

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Mitigation Working Group

March 1, 2018 | 10:00AM - 12:00PM

Minutes

Attendance: Tad Aburn, Michael Powell, Susan Payne, Tom Walz, Susan Barnes (for Mike Remsberg), Joe Uehlein, Ben Hobbs, Yinka Bode-George (for Tamara Toles O'Laughlin), Larry Kasecamp, Colleen Turner, Christine Conn, Anne Lindner, Chris Rice, David Smedick (Sierra Club), Lara Skinner (The Worker Institute), Brian Lombardozi (American Alliance for Manufacturing), Lacey Dean (Exelon), Earl Lewis (MDOT), Larry Liebesman (CCL/Climate XChange), Chuck Sewell (Smart 100), John Kumm (EA Engineering, ECO Co-Chair), Rachel Marks (DNR), Jette Findsen (Abt Associates), Gerald Jackson (AFL/CIO), Tom Killeen (Smart 100), David Costello (IEER), Stuart Clarke (Town Creek Foundation, MCCC Co-Chair), Chris Hoagland (MDE), Megan Ulrich (MDE), Joe Lutz (MDE), Chris Beck (MDE), Hannah Brubach (MDE), Jess Herpel (MDE), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Luke Wisniewski (MDE)

Phone: Tom Weissinger, Lisa McNeilly, Jana Davis, Mark Kresowik (Sierra Club)

10:00 AM MWG Meeting Began

1. Introductions

- Tad welcomed everyone and introductions were made around the room and on the phone.
- Brian Hug gave a brief introduction to the speakers

2. Presentations on Labor and Manufacturing

- Brian Lombardozi of the Alliance for American Manufacturing presented on: "Using Procurement Policies to Support American Manufacturing Jobs in Renewable Energy." This presentation is available on the Commission's website under meeting materials.
 - Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) recommended MWG consider: *Any publicly funded clean energy project should require the use of domestic iron, steel, and manufactured products.*
 - Brian Lombardozi was asked to clarify AAM's position on bills which would aim to increase the RPS to 50%. He noted that their opinion depends on the specifics of the bill, and how its implemented. It was suggested that there could be a condition added, to do a study. Brian agreed, specifying an economic assessment of what types of energy will be scaled down, and what will be created within Maryland due to the legislation.
 - Another suggestion was that environmental goals could be considered during each procurement decision.
 - It was noted that, in addition to strictly publicly funded clean energy projects, it would be possible to include similar requirements in the agreement for public/private partnerships.
- Lara Skinner, of The Worker Institute at Cornell University's ILR School presented on: "Economic Development, Job Creation, and the Development of Robust Offshore Wind and Solar Industries in Maryland." This presentation is available on the Commission's website under meeting materials.
 - Lara Skinner recommended MWG consider: *Including strong labor standards in all state solicitations for renewable energy, including project labor agreements and prevailing wage requirements on construction work, including labor peace agreements for manufacturing work, and Maryland committing to and applying additional funding for state certified apprenticeship programs.*
 - Lara clarified upon questioning that a Project Labor Agreement (PLA), which is currently required for offshore wind projects, should be required for all projects (not just large wind projects).
 - It was asked whether NY currently has a process for tracking new clean energy jobs, and how clean energy is defined; Lara noted that there was not a specific process currently, and the definition likely follows that of the Federal government currently.
 - Lara noted that multi-state collaboration may be helpful for wind.

- Lacey Dean of Exelon presented on: “Maryland In-State Low Carbon Power and Jobs.” This presentation is available on the Commission’s website under meeting materials.
 - Exelon recommended MWG consider: *(1) Include all zero-carbon energy sources in strategies to reduce GHG emissions; (2) participate in regional programs to limit GHGs; and (3) assure clean energy portfolio expansion does no harm to existing clean energy.*
 - It was asked why should we invest in subsidies for nuclear rather than renewables. Lacey stated that a subsidy is creating the issue, and investing in nuclear would be fixing policy and market problems; you want to have a diverse energy supply for many reasons.
 - It was pointed out by Mike Powell, as a reminder from what we saw last month, that the modeling shows emissions increasing greatly if we assume that the licenses are not renewed in the mid-2030’s.
 - Lacey noted that they were very supportive of the Illinois ZEC program and the similar NY legislation; the program was a way to preserve existing assets, matching the solution to the problem and avoiding the elimination of low-carbon technology.
- David Smedick of Sierra Club Maryland presented on: “A Just Transition for Communities and Workers Traditionally Reliant on Fossil Fuels.” This presentation is available on the Commission’s website under meeting materials.
 - Sierra Club recommended MWG consider: *(1) Policies should provide workers, communities, and companies currently dependent on fossil fuels with lead time and funding to transition; and (2) Policies should ensure greater access to benefits of future clean energy opportunities for communities and constituencies overburdened by pollution and underserved by our current system.*
 - When asked to confirm the Sierra Club position on PLAs and wage agreements, David noted that Sierra Club generally does not oppose PLAs and wage agreements. Although, David did not know of the specific national position.
 - Sierra Club is still exploring a newer idea regarding plant transitions (Sierra Club needs to speak to some plant owner/operator level employees and gather additional facts) and the potential to incentivize investments in a fund to support the transition (similarly to the decommissioning fund that nuclear plants set aside).

3. Discussion on Labor and Manufacturing

- Larry Kasecamp noted that he would be supportive of a recommendation that includes PLA, wage agreement, and labor peace agreement for all renewables. Larry has not discussed in detail concerns regarding nuclear power.
- Ben Hobbs asked if there were any suggestions for the conditions/employment of solar installers. Lara suggested looking to California because California shows a very disparate compensation between utility scale solar and residential installers. It is utility industry practice to use PLAs. It may be helpful to include PLA requests in solicitations. Brian Lombardozi referred to a source which he later sent out via email and was distributed to the MWG members (https://www.cows.org/greener-reality-jobs-skills-and-equity-in-a-cleaner-us-economy_1).
- Chris Rice questioned the salary compared to the average wage of those with a high school degree, thinking that perhaps the solar installation jobs, regardless of the way they were compared during today’s discussion, may still be a pretty decent wage. It was noted that manufacturing and other similar jobs are starting to require 2 year degrees (not just high school). Another point brought up was that most solar installers are considered independent contractors, and as such are unable to unionize; therefore it is possible electricians on the same jobs may be fairing better.
- Tom Weissinger suggested important components may be to protect workers from a salary/wage impact, and being able to plan in advance for repurposing of the site, so that value remains in the community (tax base, business, etc.)

4. New Business

- April's meeting (Economic Modeling for the 40 by 30 Plan and Other Updates)
 - Tad Aburn requested that if anyone has any outside resources or is working on things to calculate economic modeling for the 40 by 30 Plan, please let us know now.
- Other Business
 - Susan Payne noted that the MDA has done some listening sessions and presentations regarding healthy soils that were well-received. She also suggested that people may want to read "Soil Will Save Us" by Kristen Ohlson, prior to the MWG discussion at the end of May (the "June" meeting).
 - A RGGI update will be provided at the ACQAC meeting (at MDE) on April 12th, for those who may be interested.

5. Public Comment

- There were no public comments brought forth during this period.

12:15 PM Meeting Adjourned