

**FAIRFAX COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING**

MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, August 10, 2022

TIME: 7:15 to 10:15 pm

LOCATION: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present (P) Absent (A)	Name	Present (P) Absent (A)
Stella Koch Chairman – at large	P	Larry Zaragoza (Vice Chairman, Mt. Vernon)	P
Johna Gagnon (Lee)	P	Renee Grebe (At- Large)	P
Richard Healy (Mason)	A	Jacob Hammond (Student)	P
Kenneth Gubin (Dranesville)	P	George Lamb (At- Large)	P
Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)	P	Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	P
Elisa Meara (Providence)	P	Mike Zatz (At- Large)	P
Rich Weisman (Sully)	P	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	P

Note: Ms. Koch participated for approx. for the first 1 hr, 15 minutes.

Staff Attendance

Matthew Meyers, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC)

Neely Law, OEEC

Maya Dhavale, OEEC

Allison Homer, OEEC

John Morrill, OEEC

Visitor Attendance

Marc Aveni, Loudoun County

AGENDA ITEMS, DISCUSSION & DECISIONS:

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Chair Koch.

Loudoun County Community Choice Aggregation program:

Marc Aveni of General Services, Loudoun County, discussed a Loudoun County Board-approved feasibility study of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). This program allows a county to purchase energy on the open market (i.e., wholesale), instead of from a utility such as Dominion Power. This allows the purchaser to choose the mix of energy generation, for example from renewable sources, as well as negotiate price. This program has never been done in Virginia, and would require approval of the State Corporation Commission. Mr. Aveni discussed the pros and cons of this approach. It was estimated that CCA could save 4% a year in energy costs, or upwards of \$150 million in savings for Loudoun County.

Matt Meyers noted that CCA was a recommendation under CECAP; Fairfax County is tracking Loudoun's CCA's progress.

CECAP update from OEEC: Matt reported that OEEC is preparing to submit a CECAP implementation master plan (as well as Resilient Fairfax plans) this Fall to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

Larry Zaragoza emphasized that it is very important to have targets and a vehicle to see where we are in meeting targets. We need a dashboard that does not just present things by activities, but rather, by achievement in reaching goals. Matt agreed with this approach although he noted that it is difficult to track GHG reductions. One can easily track the number of EVs, but not the GHG gas reduction that achieves.

Larry noted that while Fairfax County is making progress, the public doesn't always see it. The County has an important story to tell.

CECAP priorities: Matt and the Council discussed some EQAC proposed recommendations to prioritize the various CECAP strategies. There was discussion on a proposed 'Low' priority ranking for conservation measures. Several members, as well as Matt, thought that it deserved a higher ranking. George Lamb proposed that conservation -- Strategy 1 (S1). be raised to high; S3 (green buildings) should be rated medium; and S6 (energy recovery) be rated low.

With those changes, **the prioritization table was moved for adoption, seconded, and unanimously approved** as follows:

Table 1. Summary of Strategies for Reducing GHG and EQAC Priorities

Strategy	EQAC Priority to address Climate	2050 Predicted Reduction	Workgroup Comment	EQAC Comment
S1: Increase energy efficiency and conservation in existing buildings	High	12.6%	WG Priority	Meeting the goals in the Virginia Clean Economy Act should deliver clean energy to address these emissions.
S2: Electrify existing buildings	High	10.9%		Given an estimate 10.9 reduction in emissions in 2050, converting from coal or other energy sources to electricity is important to reducing carbon emissions.
S3: Implement green building standards for new buildings	Medium	1.2%		See S1 Comment
S4: Increase the amount of renewable energy in the electric grid	High	13.2%	WG Priority	Given an estimated 13.2% reduction in GHG emissions in 2050, these actions should support or compliment the actions required under the Virginia Clean Economy Act
S5: Increase production of onsite renewable energy	Medium	4.4%		See S4 Comment but this recommendation is especially important if the Virginia Clean

Strategy	EQAC Priority to address Climate	2050 Predicted Reduction	Workgroup Comment	EQAC Comment
				Economy Act falls short of goals.
S6: Increase energy supply from resource-recovered gas, hydrogen, and power-to-gas	Low	7%	Somewhat redundant	This strategy would rely on the use of best practices, which should be employed in the future and the costs should be modest
S7: Increase electric vehicle (EV) adoption	High	19.4%	WG Priority	Transportation constitutes a significant part of the County's emissions inventory and EVs must be an important part of addressing transportation emissions.
S8: Support sustainable land use, active transportation, public transportation, and transportation demand management (TDM) to reduce vehicle-miles traveled	Medium	3.7%	WG Priority	These actions would help to reduce transportation emissions.

Strategy	EQAC Priority to address Climate	2050 Predicted Reduction	Workgroup Comment	EQAC Comment
S9: Increase fuel economy and use of low-carbon fuels for transportation	Low	9%	WG Priority	Important for sources like aviation, however, this is a national need that many parties should help to address.
S10: Reduce the amount of waste generated and divert waste from landfills and waste-to-energy facilities	Medium	2.4		We should divert more waste from landfills and waste to energy facilities as other localities have successfully done.
S11: Responsibly manage all waste generated, including collected residential and commercial waste, wastewater, and other items	Low	0.04%		This seems to be a best practice, which should be implemented but the GHG emissions reduction is small.
S12: Support preservation, restoration, and expansion of natural systems, green spaces, and soil quality	Low	2.4%	WG Priority	Modest reduction in GHG emissions but these activities are sound practices for other reasons, including OneFairfax principles.

Green Banks. Mr. Morrill noted that several Board members consider a Green Bank as a priority item. OEEC is working on it, and has reviewed Green Banks in the

region. He believes that establishing a Green Bank as a 501c3 corporation would be the best approach. Such a corporation would be free of some restraints that the County has, and could serve as a one-stop clearinghouse of clean energy information including information as to grants and rebates. OEEC is preparing to present a Green Bank proposal to the BOS in late Fall or Winter.

Funding. Matt noted that the County has FY '22 carryover funds of \$10.32 million, available for energy projects.

Timeline for 2022 Annual Report on the Environment (ARE) Submissions:

Renee Grebe stated that today was the final day for ARE chapter submissions, with additional content to be approved by the Council in September. Renee will share the scorecard format and asks for responses as soon as possible, but by August 19. The final report will go to staff by the 3rd week in Sept. Stella and Renee will finalize the front content (the 'top asks.')

ARE Cover: Jacob Hammond said that he is working on the cover; it will be ready by the next meeting.

ARE topics:

Water: Stella Koch presented. She explained how it is divided into sections on Waste Water, Storm Water and Drinking Water. She discussed various issues, such as the high vacancy rate in the waste water sector; contaminants and sodium levels in the Occoquan Reservoir, and funding concerns. Renee noted that there was no mention of PFAS, a growing chemical concern. Clyde Wilber and Larry mentioned recent significant EPA reductions in permissible levels of PFAS in the water. This is an important development for which we do not have a plan of action. Stella will incorporate a reference to this in the chapter. Renee and Clyde will review the chapter too.

The Water chapter was moved for adoption, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Transportation. Rich Weissman and Mike Zatz presented. They have the same two recommendations as last year, dealing with EVs and non-motorized transportation. They've gotten positive feedback from staff. With regard to non-motorized transportation, the report asks to support the Safe Streets initiative adopted by the Board in the Springtime.

The Transportation chapter was moved for adoption, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Parks and Ecological Resources. Renee Grebe presented. There has been progress on invasive species although real progress would require authority from the State. It was discussed whether to make the invasive species discussion a comment

rather than a recommendation, in light of limited prospects for legislative action. It was the consensus that EQAC's role is to inform the BOS as to what is needed. It will be kept as a recommendation. Renee will change recommendation #4, to relate more to staffing needs rather than funding. It will continue to prioritize trees. It was discussed that stable funding in this area is needed. There was a discussion about tightening the language about what authority the BOS should seek.

The Parks and Ecological Resources chapter was moved for adoption, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Climate and Energy. Larry Zaragoza presented. There was a discussion about the appropriateness of making climate and energy-related measures contained in other sections, recommendations in this section too, to provide additional emphasis. County staff has not favored this approach, but the consensus was to keep it.

Larry spoke about the need to adopt a climate strategy related to GHG emissions and resilience. And to have reporting elements that allow one to assess progress on the big picture.

There was a discussion about the approach in the chapter of repeating various CECAP and Resilient Fairfax recommendations. There was no consensus to change this approach but Larry agreed to tighten the language.

There was a discussion of how CECAP and Resilient Fairfax initiatives are for the most part not part of the budget. Funding these long-term initiatives via carryover money does not provide for stable funding. It was agreed to move the recommendation as to long-term funds to the first recommendation in this section.

The Climate and Energy chapter was moved for adoption, seconded, and approved unanimously. (Note: Clyde Wilbur had left at this point.)

Larry will nonetheless edit the chapter to make it more concise and circulate the revised chapter to everyone.

Approval of Minutes.

Revised minutes from July were moved, seconded, and approved unanimously for approval; Renee abstained.

Technology. Ken Lanfear noted that while the Technology section was discussed last month, it was not approved.

The Technology chapter was moved for adoption, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Council member items: Renee mentioned that there will be an update next month at the BOS Environmental Committee on flood risk and flood reduction plans. Ken L. added that literature indicates the flood frequency duration curves are changing such that 100-year flood guidelines are not what they used to be.

Renee also reported that the plastic bag tax in the first 5 months has netted the County \$500,000, to be used for environmental causes.

Larry noted that Matt has asked for clarification about EQAC's legislative recommendations. There were questions from staff on the living shoreline recommendation. This will be discussed at the October meeting.

Staff: Neely said will DEWES will present the flood risk study to EQAC in September. Also in September, someone from the Forestry section will present new tree planting standards. In October, there will be a presentation by DPD about the parking lot initiative.

Environmental Excellence awards. Ken L and another individual on EQAC are reviewing the award nominations, and will present their recommendations at the September meeting.

Adjournment.