

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

June 20, 2019, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm - MDE

Attendees: Ben Grumbles, Tad Aburn, Brian Hug, Earl Lewis, Nancy Kopp, Lori Arguelles, Dr. Peter Goodwin, Mike Tidwell, Jeanie Haddaway-Riccio, Catherine McCall, Russ Dickerson, Lindsey Mendelson, Mira Janush, Suzannah Mullen, Doug Aus, Les Knapp, Susan Payne, Cristen Flynn, Portia Wheatley, Steve Pattison, Spyros Papadimas, Thomas Walz, Kim Drake, Catherine McCall, Kim Grubert, Elliott Campbell, David Smedick, Jim Bass, Michelle Charochak, Kate Charbonneau, Pamela Powers, Paul Berman, Jim Frazier, Nicholas Wetzle, David Costello, Matt Rowe, Gary Greening, Dorothy Morrison, Michael Bibb, Nick Orrick, Margie Brassil, Rob McCord, Mike Powell, Deborah Prout, Chris Rice, Hans Schmidt, Mark Belton

Phone: Colby Ferguson, Lisa McNeilly

Welcome from Secretary Grumbles and Introductions

- Mark Belton has been appointed to the MCCC as the MACo.
- The main topic of the meeting as being the pre-release of MDE's GGRA draft plan; Referred to Senator Pinsky, stating that Senator Pinsky wants the plan to have specific details to focus on.
- Mentioned the importance of May 22nd, when Governor Hogan allowed the Clean Energy Job Act to become law. This Act builds upon the importance of renewables in our future, which is clean energy. Moving forward, the GGRA's focus will be on improving technology and utilizing renewables. The goal is to have 100% clean electricity by 2040. For this to be accomplished, the State will need to have a collective effort from all of its partners.
- News that New Jersey will be part of RGGI for the first auction of 2020 as they have finalized regulations and rejoined as of June 17th. Pennsylvania is looking to join RGGI as well after comments from Governor Tom Wolf this week.
- Discussed the EPA finalizing regulations for the Clean Power Plan and mentioned that the Federal Government has already briefed state officials.
 - Maryland is disappointed by the rule and will need strong state leadership to counter these rollbacks.
 - Treasurer Kopp asked about immediate impacts from EPA's decision.
 - Secretary Grumbles replied that there may be no immediate impact as it will be in the courts for a while. He recognized some efficiency benefits for power plants and stated that MD needs to focus on clean energy through bi-partisanship effort with other states. He also stated that it will not affect our economy and the only impact that will occur will be in the political arena.

Public Comment

- Paul Berman (Citizen)
 - Regarding the P3 project, he is not for or against the proposal to widen the highway, but is concerned for the future of his grandchildren. He requests that the MCCC expends

energy and resources to make sure the project is implemented effectively and mentioned the plan has to be resilient as well as focus on reducing emissions from vehicular traffic.

- David Costello
 - Expressed disappointment that the Draft Plan is six months late, as he was excited about the contents of the report. Mentioned that we need to take a look at the impact of fugitive methane and he is glad that the 2017 inventory was released, but he is worried about the uptake in emissions. He is suspicious of transportation factors and would like the commission to look at inventory emissions due to federal rollbacks.
- Nick Maury (PG resident and former Mechanical Engineer at the Naval Research Laboratory)
 - He does not think that adding more highways will be beneficial overall, despite traffic concerns; he believes that the building of the roadways themselves will cause more emissions. He stated we need to draw more attention to reduce traffic and have our citizens drive less.
- Lindsey Mendelson (Sierra Club)
 - She is concerned with the highway proposal going forward without an environmental statement. She thinks that before the project progresses it should be halted and a more comprehensive analysis guided by climate science should be performed.
- Maria Janice (Rising senior at the University of Maryland)
 - She thinks that the highway will cost too much and will have to be renovated in 15 years, and will require a larger scale of repairs in 30 years. Climate change impacts will need to be considered since road emissions will increase.
- Susanna Mullen (Our Revolution Maryland)
 - Our Revolution Maryland strongly opposes the highway plan and this expansion may lead to more cars on the road. Stated that they do not yet know the extent of our environmental or economic impact. They would like the State to look into more and/or better public transit options.
- Doug Haas (Towson Resident)
 - He stated that he is here for the highway expansion as well, and believes it will increase emissions from our transportation sector.
 - Stated that the increased number of cars on the road will lead to more total Vehicle Miles Traveled, and that the emissions from greater VMT will counteract any savings we achieve from reducing idling.
- David Smedick (Sierra Club)

- He believes that our draft being six months too late is hampering public engagement. He would like to see more public engagement on the draft plan.
- He continued, mentioning the goal of 100% clean energy by 2040. He stressed that we cannot just talk about how to accomplish clean energy; we need to talk about fossil fuel free electricity sector and specifically plan for how to deal with the transition off of coal and natural gas.
- Secretary Grumbles
 - In response to the transportation concerns, he mentioned that MD needs a systems approach which has been an important component of the Hogan Administration. MDOT and MDE have been putting a lot of time and effort on a cap and invest program modeled off of RGGI. On July 30th there will be a regional public meeting with 12 states involved held in Baltimore.

Update & Discussion: Working Group Activities

- ECO - Lisa Nissley (refer to Working Group Update PowerPoint)
 - Treasurer Kopp asked about how to better get the climate change message out to the public?
 - Lisa responded that MD is attempting to have climate change information in places where people are already meeting such as schools, MVA, etc, as well as to have this information accessible online.
 - Secretary Grumbles responded by saying that Governor Hogan is very supportive of the MCCC reaching out to the public and mentioned the importance of the Climate Leadership Academy.
- STWG -Dr. Peter Goodwin and Russ Dickerson (refer to Working Group Update PowerPoint)
 - Dr. Goodwin stated they were also awaiting release of GGRA plan draft. They have some concerns about rising sea levels, more precipitation in future, and impacts on human health.
 - Mentioned that the saltwater intrusion plan has been drafted and that they have already begun discussions on the potential emissions from highway expansion.
 - Russ Dickerson spoke to the fact that he has found substantially more methane in many of the inventories while , in contrast, the carbon dioxide inventories have been more consistent.
 - Secretary Grumbles mentioned Blue Carbon and that MD need to develop strategies for improving coastal wetland conservation and resilience. These need to be put on the table in regional discussions.
- ARWG -Jeanie Haddaway-Riccio and Catherine McCall (refer to Working Group Update PowerPoint)
 - They stated they are proud of the Climate Leadership Academy which has garnered lots of interest. They informed the Commission they met May 20th with UMCES to discuss metrics for tracking process, where they got advice about setting milestones and report

cards. They highlighted the fact that they are a decade past their prepared adaptation targets.

- MWG -Tad Aburn (refer to Working Group Update PowerPoint)
 - Discussed the importance of well attended meetings with outpouring of public input where experts give opinions on important issues and then answer questions. MDOT gave a webinar/training session on May 6th and a formal MWG session on transportation will be held on August 13th. July 16th will be a briefing on the GGRA plan and July 30th will focus on the energy sector. He is open to adding more priorities after the GGRA update. Highlighted two initiatives on methane: the first being methane from compressors stations (4th stakeholder meeting on the 28th) and the second is working with Russ Dickerson and the STWG on landfill methane releases. Work is also to be done on HFC reductions as well as new regulations for RGGI. Anticipating questions about the GGRA Draft Plan's length, he mentioned it will cover many smaller topics, including partnerships with local communities and Idle Free MD.
 - Correction: July 30th meeting is cancelled. MWG meetings will take place on Future MWG meetings will take place on July 16th, August 1st, and August 13th on GGRA, Energy, and Transportation, respectively.
 - Lori Argulles asked about land use conservation.
 - Tad Aburn responded by saying this is one of the issues that we want to look at, it needs to be fully planned, but this is not at the top of our priority list.
 - Secretary Grumbles responded that DNR and MDA are concerned with Healthy and Natural Work Lands.

Discussion: GGRA Update

- Brian Hug and Luke Wisniewski (refer to GGRA Draft Plan Overview PowerPoint)
 - In regard to where 2017 numbers are, Brian stated they have not been released due to the federal government shutdown.
 - Luke Wisniewski mentioned that CARES (the Clean and Renewable Energy Standard) will help us open up to new technology.
 - The main discussion centered on Treasurer Kopp's concerns that the plan did not do enough to address our future goal of 80% reduction by 2050 (See line graph in presentation).
 - Brian and Luke clarified - the plan was designed to achieve our 2030 goals. It does not, and was not intended to, lay out specific steps and measures past 2030. In light of this, the plan does not lock us out of future reductions options. It was NOT designed as a short-term solution that will hamper our efforts in the future. Future reductions opportunities will also be affected by new, emerging technologies.
 - It was noted that the plan should substantially increase job opportunities. Most, but certainly not all, are attributed to transportation based jobs (See graph in presentation).
 - Moving forward, the plan will go through a full interagency review and then will be released to the public for comment.

Wrap Up

- Brian Hug stated that the PowerPoint will be available on the MCCC website and a detailed draft plan in the future will follow.
- Secretary Grumbles has reviewed policy scenarios and believes CARES will be a very important component of the 40% reduction by 2030 Plan.
- Lori Arguelles asked what are the next steps in the GGRA process?
 - Secretary Grumbles answered that MD needs more interagency development and number crunching.
- Dr. Peter Goodwin mentioned starting a pilot program to advance Maryland on a national level
 - Secretary Grumbles answered we need continued input from the academic and private sectors, as well as innovative partners and better technology.
- Tad Aburn talked about working with USCA to reduce climate emissions. He stated that regional partnership will be critical in this endeavor.
- Secretary Grumbles said the legislative part of the CARES plan needs to get through legislation and will take a few months, in response to a question from Mike Tidwell.
- Mike Tidwell stated the May 22nd letter from Governor Hogan was a bad look, since it already had support from all the major environmental groups in the state. He later added that he wished the Governor had brought up his concerns earlier in session.
- David Smedick has a clean energy certification question; he is trying to understand how it is moving forward if we're basing it on existing resources?
 - Secretary Grumbles answered that we'll do more in the future
- David Costello (on clean energy certificates) mentioned that money should not be going to generators which are already at zero emissions because it takes money from potentially new electricity sources, such as wind and solar.
 - Secretary Grumbles responded that it will take a lot of investing to reach the 80-by-50 target.

Meeting Adjourned 11:57am