

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

**MEETING MINUTES
DATE: August 14, 2024
TIME: START 7:15 p.m. – END 9:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present/ Absent*	Name	Present/ Absent*
Larry Zaragoza (Chair, Mount Vernon)	P	Ken Lanfear (Vice-Chair, Hunter Mill)	P
Johna Gagnon (Franconia)	P	Stella Koch (At-Large)	P 7:40
Richard Healy (Mason)	P	Joseph Tso (Student Member)	P
Ken Gubin (Dranesville)	P	George Lamb (At-Large)	P 9:26
Renee Grebe (At-Large)	P	Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	P
<i>Vacant</i> (Providence)	-	Eric Goplerud (At-Large)	A
Rich Weisman (Sully)	P	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	P

* P indicates present; A indicates absent

Staff Attendance

John Morrill, Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC)
Matthew Meyers, Division Director (OEEC)
Neely Law (OEEC)
Maggie Beetstra (OEEC)
Kelly Zitzer (OEEC)
Chris Herrington, Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)
Emma Gutzler, Assistant Director, (DPWES)

Visitor Attendance

None

Call to Order

Chair Zaragoza called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm

Chair Zaragoza introduced the requirements to allow EQAC to meet virtually. He asked that all members introduce themselves and following, he moved that EQAC certify that the virtual meeting comported with EQAC’s adopted policy for all-virtual meetings. He further moved that EQAC conduct the meeting electronically through a dedicated video- and audio-conferencing line, and that the public could access this meeting through the Microsoft Teams link provided on the agenda or by at dialing in by phone at 571-429-5982 with the phone conference ID: 790

744 53#. The motion was seconded by Mr. Campbell and carried with a vote of 11-0-0 with Ms. Koch not yet present.

Chair Zaragoza asked council to look at the agenda for amendments or adjustments. Mr. Wilber moved to accept the agenda as presented, and Vice Chair Lanfear seconded; the motion carried 11-0-0 with Ms. Koch not yet present.

Agenda Items, Discussion, Decisions and Votes

1. Public Comment Period: None
2. Flood Risk Reduction Update by Chris Herrington, Director of Fairfax County's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

Gave some updated information of where they are in the flood mitigation assistance grant program, as well as the most recent conversation with the Board of Supervisors around a countywide flood risk reduction policy. Starting July 1, a new collaborative program with Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District for them to administer a flood mitigation assistance grant program. This will be available to any property owner, common interest communities and churches. Here is the link with information about this: [Flood Mitigation Assistance Program \(FMAP\) | Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Five applications for reimbursements received so far.

Another link given for the May 14 Land use Policy Committee briefing about this: [Board of Supervisors Land Use Policy Committee Meeting: May 14, 2024 | Board Of Supervisors \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

There're only 3 general approaches that the county has available to reducing flood risk. We can do projects in developed areas to mitigate flood risk. We can prevent flood risk from occurring through the redevelopment process or development regulations. Or programs, programmatic options where people can work with the county to help themselves or the county can directly help people on an individual basis. The problem is the county's existing flood policy has an established prioritization where the county must meet their regulatory requirements. Another priority is to alleviating structural flooding up to the 100-year storm recurrence interval. The county's analysis is that for non-coastal inland structural flooding, there are about 570 confirmed structural flooding that have flooded in the past. Estimated to take 7 decades at current rate of project delivery to resolve the 570 confirmed structures. County is looking at modifications to development regulations, and continuing to pursue grant funding to supplement the capital budget. There's a focus on outreach and education. The Bell Haven area of the county was discussed. County not likely for new positions or additional stormwater tax increase for fiscal year 2025 because of budget shortfall that is currently estimated. Questions and comments from council members.
3. Presentation on the Annual Report on the Environment Draft Chapters

Vice Chair Lanfear stated 5 of the 8 ARE chapters have been turned in for review tonight. The Land Use chapter is not ready yet and the chapter author, Mr. Lamb, said it will be ready in September.

Vice Chair Lanfear stated, since the Council was to have read the presented chapters before the meeting, for each chapter these questions will be asked:

Are you generally satisfied with the chapter? EQAC will look at for approval of each recommendation from EQAC members.

a. Chapter II Transportation by Dr. Weisman

i. Dr. Weisman recognized Dr. Goplerud's help with the Chapter.

Ms. Grebe commented she was surprised that the chapter did not mention the Cinder Bed Road Bike Way. Dr. Weisman said impacts to tree areas is not in this chapter. Since this was new this year, he didn't want to include in the chapter or as a recommendation until EQAC has a chance to hear from county staff.

Mr. Lamb asked about the JET recommendation and the cost. The amount is unknown at this time.

ii. The 3 Recommendations were presented with brief explanations:

(1) Develop a formal plan to increase light-duty electric vehicle (EV) registrations to at least 15% of total registrations by 2030.

RECOMMENDATION: 2TRANS-2021.1 Age: 4 years Status: Making progress

(2) Provide the resources and funding needed to complete and implement the Active Fairfax Transportation Plan in a timely manner, including providing a staff person for Safe Streets for All Program.

RECOMMENDATION: 2TRANS-2023.1. Age: 1 year Status: Making Progress

(3) Provide an action plan with proposed budgets for implementing the JET recommendations to replace the county connector diesel bus fleet to EVs by 2030, transition non-bus county vehicles to EVs by 2035, and develop the necessary charging infrastructure and EV maintenance capability. RECOMMENDATION: 2TRANS-2024.1 Status: New this year

iii. Dr. Weisman moved adoption of the 3 Recommendations. Mr. Lamb seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 12-0-0.

b. Chapter III Water – Drinking Water section by Vice Chair Lanfear

i. Two recommendations were made/continued in 2023. These recommendations are retained for 2024, but modified to better reflect specific needs. Two additional recommendations are made for 2024. Vice Chair Lanfear explained recommendation # 4 on data centers which includes what EQAC put into the memo to the Board of Supervisors if large data centers approval conditions must consider possible water cutoff during periods of drought. Ms. Koch commented on recommendations # 3 that everybody needs to understand it's not just a question of how low can we go, but it's also how long can we go low in terms of how it affects the ecosystem. It's a question that needs to be answered but hasn't been.

Mr. Wilber commented on recommend # 4 that the no return of blowdown eliminates the use of recycled water in the UOSA drainage area because the blowdown water from these systems would be returned to the sewage system and follow on to the reservoir. Vice Chair Lanfear and Mr. Wilber discussed evaporations and salts. Vice Chair Lanfear decided to leave the recommend in as it is.

- ii. The 4 Recommendations were presented with brief explanations:
 - (1) Recommendation 3A-W-2021.1 Continue and enhance the protection of the Occoquan Reservoir by developing a plan for managing treats such as PFAS and sodium. Status: Making Progress.
 - (2) Recommendation: 3A-W-2021.2 Fund monitoring and modeling of emerging contaminants such as PFAS and the rising sodium levels in the Occoquan Reservoir. This effort should include an inventory of present and proposed pollution sources, such as data centers and other industrial facilities. Status: Stalled.
 - (3) Recommendation: 3A-W-2024.1 Continue to participate with the ICPRB in studying water supplies in the Potomac River. In particular, support ecological studies of low flows in the Potomac Gorge. Status: New in 2024
 - (4) Recommendation 3A-W-2024.2 If large data centers are approved with evaporative cooling, approval conditions must consider (1) Possible water cutoff during periods of drought; (2) Use of recycled wastewater where feasible; and (3) No return of any “blowdown” to the Occoquan Reservoir. Status: New in 2024
- iii. Motion to approve by Vice Chair Lanfear. Seconded by Ms. Koch. Ms. Koch made a Friendly Amendment to change recommendation # 2 from Stalled to In Progress. Vice Chair Lanfear, maker of motion accepted. Carried by a vote of 12-0-0

c. Chapter III Water – Wastewater by Mr. Wilber

- i. The 3 Recommendations were presented. Two are continued from 2023. Mr. Wilber and Vice Chair Lanfear discussed recommendation # 3. Vice Chair Lanfear acknowledged that recommendation was checked with county staff who said it was presented accurately. Dr. Weisman commented about recommendation # 3 being complete which is similar to recommendation # 1 being stalled. Mr. Koch added some information to clarify.

- (1) Set the fee rate collected for wastewater treatment to meet the documented needs of the necessary upgrades and maintenance requirements for all plants that serve the county and their respective wastewater collection system. This may include the necessary increases to hire and retain adequate wastewater personnel on an ongoing basis. Recommendation: 3B-W-2021.2 Age 3 years Status: Stalled.

- (2) Recommendation: 3B-W-2021.2. Continue aggressive public education and monitoring of the new alternative septic systems performance. Status: Making progress
 - (3) Wastewater operates an enterprise fund, and the department needs to be supported in creating a salary structure and pursuing benefit programs that will hire and keep adequate numbers of employees in these essential positions. Recommendation: 3B-W-223.1 Status: Completed.
 - ii. Mr. Wilber moved to approve the 3 Recommendations. Vice Chair Lanfear seconded. Vice Chair Lanfear recommended a friendly amendment to the add to # 1 wastewater personnel on an ongoing basis. Ms. Koch agreed. Mr. Wilber accepted the friendly amendment, and the vote to approve was 12-0-0.
- d. Chapter III Water – Protecting and restoring streams, ponds and lakes, and tidal and freshwater wetlands by Ms. Koch.
 - i. Below recommendation listed in ii should be 3 recommendations. Ms. Koch split into 3: (1) essentially the same, (2) middle Long Branch – additional funding and personnel, (3) Support more stream restoration. She spoke to the 3 individual recommendations. Number 2 recommendations say we need additional funding and personnel to deal with all the upcoming flooding issues in the county. And # 3 recommendation is to support more stream restorations like Long Branch in Mr. Campbell’s district.
 - ii. Increase funding for the stormwater program by either an increase in the Stormwater Service District rate in FY 2025 by at least one-quarter penny, from a rate of 3.25 cents per \$100 assessed real estate value to 3.50 cents per \$100 or find an alternative means or increasing funding to this program. Additionally, this increase must include funding for the Updated Countywide Flood Reduction Policy and new staff position necessary to increase project delivery capacity. Recommendation 3C-W-2022.1 Age: 2 years Status: Stalled
 - iii. Implement more stream restoration projects that are watershed-wide comprehensive efforts like the Long Branch Central effort. It will hopefully see significant measurable improvement over a shorter time frame. Recommendation: 3C-W-2024.1 Status: New in 2024
 - iv. Mr. Wilber moved to accept Ms. Koch’s verbal recommendations, and she will refine the language with Vice Chair Lanfear for the final recommendation(s), and Mr. Campbell seconded. Motion carried 12-0-0.
- e. Chapter IV Waste Management –by Mr. Wilber and Dr. Goplerud
 - i. No action tonight. Vice Chair Lanfear said it’s a different situation this year and Mr. Wilber and Dr. Goplerud did a good job describing and documenting where we currently stand on our solid waste program. The solid waste plan as we’re now implementing it is not going as well as we might have hoped. Mr. Wilber pointed out that the chapter draft that was sent to everyone is about 90% complete. One most important

recommendation is to increase the recycle rate, which is really the big goal of the county. Discussion on contracting, districts, etc.

- ii. Chapter recommendations not ready yet.
- f. Chapter V Parks and Ecological Resources by Ms. Grebe
 - i. Deferred to September
- g. Chapter VI Climate and Energy by Chair Zaragoza and Mr. Gubin
 - i. Chair Zaragoza reported there's been a lot of changes and explain some changes to the chapter, but the recommendations have remained largely intact. Mr. Lanfear brought up the lack of status on Recommendation # 5. After discussion, it was decided to mark # 5 status as stalled. Dr. Law asked about status of Recommendation # 3 was making progress in 2023 and in now marked as stalled. Chair Zaragoza explained. Dr. Law requested further comment to explain to be clear. Vice Chair Lanfear suggested commentary can be included with recommendations that will be included in the Scorecard. Mr. Meyers commented to add about Green Business Partners as part of the clarifications.

The 6 recommendations presented were:

 - (1) Recommendation # 1: Incorporate adequate funding for both CECAP Implementation and Resilient Fairfax in the annual operations and CIP Budget. Recommendation: 6CE-2022.1 Age: 3 years Status: making Progress
 - (2) Recommendation # 2: Adopt a Climate Plan for public consumption that shows how CECAP, Resilient Fairfax and other climate related efforts, such as VCEA, are being Implemented and the progress being made towards achieving goals. Recommendation: 6CE2022.2 Age: 3 years Status: Making Progress.
 - (3) Recommendation # 3: Seek the ongoing advice of business leaders on climate and energy issues. Recommendation 6CE-2021.4 Age 4 Status Stalled.
 - (4) Recommendation # 4: Plan and implement an EV charging network so that residents of buildings without EV charging and travelers will have options for charging their EVs. Recommendation: 6CE-2021.5 Age: 4 Status: Making Progress
 - (5) Recommendation # 5: Collect energy consumption information on current and planned data centers in the county and determine the extent to which data centers obtain green energy in order meet the country's carbon neutrality targets. Recommendation: 6CE2023.1 Age: 1 year. Status: Stalled.
 - (6) Recommendation # 6: Implement major Community Engagement and Educational campaign on the actions that businesses and residents can do to reduce GHG emissions. Recommendation: 6CE-2021.3 Age: 4 years Status: Making Progress.
 - ii. Chair Zaragoza motioned to approve the 6 recommendations with understanding that # 3 may be adjusted. Vice Chair Lanfear and Ms. Grebe seconded the motion. The motion was approved 12-0-0.

- h. Chapter VII Air Quality by Mr. Healy
 - i. Mr. Healy explained the chapter isn't substantially different from last year. Two things touched on this year are first the unhealthy air days have increased since COVID, during which they decreased. Last year the Canada wildfire smoke created a whole new problem. We jumped up to 15 unhealthy days this year as of the beginning of August. Air quality in the Washington region has improved significantly over the last quarter century with only a decade ago we had 30-40 unhealthy air days each year. The second Mr. Healy addressed was the fine particulate matter. EPA has come out with a new standard on this going from 12 micrograms per cubic meter to 9. There is one recommendation that is not new. The Transportation Chapter includes more information on this.
 - ii. Recommendation presented was:
 - (1) Recommendation # 1: County officials should continue efforts to strongly encourage people to telework where possible, take public transit, and use alternative forms of transit. Recommendation: 7AQ-2021.1 Age: 4 years Status: Making progress.
 - iii. Mr. Healy moved to approve the recommendation and the air quality chapter. Dr. Weisman seconded the motion and it was approved 12-0-0.
- I. Chapter VIII Wildlife Management by Mr. Campbell
 - iv. A lot of the chapter is the same with some updates. Information was included about the Animal Service consolidation. There is one new recommendation was taken from the memo EQAC sent to the Board of Supervisors asking for a more comprehensive analysis of the potential impacts and benefits of the new model. For the first recommendation staff recommended an update of a number of data collections. More information on drones and now a dollar amount is included in the recommendation. The second recommendation focused on deer last year and staff recommended to expand that for the entire program including geese management and West Nile. The last recommendation is complete. After the motion & second, Dr. Weisman asked about the status of the first two – is one stalled? After discussion, Mr. Campbell said the status of both should be stalled.
 - v. Recommendations presented were:
 - (1) Recommendation # 1: Expand survey methods for deer management data collection. Recommendation: 8WIL-2023.2. Status: 2nd year.
 - (2) Recommendation # 2: Add funding for a position in the wildlife biologist program to focus on expanding public outreach and education, for not just the county's deer management program, but for the entire wildlife program. Recommendation: 8WIL-2023.2. Status: 2nd year
 - (3) Recommendation # 3: Conduct a comprehensive analysis on the potential impacts and benefits of the new model as well as robust outreach campaign to solicit comments from Fairfax County residents and other stakeholders. This analysis with public

comment should be captured in a report and presented to the Board to demonstrate how the new model supports One Fairfax, results in better outcomes for wildlife in the county, maintains safety for residents, reduces the budget, and provides greater efficiency.

Recommendation: 8WIL-2024.1. Status: New this year.

(4) This prior recommendation has been completed: Make changes to zoning codes to grant exceptions for deer processing operations in Fairfax County to minimize impacts on participation in the deer management program. Recommendation: 8WIL-2023.3. Status: Complete.

vi. Motion to approve the four recommendations by Mr. Campbell. Seconded by Ms. Grebe. A Friendly Amendment to mark recommendations 1 and 2 with status as Stalled, was accepted by both Mr. Campbell and Ms. Grebe. Motion approved 12-0-0

j. Appendix A Spotlight on Public Schools by Dr. Weisman

i. Vice Chair Lanfear stated that some progress is being made. Should this be marked as Stalled? Dr. Weisman reported Appendix A is close to ready to be circulated to EQAC members. There are three questions waiting for staff to get back on. Dr. Weisman said Dr. Beetstra has volunteered to help follow up on these. She reported school contacts were made and are working on comments with updates soon. Confident this will be ready for September meeting. Vice Chair Lanfear asked about dealing with electrifying the school bus fleet. Dr. Weisman said he's been working with Dr. Goplerud, and a lot of content has been added to the Spotlight about this and for the first time this year the Spotlight will include a recommendation speaking to what we suggestion about electrifying school buses. Discussion on this.

k. ARE Cover by Mr. Tso

i. Being worked on to be ready for September meeting.

l. Scorecard by Ms. Grebe

i. Discussion about the format: table or not. Ms. Grebe stated no table was tried and it was usable and not functional. Vice Chair Lanfear said he'd like to try no table and basically text with indentations, etc. Must be ready to be approved in September. Ms. Grebe reminded chapter authors to get descriptive detail about their recommendations to her for the score card. Chair Zaragoza asked Vice Chair Lanfear to send everyone an example of what they should provide so they can draft it. Also in September, identify key recommendations to be emphasized in overview.

4. Discussion of Process for Environmental Excellence Awards Selection and Recognition

Dr. Healy reported 15 applications were received. Drs. Weisman and Goplerud reviewed the applications using five criteria with a rating scale. They have five people to recommend receiving awards. Staff said the supervisors have a problem giving out awards this year. Short discussion on waiting until 2025. Ms. Zitzer recommended postponing at least for this month announcing the names. Chair Zaragoza asked Mr. Healy and Dr. Goplerud for their thoughts.

5. Approval of May 8, 2024 Joint Meeting with the Park Authority Board Minutes
 - a. Brief discussion of not yet having the meeting minutes for the regular EQAC meeting also held on May 8.
 - i. Decision to defer until both sets of minutes for the two May 8 meetings can be approved at the same time
6. Chair's Items
 - a. Chair Zaragoza mentioned the meeting with VDOT about Trees and Trash in the Right-of-Way. He reported invitations have been sent to appropriate county agencies and the Chairman of the Tree Commission would like to be at the table with EQAC for this meeting. Chair Zaragoza suggested questions be sent before the meeting. Anyone can provide input on questions for discussion. Dr. Weisman asked about the September EQAC meeting agenda topic of VDOT and trash/trees in Right of Way. Discussion and suggestions for questions. Mr. Wilber commented on dump sights, as opposed to just trash, in Right of Way. Code Compliance will be there. Mr. Wilber suggested inviting the police to the meeting.
 - b. Chair Zaragoza brought up doing the tour of the Noman Cole Plant in October, but the council has to complete the ARE at the October meeting. He was concerned about not having a quorum if meet at Noman Cole in October because we would need to begin the meeting around 4 pm, when some EQAC members would still be working. He suggested that a tour of Noman Cole should be conducted outside of a regular EQAC meeting.
 - c. Everybody received a roles and responsibilities memo from Ms. Zitzer. Some members had questions about it. It will be on a future meeting agenda as to what this means and how it applies to EQAC.
7. Council Member Items
 - a. Ms. Grebe mentioned on June 25 the Board of Supervisors introduced a recommendation to establish a recreation facility authority & more information will be coming to the Board. EQAC should stay informed for the Parks Chapter.
 - b. Ms. Gagnon, EAC's representative on FJLEPC, announced on October 10 there will be a presentation on fires in trucks and at Coventra. The meeting is virtual at 10:00AM and open to the public.

Ms. Gagnon also reported from the August 8 FJLEPC meeting that Amazon reported to the county they are opening two critical hazardous (data center) facilities in the Herndon area. The county reported there are 195 facilities reporting as critical hazardous facilities with 95% due to sulfuric acid.
 - c. The remaining council members had nothing to report
8. Staff Items
 - a. Dr. Beetstra asked how many council members are interested in doing a tour of the Noman Cole Plant. The tour will have to be done during daylight starting about 4:30. She stated that it would be better to decide if a tour after a presentation at a EQAC meeting. A representative from Noman Cole will be asked to come to the October or November meeting to give a presentation.
 - b. Dr. Law brought up the meeting topic through the end of the year. The September EQAC meeting may have a presentation by the Virginia Department of

Transportation on Trees and Trash in the Right-of-Way. Also in September, the remaining ARE presentations chapters, cover, etc.

Reminder was given for council members whose terms of appointment will be ending in November that they should reach out to their supervisors.

This website was shared for members to check their appointment terms:

<https://fairfaxcounty.civicweb.net/portal/members.aspx?id=65> .

- c. Ms. Zitzer asked for notetakers for the September, October and December meetings. Some people have not yet taken notes this year.
Ms. Zitzer needs everyone to send their ARE staff contacts for her to keep track of. Send to the generic EQAC email address.

9. Adjournment

- a. Meeting ended at 9:30 p.m. following a motion for adjournment by Dr. Weisman, which was seconded by Vice Chair Lanfear and Ms. Koch. The motion carried by a vote of 11-0-0 (Mr. Lamb left before the vote).

DRAFT