

Mitigation Work Group Meeting Notes

November 28, 2016

Attendance: Ben Grumbles, Brian Hug, Luke Wisniewski, Susan Payne, Colleen Turner, Earl Lewis, Colby Ferguson, Rebecca Rehr, Dan Engleberg, Jana Davis, Tom Weissinger, Mike Remsberg, Mike Powell, David Smedick, Ellen Bast, Todd Metcalfe, Hampden Macbeth, Gabriel Pacyniak, David Costello, Chris Hoagland, Megan Ulrich, Jess Herpel, Erick Thunell, Chris Beck, Scott Zacharko

Phone: Ben Hobbs, Drew Cobbs, Mike Tidwell, Les Knapp, Margie Brassil (for delegate Stein), Anne Lindner, Andrew Kreider (EPA Region 3), Barry Powell (DGS), Steve Walz

Agenda Item #1: Intro

- Basic introductions

Agenda Item #2

- Report was issued in the correct time frame, including a press release from MDE
 - Feel good about it, thanks to all for the smooth process
- ECO Working Group will spread the word and develop messaging to various stakeholders

Agenda Item #3: Meeting Structure – Calendar, Meeting Times, Possible Webinars

- Potential lighter meeting schedule during Session (Jan-April)
 - If we did have meetings, they'd be sector-specific or more tailored to a topic (e.g. jobs)
 - We don't want people to feel pressured or obligated to go to all of these
- Comments regarding meeting days
 - Several suggestions for Mondays, especially during Session
- Supplemental webinars
 - MDE happy to set them up if there is a specific demand, but would not be able to structure the full content and speakers etc.
- Meeting times
 - Suggestion for either earlier or later (as opposed to mid-day)
 - Suggestion for later in the day, not in the morning during Session (seconded; staff Mondays)
 - In Annapolis later in the afternoon
 - Third agreement to this
 - Suggestion that 10:30 to 12:30 works, or 2:00 to 4:00pm

Agenda Item #4 : 2017 Priorities and Work Plan

- See handout
 - MDE pulled the 7 priorities/topics from the 2016 Recommendations
- Comments on third bullet:
 - On partner with CEJSC; ECO will probably be lead on that
 - Instead of a priority, suggestion to make a joint meeting with them

- And possibly ARWG as they have many connections in the community
- We have no definitive definition for environmental justice and underserved communities
 - Potential to use the EPA's EJ Screen to define the terms
 - Georgetown Climate Center – there are some methods available (like EJ screening in CA) to define
 - Noted there are many current definitions but no one that the Commission or MWG has agreed upon
 - Reminder that we do not want to leave out rural communities
 - Encourage stakeholder meetings
- Suggestion to partner with STWG for first bullet (enhanced GHG inventory), it's one of their priorities to make that accurate
- Third bullet (supporting clean energy businesses and manufacturing)
 - Issue with siting of solar farms - potential for exemption from local zoning laws
 - It's gonna be controversial, let's discuss it during the year rather than attempt to state a position in our priorities This does not need to be included if we are just acknowledging it as an issue, we can't just put hundreds of separate issues in the work plan - opens up to too many additional items
 - Suggested alternative language:
 - Add the word "appropriate" - "... support of an enhanced and appropriate effort..."
 - Several people found this agreeable
 - Add "in coordination with local government" - "...effort by the State and the business community, in coordination with local government, to bring..."
 - Instead of "appropriate", use the term "where beneficial" - "...effort...to bring additional clean energy businesses and manufacturing jobs to Maryland, where beneficial..."
 - Suggestions to open the issue up to other stakeholders (e.g. clean energy groups)
 - Secretary Grumbles suggested that we table this for now and give everyone a chance to think it over and come to the next meeting having spoken to various stakeholders etc.
 - It was pointed out that the wording in this bullet, as it exists, is exactly the same consensus language that we agreed upon in the recommendations for the 2016 Annual Report.
- Fifth bullet (Collaboration and enhanced effort on climate friendly agricultural practices)
 - Suggestion to move this closer to the top of our priorities list - argument that it is something more people have the ability to become involved in (not everyone can buy a new car, most people have soil)
 - Seconded
 - DNR is already working with a University of Maryland Geology professor regarding this initiative (potential collaboration)

- Brian noted that MDE will produce a draft calendar/agenda for next year and distribute prior to the next meeting so that everyone can come prepared with their comments.

Agenda Item #5: Public comment

- Georgetown Climate Center
 - On methane, draft memo made about CA and PA to do facility specific measurements
- Colby Ferguson (MWG member)
 - Every 100 acre of solar goes in, minus 100 acre ag area
 - We never discuss potential negative consequences of solar
 - This loss should be included in the Maryland GHG inventory
 - Brian noted that MDE does include sinks as part of our inventory, and land-use change is accounted for
 - David Costello - to grow the sinks, we need a net increase in sequestration; also noted that forest and agricultural lands are removed for other development, not solar
 - Mike Tidwell – Development is the major reason for loss of agricultural land.
- Suggestion for a briefing in 2017 on new Federal administration, since there may be a large change coming up

Agenda Item #6: Wrap-up

- MDE will make a tentative schedule; work to edit the consensus recommendations from the 2016 Commission report to shape into more specific priorities for 2017

Meeting Adjourned 1:53