

Minutes of the June 9, 2010 EQAC Meeting

Members present

Stella Koch
George Lamb
Frank Crandall
Frank Divita
Ned Foster
Rich Weisman
Marie Flanigan
Linda Burchfiel
Glen White
David Ouderkirk
Johna Gagnon
Larry Zaragoza

Staff present:

Kambiz Agazi
Noel Kaplan

Guests:

Dann Sklarew
Ross Shearer

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm.

Item 1. Briefing from George Mason University on a community-wide greenhouse gas inventory for Fairfax County.

Dr. Dann Sklarew of George Mason summarized work that is being undertaken for Fairfax County to inventory greenhouse gases for Fairfax County. Dr. Sklarew outlined a plan that was well received. The plan included:

- a) Collection of greenhouse gas information using methods that are consistent with methods used by others so that results can be compared.
- b) Providing results on the web so that they can be reviewed by others.
- c) Collecting enough information so that greenhouse gas emissions can be associated with various sources and energy use, which should help with control strategies.
- d) A final report should be available in November.

Dr. Sklarew also went on to describe various strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions like the use of cloud computing for universities, energy efficient buildings, and other efforts.

Follow-up actions:

Dr. Sklarew to provide a link to George Mason University's inventory

Item 2. Briefing on County government operations for Greenhouse Gas inventory.

Dr. Agazi noted that Fairfax County started this effort February of 2009. He noted work for Fairfax County Public Schools on energy management and that emissions were determined using the climate registry. The county is starting with an analysis of 2008 data and is working backward from there. The inventory is going as far back as 2006; data prior to then are not complete. The inventory will exclude Federal sources, which will be part of a different inventory.

Dr. Agazi noted the importance of this work and that Dave Molchany would highlight these efforts at EQAC's July meeting with the Environmental Coordinating Committee.

Motion:

Chair Koch moved that she be authorized to write a short letter to the Board of Supervisors to commend this effort and the community-wide greenhouse gas inventory in particular. Dr. Zaragoza seconded the motion, which was approved by consensus

Follow-up action:

Chair Koch will prepare a draft of a letter, which will be circulated to EQAC members prior to transmittal.

Item 3. Consideration of a recommendation regarding visual pollution issues.

Ned Foster presented a proposed set of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors addressing visual pollution issues, highlighting illegal signs in highway rights-of-way and cigarette butts.

Motion:

Chair Koch motioned to separate the document into two parts: recommendations to the County for legislative action and goals (along with suggestions for supporting actions). Ms. Flanigan seconded the motion, which was approved by a unanimous vote.

Follow-up actions:

Ned Foster will modify the materials and they will be circulated to ensure that they properly reflect EQAC's vote.

Item 4. Discussion of federal efforts to restore forests in priority areas.

David Ouderkirk reviewed efforts to restore forested priority areas and noted that grant opportunities will be coming up. He circulated a summary of Tree Commission activities.

Item 5. Discussion of Loudoun Water’s Demand Management Program.

Chair Koch noted that Loudoun County has a particularly noteworthy plan for managing water demand and suggested that it could serve as a model for Fairfax County. She referenced Potomac River low flow issues, noting that the mean low flow is 388 million gallons per day and that we normally draw 500 million gallons from the Potomac per day. She questioned the scientific basis for the existing 100 mgd low flow threshold and noted that the Nature Conservancy and the US Army Corps of Engineers are looking at this threshold. Chair Koch suggested that there be a briefing from Loudoun Water on this program at a future EQAC meeting. Dr. Agazi suggested that appropriate county staff be invited to this discussion. He also made note of significant differences between Loudoun and Fairfax Counties.

Follow-up actions:

A briefing from Fairfax Water will be scheduled for a future meeting agenda.

Item 6. Report and recommendations from the Student Member Search Committee

Ms. Flanigan reported that the student search committee reviewed 31 excellent applications from 14 schools. They recommended the nomination of Kevin Sun, an eleventh grader from Thomas Jefferson, with Katherine Pfleeger, a 10th grader from Madeira, as the alternate in the event that Mr. Sun is no longer available.

Motions:

Ms. Flanigan made a motion for the nomination of Kevin Sun, with Katherine Pfleeger as the alternate. Dr. Zaragoza seconded the motion, which was approved by a unanimous vote.

Follow-up actions:

Mr. Kaplan will transmit EQAC’s nomination of Kevin Sun to the appropriate member of the Board of Supervisors, for appointment at the Board’s June 22 meeting. Mr. Kaplan will contact Mr. Sun, will inform him of his selection, and will provide him with orientation materials.

Item 7. Rescheduling of the briefing from the Virginia Department of Transportation on the 527 Review Process.

The 527 briefing from May will be rescheduled to July. Also, agendas will likely be structured with at least two items so that meetings will not be cancelled in the future.

Item 8. Process for development of EQAC recommendations for the 2011 Legislative Session

EQAC discussed the plastic bag recommendation from last year and was told that we would not need to resubmit the recommendation. Any recommendations for this year must be final by the end of EQAC’s August 11 meeting.

Item 9. Preparation for the July 14 joint meeting with the Environmental Coordinating Committee

The following agenda items were identified:

- A briefing from Deputy County Executive David Molchany on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Coordinating Committee and Cool Counties Initiative;
- A briefing from Park Authority staff on the Natural Resource Management Plan; and
- A briefing from Jim Zook on the Tysons Corner Plan Amendment and related issues.

Item 10. The 2010 Annual Report on the Environment: Status Report

Mr. Kaplan updated the Council on the status of information requests, noting that information should come in between late June and the end of July, with the exception of information on climate, which will be provided as soon as it is ready. He reviewed the report preparation timeline.

Item 11. Approval of the minutes of the April 14 2010 meeting.

Motion:

Ms. Flanigan moved for approval; Mr. Foster seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Item 12. Chairman's Items

Chair Koch highlighted the review of the policy regarding disturbances to Environmental Quality Corridors, noting the Planning Commission's support for the staff proposal subsequent to the June 2 public hearing, at which there were no speakers. Mr. Kaplan noted that the Board of Supervisors public hearing on this matter was scheduled for July 27.

Item 13. Council Members Items

Larry Zaragoza noted that the Virginia DEQ has made its decision on air quality monitoring based upon the combination of a statistical analysis that looked at correlation (which does not speak to meeting the standard) and the decision of Fairfax County to close its monitors. He further noted that Virginia DEQ has not explicitly addressed the fact that the Mount Vernon monitor has historically reported higher values and served as the design value monitor for Northern Virginia for many years.

Mr. Foster thanked the committee for comments on the visual blight piece.

Mr. Crandall noted that the fines for violation of the sign rules are a disincentive for County staff because they do not provide sufficient funds to cover the costs of enforcement.

Item 14. Staff items

Noel Kaplan:

1. Noted that everyone got a bumper sticker from Clean Fairfax Council in their meeting packets.
2. He also noted the a hard copy of a 2006 report on littering had been provided to Ned Foster; he agreed to e-mail the report to all members.
3. Guidance from EQAC was sought on the scheduling of a meeting with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, Fairfax County Airports Advisory Committee and Federal Aviation Administration regarding the operations at Dulles Airport under the new four-runway configuration. It was agreed that this item would be scheduled for the August meeting.
4. It was also agreed that briefings on the bicycle and pedestrian programs would be scheduled for the August meeting.
5. EQAC asked that a briefing from Vicky Monroe, the county's Wildlife Biologist, be scheduled for the September meeting.
6. The ceremony for the Environmental Excellence Awards will be Sept 28 at 10:30 am; the awards committee will need to make its recommendations at either the July or August EQAC meeting.
7. The BOS Environmental Committee will meet on June 29 from 10-12 in Conference Rooms 9-10 of the Government Center.
8. The Planning Commission's Environment Committee will meet on June 24 at 7 pm in the Board's conference room on Green Building policy.
9. In order to avoid a conflict with Rosh Hashanah, the September meeting was moved from September 8 to September 7.

Kambiz Agazi: No items.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.