

Approved by EQAC, January 12, 2016

**FAIRFAX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

DATE: Wednesday, March 11, 2015
TIME: 5:00 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Rooms 9 and 10, Fairfax County Government Center,
Fairfax, VA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Stella Koch (Chairman, At-Large)	Johna Gagnon (Lee)
Larry Zaragoza (Vice Chair, Mt.Vernon)	George Lamb (At-Large)
Matthew Baker (Student Member)	Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)
Linda Burchfiel (At-Large)	Rich Weisman (Sully)
Frank Crandall (Dranesville)	

MEMBERS ABSENT

Alex Robbins (Providence)	Glen White (Mason)
Robert McLaren (At-Large)	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)

STAFF

Kambiz Agazi	Noel Kaplan
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GUESTS

Katie Boyle	Dave Molchany
Keith Cline	James Patteson
Katherine Edwards	Jerry Peters
Ellen Eggerton	Norbert Pink
Bob Flanigan	Erin Schaible
Eric Goplerud	Pieter A. Sheehan
Laura Grape	Charles Smith
Susan Hafeli	John Stokely
Tawny Hammond	

The meeting convened at 5:10 P.M.

Joint Meeting with Fairfax County's Environmental Coordinating Committee

The County Executive's proposed FY 2016 budget

Matters discussed:

- Two-year balanced budget process.
- County Executive's proposed FY 2016 budget and tax rate.
- Steady budget proposed for environmental programs, except for the Stormwater Service District rate, which would increase by 25 cents.
- Description of Environmental Improvement Program funding process and proposed allocations.
- Public hearing starting on April 7.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

Briefing from Katherine Edwards, Wildlife Management Specialist and Tawny Hammond, Director, Animal Shelter on the Deer Management Program audit

Matters discussed:

- Location of the Wildlife Management Specialist position under the Director of the Animal Shelter.
- Meetings with each member of the Board of Supervisors regarding deer management efforts in each district and to identify concerns of Supervisors.
- Coordination with the Fairfax County Park Authority.
- Safety efforts.
- Update of the Deer Management Plan.
- Overview of information presented during the program audit.
- Deer density data and trends--overall countywide density of 47 deer per square mile; reductions in deer density in some areas.
- Parks for which deer hunting efforts have been approved.
- Deer/vehicle collision data—400 deer kill identified by the Police Department between November 2014 and February 2015.
- Efforts to identify hot spots for vehicle-deer collisions.
- Deer browse impact surveys in parks.
- Forest regeneration concerns.
- Deer harvest by management method.
- Hunting in parks vs. private property.
- Education and outreach.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

County activities supporting pollinators—Briefing from John Stokely, Manager, Natural Resources Management and Protection Branch, FPCA

Matters discussed:

- Activities related to promoting pollinators in Fairfax County that are undertaken by the Fairfax County Park Authority:
 1. Habitat preservation, management and restoration (e.g., prescribed burns).
 2. Population monitoring and restoration.
 3. Demonstration sites and waystations.
 4. Interpretation, education and outreach.
- Integrated pest management; avoidance of use of neonicotinoids.
- Planting of native species.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

County activities supporting pollinators—Briefing from Laura Grape, District Administrator/Executive Director, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District

Matters discussed:

- NVSWCD pollinator-related activities:
 1. Watershed-friendly garden tours.
 2. Annual native seedling sale.
 3. Education and outreach efforts, including a “Native Plants for Northern Virginia” booklet that is available from the NVSWCD website.
 4. Soil and Water Stewardship Week (National Association of Conservation Districts)—This year’s theme focuses on the important role that pollinators play in a healthy environment.
- Other regional efforts promoting pollinators.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: Ms. Grape agreed to provide EQAC with copies of the “Native Plants for Northern Virginia” booklet.

Climate change/energy efforts in the community: private sector and related county efforts; regional efforts and county support

Energy Action Fairfax

Matters discussed:

- Briefing from Susan Hafeli, Senior Utility Analyst, Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services.
- History of the program.
 - Pilot program in 2011-2012 funded by a federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.
 - Presentations and audit events to seven homeowner/community associations.
 - Website with residentially-oriented energy guidance.
- Program goals and elements.
- Positive feedback from participating residents.
- Post-pilot program review/contractor recommendations/lessons learned, including recommendations for improved community outreach.
- Community attitudes/results from a survey conducted by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District.
- Program efforts in 2014, including revisions to the website.
- Plans for 2015:
 - Build on the on-line information.
 - Re-engage with the residential community.
 - Explore opportunities to partner with faith-based communities.
- Green Business Partners program (a voluntary recognition program).
 - Qualifications for a business to be recognized through this program.
- Consideration as to whether EQAC should recommend to the Board of Supervisors that improved incentives for energy efficiency in Virginia be made a legislative priority.
 - Discussion of PACE loans; Solarize Virginia; existing county solar tax credits and free solar permitting.
- Consideration as to whether there is a need for recognition of the many firms in Fairfax County that are going beyond minimum levels of energy savings—perhaps different levels of recognition.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

Watershed Protection and Energy Conservation Matching Grant Program (Conservation Assistance Program)

Matters discussed:

- Briefing from Laura Grape on the pilot program (funded through the Environmental Improvement Program funding process).
- Circulation of copies of a previous presentation on the program.
- Financial and technical support to homeowner associations for stormwater improvements and energy conservation assessments and enhancements.
- \$10,000 to be available in spring 2015.
- Results from survey of individuals regarding opportunities for education, existing homeowner efforts, incentives and barriers, and interest in grant opportunities.
- Scope of efforts that can be funded through this program.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

Energy Code Considerations

Matters discussed:

- Briefing from Ellen Eggerton, Ombudsman for Religious and Non-Profit Community Groups and Green Building Ombudsman, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services on the state energy code and experiences in the community.
- Applicability of the new 2012 energy code--applies only to new buildings and additions.
- Overview of changes made to the energy code between 2009 and 2012.
- State adoption of changes made at the national level: Virginia did not adopt the national changes to the residential energy code but did adopt changes to the commercial energy code. As a result, Virginia's residential energy requirements are less efficient than what's being applied elsewhere in the country (e.g., insulation requirements; testing for air leaks; lighting requirements; labeling of insulation provided; requirements for replacement windows; insulation on hot water piping; efficiency of equipment).
- Additional costs of complying with more efficient requirements (e.g., an additional \$13 per month on the mortgage of a house) compared with savings associated with improved efficiency (e.g., \$26 per month).
- Some builders in Northern Virginia build houses in neighboring localities that have stricter requirements; where standard designs are pursued, they are therefore building more efficiently than the minimum required by the Virginia energy code.
- Efforts by some builders to build green homes.
- Green permitting—Priority reviews of plans.
- Outreach through meetings with places of worship to encourage green improvements during changes/renovations.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

Conclusion

Do to the lateness of the hour, staff agreed to cover remaining topics scheduled for discussion at this meeting at a later meeting.

Mr. Zaragoza requested improvements to the county's website to better present what the county is doing in regard to pollinators.

The next joint meeting was scheduled for July 8, 2015.

The joint meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M. EQAC took a short break and resumed with the business portion of its meeting.

Presentation from Eric Goplerud, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, regarding energy dashboards

Matters discussed:

- Extent of waste of electricity in the United States.
- Climate change projections and implications.
 - Sea level rise.
 - Temperature increases.
 - Precipitation impacts.
 - Public health implications.
 - Natural systems implications.
- Fairfax County community-wide greenhouse gas emissions.
- Need for energy efficiency and conservation to reduce emissions.
- Benefits of measurement of energy use.
- Request for Fairfax County to lead by example, specifically through the use of a publicly-accessible energy dashboard.
- Overview of energy dashboards.
 - George Mason University.
 - Arlington County.
- Estimated costs to implement.
 - Case studies (based on Mr. Goplerud's consultations with local government staffs from a number of localities)—differing approaches have different costs.
 - Estimate for Fairfax County.
 - Suggestion from Mr. Goplerud that the costs previously identified by county staff were much higher than what would be needed for a simplified dashboard—he concluded that, given existing systems that are in place, an additional \$120,000 should be adequate to provide for energy monitoring and publication to a website that the public can view, with an annual management cost of \$55,000.

- Potential for energy and cost savings through the use of an energy dashboard for county government facilities.
- Lack of ability to get building-specific energy information from Dominion.
- Relationships among what Mr. Goplerud presented, what Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions has recommended in the past, and what county staff is proposing to do.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions:

- EQAC agreed to discuss this issue further, perhaps inviting staff representatives from Arlington County and/or Washington, D.C. to explain what they're doing.
- As a first step in the review, EQAC requested a briefing from county staff regarding what is being proposed for Fairfax County (once a draft is available).

Consideration of EQAC correspondence to the Board of Supervisors on freshwater mussels and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's proposed ammonia criteria

Deferred to a future EQAC meeting.

Discussion of concerns identified in response to EQAC's January 22, 2015 memorandum to the Board of Supervisors regarding fall cankerworm control

Matters discussed:

- Concern raised by Kathryn Wychulis about how a position taken by a coalition of environmental organizations was represented in EQAC's January 22, 2015 memorandum.
- Reviews of Ms. Wychulis's concern by Noel Kaplan and Larry Zaragoza, including a review of the meeting recording.
- Consideration of a draft memorandum to the Board of Supervisors to clarify EQAC's earlier memorandum.
- Revisions to the draft memorandum per EQAC discussion and direction.

Motions made:

- Larry Zaragoza moved to accept the memorandum as revised during the discussion. The motion was seconded by Johna Gagnon.

Record of the vote:

- The motion was approved by a unanimous vote of members present.

Follow-up actions:

- The memorandum as revised will be signed by the Chairman and transmitted to the Board of Supervisors. It will also be posted on EQAC's website.

Review of issues identified at the January 21, 2015 public hearing and scheduling of EQAC agenda items

Matters discussed:

- A draft summary of issues prepared by Noel Kaplan.
- Scheduling of future meeting agendas, along with field trips (Covanta facility; Noman Cole facility; a recycling facility).

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions:

- EQAC members were asked to review the draft issues summary from the public hearing to ensure that it was complete.
- Noel Kaplan was asked to find out if nighttime tours of facilities could be scheduled.
- Noel Kaplan was asked to coordinate with Clyde Wilber on the scheduling of a solid waste discussion.
- Scheduling of several future agenda items:
 - Climate change and energy: regional efforts and county support (April).
 - Emissions reductions in the utility sector (April).
 - Review of county staff response to EQAC's recommendation on climate change adaptation (May)
 - Other issues of interest identified but not scheduled:
 - Tree canopy and corridors.
 - Pesticide use and pollinators.
 - Contaminants of emerging concern (Fairfax Water; Upper Occoquan Service Authority; Solid Waste--pharmaceutical disposal).
 - Stormwater management update; integrated approach to stream management as opposed to dozens of Total Maximum Daily Load efforts.

Consideration of an EQAC position on the County Executive's Advertised FY 2016 Fairfax County Budget

Matters discussed:

- Stella Koch's intention to sign up to speak at the forthcoming budget hearing.

Motions made:

- Linda Burchfiel moved to authorize Stella Koch to support the County Executive's advertised budget as it relates to environmental initiatives. The motion was seconded by Larry Zaragoza.

Record of the vote:

- The motion was approved by a unanimous vote of members present.

Follow-up actions:

- Stella Koch will present EQAC's approved position at the public hearing on the budget.

Discussion of the annual report preparation process

Matters discussed:

- Noel Kaplan's concerns with the process through which the 2014 Annual Report was completed, expressing his view that the process is not sustainable.
- Consideration as to whether the report is serving EQAC's intended audience.
- Consideration of revising the report preparation process to have an EQAC member provide editorial support.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions:

- EQAC agreed to continue to consider how the process can be improved but also agreed that there would be no substantive changes to the structure of the 2015 Annual Report.

Approval of meeting minutes

Matters discussed:

- Approval of the minutes of the July 9, 2014, August 13, 2014, September 10, 2014 and November 12, 2014 EQAC meetings.

Motions made:

- Larry Zaragoza moved to accept all four sets of minutes as drafted. The motion was seconded by Linda Burchfiel.

Record of the vote:

- The motion was approved by a unanimous vote of members present, with Ken Lanfear and Johna Gagnon abstaining.

Follow-up actions:

- The approved minutes will be posted to EQAC's website, and an e-mail will be sent to all Board of Supervisors' offices to advise them of the availability of the minutes on-line.

Chairman's items

The Chair had no items

Council member items

Matters discussed:

- The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District's annual seedling sale.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions: None.

Staff items

Matters discussed:

- A request from a Boy Scout group to give a presentation to EQAC on a stream project.
- The need for an EQAC representative to the Tree Commission
- Upcoming meetings of the Planning Commission's Environment Committee.

Motions made: None.

Follow-up actions:

- Noel Kaplan was asked to advise the Boy Scout group that it could provide a copy of its written report to EQAC.
- There were no volunteers for the Tree Commission position.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.