

CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 30, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Via WebEx

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Chairperson Mark Hammond	Joe Sherrick (for Gladys Brown Dutrieuille)
Vice-Chairperson Steve Krug	Adam Walters (for Dennis Davin)
Greg Czarnecki (for Cindy Dunn)	Marc Mondor
Representative Steve McCarter	Luke Brubaker
Robert Graff	Lindsay Baxter
Zakia Elliott	Jaret Gibbons
Glendon King (for Representative Metcalfe)	Kimberly Kipin-McDonald
Terry Bossert	Gary Merritt
Alissa Burger	Rachel Gleason (for Zachery Smith)
Patrick Henderson	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

James Felmlee, Representative Ryan Bizzarro

PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP) STAFF:

Kerry Campbell, Lindsay Byron, Heidi Kunka, Dave Althoff, Allen Landis, Jessica Shirley, Libby Dodson, Darek Jagiela

INVITED GUESTS:

Amir Sapkota

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Mike Roth, Shea Zwerver, David Hess, Bob Barkanic, Nick Troutman, Ellis Foley, Teresa McCurdy, Abby Foster, Patrice Tomcik, Vanessa Lynch, Stephanie Hasanali, Nora Elmarzouky, Miriam Baril, Sarah Whitney, David Gelman, Pete Gleason, Elaine Labalme, Josie Gaskey, Tom Batrone, Andrew Zwally, Robyn Fernando, John Walliser, Melissa Muroff, Jim Wylie, Jenna Cramer, Kevin Lugo, Rene Diehl, Alyssa Lyon, Ngani Ndimbie

MEETING:

The April 30, 2020 meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Mark Hammond. With 19 of 21 seated members present at the start of the meeting, a quorum was established.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the February 25, 2020 CCAC meeting were presented to the committee for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Krug and seconded by Mr. Mondor. One minor correction was requested by Ms. Baxter and noted by DEP. The motion to approve the minutes with the one correction carried by a voice vote and passed.

MEETING SUMMARY: (This narrative provides a summary of the discussions that took place during the meeting. It is not a transcript of the proceedings.)

Public Health Impacts of Climate Change

Dr. Sapkota from the University of Maryland gave a presentation on how climate change impacts public health. He began by covering extreme heat impacts from a global perspective and then brought the focus local to Maryland (MD), as he explained how his University has worked with MD Dept. of Public Health on this topic. Dr. Sapkota shared that there has been a 36% increase in hospitalizations due to asthma on extreme heat days in Baltimore, more than other areas studied in the state. His team also studied the risk of hospitalization due to heart attack in MD from extreme heat events and found a 26% increase for non-Hispanic blacks. They also discovered a 43% increase in heart attack risk in Baltimore due to poverty/low-income status. Dr. Sapkota also discussed their findings with end-stage renal disease patients and how the risk of hospitalization due to extreme heat events is greatest for non-Hispanic blacks.

He explained the most sensitive indicator of ecological response to climate change is plant phenology, or “nature’s calendar.” Thus, his team discovered that asthma hospitalization increases when spring arrives early.

Dr. Sapkota finished by talking about vulnerability. He stressed the need to identify vulnerable populations and noted that being linguistically isolated makes you more vulnerable to climate stressors. He noted that adverse health impact in MD is not equally distributed geographically or by population. Instead, the impact at the local level is exacerbated by pre-existing health conditions and the capacity to adapt. Dr. Sapkota explained that planning and engaging with local stakeholders is critical for building resilience.

Several committee members had questions and comments for Dr. Sapkota, to which he clarified that his research on end-stage renal disease covered Boston, Philadelphia, and New York and that his team’s work was funded by CDC’s BRACE program. Ms. Hasanali asked if anyone has done similar work in the Commonwealth, to which Dr. Sapkota replied that he is unaware of extensive vulnerability assessments of public health in the state, but he’d like the opportunity to assist PA with that assessment.

Act 129 Update

Mr. Sherrick gave a brief overview of the history of Pennsylvania’s Act 129, as well as a description of the legislation. He explained how cost effectiveness for Act 129 is measured using the Total Resource Cost (TRC) test and that it has decreased through the first three phases of the program, which is to be expected as lower hanging fruit is addressed. Mr. Sherrick showed how each electric distribution company (EDC) was faring with meeting the portfolio targets, as well as cost effectiveness. PECO is the only EDC that may not meet their target for Phase III.

Mr. Sherrick then shared the Phase IV market potential for annual energy savings, peak demand reduction, and cost effectiveness. He clarified that Phase IV would be from June 1, 2021 – May 31,

2025. Mr. Sherrick stated that the only carve out in Phase IV would be for low-income. No EDC has had a problem meeting the carve out for the Government, Nonprofit, and Institutional (GNI) sector.

Several CCAC members had questions or comments for the presenters. Mr. Henderson noted how RGGI modeling for PA is not assuming that the PUC will adopt Phase IV, to which Mr. Sherrick responded that the PUC is 99% sure Phase IV will happen. Ms. Baxter asked about how savings are calculated, and Mr. Sherrick explained that much of the savings are measured via “deemed savings” that aren’t metered or monitored. Mr. Hammond asked what the Technical Reference Manual is. Mr. Sherrick said it is a cookbook on engineering details and assumptions for energy savings calculations, for example assumed hours of operation. Mr. Mondor inquired about an Act 129-like program for natural gas, since it is a recommendation in the PA Climate Action Plan (CAP). Mr. Sherrick noted that several utilities have voluntary programs for natural gas. Mr. Henderson added that there is no real legislative interest in an Act 129-like program for natural gas, since its original intent was to prevent price spikes after electric deregulation. Mr. Bossert asked why the low income carve out is not met, to which Mr. Sherrick stated that most low-income housing is technically commercial/multi-family and thus not owned by the occupant but rather a landlord, and there is minimal incentive for the landlord to make energy efficiency upgrades.

DEP’s Climate Action Plan Activities

Ms. Byron announced that the Request for Quotes (RFQ) for the 2021 Climate Action Plan and Climate Impacts Assessment will be issued on May 1st and proposals will be due by May 22nd. She shared a summary of comments received by DEP from the CCAC on the RFQ’s scope. It was unanimous that members wanted more communication between CCAC and consultant, so the number of meetings and webinars was increased to allow for bimonthly interaction. Clarifying language changes were requested and made that didn’t alter the overall scope. Members asked that electricity sector analysis should be shown as generation and consumption based, so that request was included in the scope, as well as adding technologies such as hydrogen and forest carbon sequestration.

Mr. Graff expressed concerns over restricting the pool of respondents by using the ITQ (Invitation to Qualify) list, but Mr. Hammond clarified that there are indeed multiple contractors on the list who are qualified. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Graff want to know how many entities are on the ITQ (Invitation to Qualify) list. DEP said they will provide this information to the CCAC.

Public Comment(s)

There were no public comments.

New Business/Next Steps

Mr. Krug asked if DEP could share the recently-released Annual Report from the GreenGov Council with CCAC members, and Ms. Byron said she would.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Krug and seconded by Mr. Graff. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:02 PM.