

**COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (EQAC)**

**MEETING MINUTES
DATE: October 11, 2023
TIME: 7:15 p.m. – 10:14 p.m.
LOCATION: 12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035
Conference Room 4/5**

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present/ Absent*	Name	Present/ Absent*
Larry Zaragoza (Chair, Mount Vernon)	P	Renee Grebe (Vice-Chair, At-Large)	P
Johna Gagnon (Franconia)	V (arrived at 8:11 p.m.)	Stella Koch (At-Large)	P
Richard Healy (Mason)	A	Oaklen Kalinichenko (Student Member)	A
Ken Gubin (Dranesville)	P	George Lamb (At-Large)	P
Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)	P	Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	P
<i>Vacant</i> (Providence)		Eric Goplerud (At-Large)	P (arrived at 7:20)
Rich Weisman (Sully)	V (left meeting at 9:43 p.m.)	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	P

* P indicates present; A indicates absent; V indicates attended virtually

Staff Attendance

John Morrill, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC)
Matthew Meyers (OEEC)
Neely Law (OEEC)
Sara Girello (OEEC)
Kelly Zitzer (OEEC)
Carmen Bishop, Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
Katie Hermann (DPD)
Shannon Curtis, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)

Visitor Attendance

Normand Goulet, Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)
Stanley Grant, Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory (OWML)
Greg Prelewicz, Fairfax Water
Cynthia Shang (virtual)
Donna Jacobson (virtual)

Call to Order/All Virtual Meeting

Chair Zaragoza called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. announced that Dr. Weisman had requested to participate in the meeting remotely. Chair Zaragoza read the remote participation language requirements and asked Dr. Weisman to state his name, location, and reason for remote attendance. Dr. Weisman shared that he was participating remotely from his home in the Sully District due to medical reasons. Ms. Koch moved to allow Dr. Weisman to participate remotely. Mr. Lanfear seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 8-0, with Dr. Weisman not yet able to vote, Dr. Goplerud and Ms. Gagnon having not yet arrived at the meeting, and Ms. Kalinichenko and Mr. Healy being absent from the meeting.

At 8:11 p.m., Ms. Gagnon connected virtually and at 8:38 p.m. announced her availability to participate. Chair Zaragoza asked her to state her name, location, and reason for remote attendance. Ms. Gagnon shared that she was participating remotely from at home in the Franconia District due to medical reasons. Vice-Chair Grebe moved to allow Ms. Gagnon to participate remotely. Mr. Wilber seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 10-0 with Ms. Gagnon not yet able to vote and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.

Agenda Items, Discussion, Decisions and Votes

1. Occoquan Watershed Presentations

- a. Stanley (Stan) Grant presented on sodium sources in Fairfax County drinking water and sewage collection systems. He highlighted the threat of sodium in finished drinking water, currently at 93% level of salinity compared to all other water treatment facilities in the state. Fairfax routinely exceeds EPA guidance for extremely low sodium diet and lower sodium taste threshold, and sodium ion concentration has continued to increase. The cost of treatment of sodium is estimated to be over \$1 billion. Sources of sodium coming from products being discharged through industrial, business and residential connections. After breaking down the proportion coming from various sources within residential/commercial connections, a very large proportion is from washing clothes. A discussion ensued on Micron Technologies; they alone are producing 14% of all sodium.
- b. Normand (Norm) Goulet presented on the Occoquan Watershed programs. He shared point source management programs and nonpoint source management programs. He also shared that the proposal to study all sources of contamination through 2040 will cost \$176,000, and there is an urgent need to develop a new modeling program since the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Corps of Engineers are no longer supporting the current modeling program. A new modeling program is going to be more expensive and will need substantial new resources for development in 2025. In order to continue to fulfill the programs directives, the Occoquan Program will need to fund, select, and develop a new modeling framework. In response to questions from EQAC members on the potential impacts of data centers, Mr. Goulet stated that current modeling techniques would not provide the best information about the impacts that data centers may have on the Occoquan. Dr. Grant shared that it would be best determined by direct monitoring of the upstream and downstream of

developed data centers, rather than expecting that a model can provide that information.

(Ms. Gagnon arrived virtually at the meeting at 8:11 p.m., and was allowed to participate at 8:38 p.m. (see Call to Order/All Virtual Meeting section above for motion).)

2. Status Update on Data Center Staff Review

- a. Mss. Bishop and Hermann from DPD provided an update on the ongoing process which will lead to recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) about data center land use and zoning. In response to the BOS Board Matter on data centers, staff are conducting community input sessions and interviews with stakeholders. Staff have planned a BOS Land Use Subcommittee briefing on October 17 and a November BOS report. EQAC raised concerns about noise levels and water use for evaporative cooling and concentration of effluent from water cooling.

3. Tree Commission Charter and Letter to Planning Commission

- a. Vice-Chair Grebe introduced a letter of support for the Tree Commission's upcoming charter revision. She moved adoption of the letter in support of the Tree Commission's Charter revisions. Mr. Lanfear seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 11-0, with Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.

4. Annual Report on the Environment (ARE) Introduction, Priorities, and Schedule

- a. The draft Introduction section and its included priorities for the 2023 ARE were reviewed. Chair Zaragoza stated that he modified the section based off of input from EQAC members and brought special attention to the proposed re-wording of several of the recommendations. EQAC members discussed the proposed edits to the recommendations and had considerable discussion about the priority recommendation for addressing staff shortages in the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES). EQAC members discussed how the recommendation should be categorized and what efforts EQAC should put in to move the recommendation forward.
 - i. Mr. Wilber stated that he believed that EQAC should work with the Department of Human Resources and other staff on the recommendation, and moved to delete the recommendation from the "Budget Priority Recommendation section" of the Introduction, categorized as "2A" ("Update employee compensation policy for areas with critical staff shortages in wastewater and solid waste to attract and retain employees") and to leave the recommendation, worded as quoted above, under "Priorities Involving Staff Coordination," categorized as "1A". Mr. Lanfear seconded the motion. The motion failed by a vote of 3-6-2, with Chair Zaragoza, Vice-Chair Grebe, Mr. Lamb, Ms. Koch, Mr. Campbell, and Dr. Goplerud voting in opposition; Ms. Gagnon and Mr. Weisman abstaining from the vote; and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.
 - ii. Vice-Chair Grebe moved that:
 - Recommendation 1A be removed from the "Priorities Involving Staff Coordination" section;

- The first section of recommendations titled “Priorities Involving Staff Coordination” section, be renamed as “Priorities Involving EQAC and Staff Coordination”;
- A new recommendations section be added and titled “Top Priority Recommendations for the Board of Supervisors”; and
- Recommendation 2A “Update employee compensation policy for areas with critical staff shortages in wastewater and solid waste to attract and retain employees” be moved to the new recommendation section titled “Top Priority Recommendations for the Board of Supervisors”.

The motion was seconded by Dr. Goplerud. It carried with a vote of 10-0-1, with Ms. Gagnon abstaining from the vote and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.

- Chair Zaragoza shared that he had modified a recommendation in the Climate and Energy Chapter based on feedback received from the OEEC. Initially, he had closed out a recommendation for additional budget funding for the implementation of the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) and Resilient Fairfax recommendations, since budget had been provided this year. However, after speaking with staff, he learned that additional funding is still needed, and so the recommendation had been moved back to “in progress”. Chair Zaragoza asked EQAC for general consensus to modify the recommendation. No members present had any comment.
- Chair Zaragoza asked that staff schedule the presentation of the ARE on a Board of Supervisors’ meeting agenda.

5. Debrief on the Planning Commission Meeting and Future Coordination

- EQAC is working with the Planning Commission’s Environment Committee and discussing priorities of interest to both organizations. This effort and other coordination is expected to focus on matters of common interest to the Environment Committee and EQAC (e.g., minimize ecological degradation from development). Chair Zaragoza will lead the discussion with the Planning Commission and shared that adding and strengthening the environmental plan helps protect the plan from getting weakened during the review process.

6. Preparation for Joint Meeting with the Fairfax County Park Authority and Budget Priorities Memo

- Chair Zaragoza announced that EQAC is scheduled to meet with the Fairfax County Park Authority Board on November 8. He shared that he has been working with the Park Authority Board’s Chair on the creation of the meeting’s agenda, and that funding for forest management and invasives is tentatively a topic on the agenda.
- Vice-Chair Grebe introduced a letter of comment to submit to the Park Authority related to their upcoming budget priorities; the letter expressed concern that the proposed level of funding is insufficient to meet the needs for park maintenance and sustainability. Vice-Chair Grebe then moved adoption of the Fairfax County Park Authority and Budget Priorities Memo. Ms. Koch seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 10-0 with Dr. Weisman not present for the vote after having left the meeting and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.

7. Approval of September 13, 2023, Meeting Minutes

- a. Ms. Gagnon moved adoption of the September 13, 2023 minutes. Mr. Wilber seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 8-0-2, with Mr. Campbell and Dr. Goplerud abstaining from the vote, Dr. Weisman not present for the vote after having left the meeting, and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.

8. Chair's Items

- a. Chair Zaragoza suggested setting up a presentation in December to talk about Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) environmental planning and actions. He added there have been concerns expressed about FCPS's acquisition of electric buses. Chair Zaragoza requested any questions about the schools be sent to him and Dr. Weisman prior to next month's meeting.

9. Council Member Items

- a. Mr. Campbell recognized Dr. Goplerud who was named "Lord Fairfax" last week by the BOS for volunteer work supporting climate change action. Mr. Campbell then reported that the Lake Accotink Taskforce's findings will be released on a very compressed timeline, with only one day between final drafting and presentation to the BOS on December 5. Discussion on the report's timeline and if the report will have countywide implications led to the conclusion that EQAC will not take up reviewing the report.
- b. Mr. Wilber reported that the Fairfax County Wetlands Board is recruiting a new member.
- c. Dr. Goplerud shared that the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions was awarded a Federal Buildings Up grant to help faith communities reduce their greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), and thus implementing CECAP goals.

10. Staff Items

- a. Dr. Law shared the following:
 - i. Kudos to Mr. Lanfear and Mr. Gubin, the ARE editors for this year, for their great work.
 - ii. The BOS' Legislative Committee met and considered EQAC's recommended legislative agenda items. The committee reviewed the Living Shorelines recommendation and did not act on the recommendation. The Committee asked staff to add some language to the electric vehicle (EV) section of the proposed Legislative Program and present to the BOS on October 17th.
 - iii. Prior to the November EQAC meeting, members are asked to send comments on the EQAC charter to Mr. Healy
 - iv. Joint meeting with Fairfax County Park Authority Board next month will start at 6:00 pm at the Herrity Building.

11. Adjournment

- a. The meeting ended at 10:14 p.m. following a motion for adjournment by Ms. Koch. Mr. Wilber seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 10-0 with Dr. Weisman

not present for the vote after having left the meeting, and Mr. Healy and Ms. Kalinichenko being absent from the meeting.