important to have good coordination, noting that there are some great opportunities ahead.

Susan requested that we add in the item from the MWG 2018 recommendations on finding a permanent source of funding for the healthy soils program.

Waste Management and Recycling; Environmental Justice and Public Health

24. Continuing to analyze strategies that would move the State towards zero waste concepts as expeditiously as practicable.
25. MDE should analyze and report on the health benefits of the reduction of air pollution that would accompany the phase-out of coal by 2030 and natural gas by 2040, both in terms of reduced morbidity and mortality and in terms of the reduced health care expenditures, with special emphasis on the communities that bear a disproportionate share of the burden of pollution today.

Brian suggested that we may treat this as a "catch-all" meeting, for additional subjects.

Mike Powell suggested that we put the procurement items (brought up by him at the beginning) in this meeting, instead of under "general". Brian agreed.

- Secretary Kopp mentioned that they are hoping for something at the board of public works that integrates looking at climate change impacts across the board when approving procurement requests.