

**MINUTES OF  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL  
November 12, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Bob Barkanic, CAC Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 12:31 PM. Adam Cutler, Chairperson of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) offered brief opening remarks.

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Robert Barkanic, Chairperson	Jerome Shabazz
Trisha Salvia, Vice-Chairperson	Thad Stevens
George Ambrose	John Walliser
Jacqueline Bonomo	Jim Welty
Carol Collier	Tim Weston
Cynthia Carrow	

**DEP STAFF PRESENT:**

Ian Irvin, Executive Director  
Casey Damicantonio, Policy Office  
Joshua Neyhart, Policy Office

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Chairman Barkanic solicited additions or corrections to the October 8, 2024, Minutes. Executive Director Irvin requested one change – the Strategic Issues Committee report be amended to read: “Ian stated that, on behalf of Jacqueline Bonomo, service on the Strategic Issues Committee would be greatly appreciated.”

**Tim Weston motioned to approve the Minutes of the October 8, 2024 meeting with this change. Chairman Barkanic seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

**DEP UPDATE:**

Kurt Klappkowski, Deputy Secretary for the Office of Oil and Gas Management, primarily focused on the plugging of abandoned wells vis-a-vis the federal funding that has come into Pennsylvania since the passage of the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Q&A included whether the change in Administration in Washington might impact future funding, the deadline for applications for the Methane Emission Reduction Program, repairing or upgrading of wells versus plugging, and a settlement reached in West Virginia requiring a large entity with over 2000 wells to engage in plugging.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Elliott Gold, Vice President of Corporate Planning, Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW)**

This presentation discussed hydrogen from an initial introductory perspective, who PGW is, how PGW is participating in the MACH2 hydrogen hub, and how PGW is proposing to participate in the hydrogen business overall.

Q&A included how PGW is managing and mitigating the work around community involvement and community input in its development of the project, envisioned challenges for DEP in terms of the volume of permits necessary to implement the project that PGW has on the table, how PGW might approach stakeholder engagement, and division of responsibility across various components of the hub.

**Max Schultz, Infrastructure Implementation Coordinator, Governor’s Office**

This presentation began with a disclaimer that the Governor’s Office has no formal policy on hydrogen, but was based on what he and others have seen and experienced, with the goal being to pursue new investments across the Commonwealth in critical areas like transportation, infrastructure, job creation, energy, and the critical need to leverage opportunities within the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and federal Inflation Reduction Act and ways to foster a robust hydrogen ecosystem within Pennsylvania.

Q&A included how well DEP will be prepared to look at the hubs in a comprehensive approach and the making of plastics and chemicals by utilizing cleaner, greener hydrogen.

**Chris Antoni, Senior Vice President, AED Energy Services**

AED Energy Services is based in Pennsylvania and provides full service midstream design, construction management, and oversight, focusing on the movement of energy and other resources. Mr. Antoni discussed community opposition, the difficulty of transporting hydrogen because of its size, hydrogen embrittlement, hydrogen containment and storage, and the repurchasing of existing infrastructure.

Q&A included the use of existing pipelines versus new and the percent differential between the two, whether a new pipeline could be co-located where a pipeline already exists, who selects the path of the pipeline, the community engagement process, and separation between pipelines.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Naishadh Bhatt and Panna Chibber**

**40 CFR Part 60, Subpart OOOOc – Emissions Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Existing Crude Oil and Natural Gas Facilities**

An overview was provided of emissions guidelines for greenhouse gas emissions from existing crude oil and natural gas facilities, a timeline of applicability dates, the major differences between the two programs, who is the subject of the rule, key points, new requirements, Pennsylvania’s approach, and a brief timeline.

Q&A included whether Pennsylvania, if it were to move forward to adopt a state plan and desired to have additional elements in that state plan, would be required to separately go through a proposed rulemaking process, whether there is a process at the federal level for submitting a state plan based on the adoption of the model rule and following up subsequently with another rulemaking, and the submission of comments to DEP during the public comment period.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

### **John Rutecki**

Mr. Rutecki works on regulatory and legislative affairs for the Environmental Defense Fund and has been working on methane issues in Pennsylvania for the last decade. He believes the methane emissions in Pennsylvania in the Appalachian Basin are still too high and that strong pollution standards are needed to ensure protective, broad, and equitable pollution reductions for all communities.

### **Vanessa Lynch**

Ms. Lynch is a Pennsylvania field organizer for Mom's Clean Air Force, a group which advocates for a strong methane rule and believes Pennsylvania should take the super emitter program and give it real legs for community members and consider the idea of cumulative impacts. She believes it is important to look for durability in a methane state plan that lives outside of just the moment and believes that PA has an outsized need to look beyond just what the EPA has done and look for opportunities that exist for Pennsylvania.

### **Alice Liu**

Ms. Liu is a policy analyst for the Clean Air Council that works to protect the right to a healthy environment. The group believes the emphasis needs to shift to green hydrogen that meets the three pillars: new clean energy supply, matching generation of hydrogen with clean energy production, and locating hydrogen productions near the new clean energy sources. Ms. Liu encouraged DEP to finalize a strong state plan for the EPA methane standards that meets the Commonwealth's unique needs. The group would support applying a tiered system where a repair timeline is commensurate with the severity of a leak to ensure climate and health benefits are realized as soon as possible.

### **Dr. Brandon**

Dr. Brandon is a retired physician who participates in the Concerned Health Professionals of Pennsylvania and Physicians for Social Responsibility. She discussed the evidence that blue hydrogen will accelerate the climate crisis and that geologic carbon storage, especially in Pennsylvania, is unpredictable and can present physical threats to unprepared emergency medical technicians, other than first responders, and the population living within miles of wells and suggested that PA is not prepared to protect its residents.

### **Kim Anderson**

Ms. Anderson is a wife, mother, person of faith, and works for the Evangelical Environmental Network. She recently collected 36,391 signatures from Christians across Pennsylvania asking DEP to implement a strong state implementation plan for the methane supplemental rule. She urged the CAC members to take seriously the words of those concerned about wasteful methane emissions and toxic pollution that risks Pennsylvanian's health, contribute to climate change, and waste the state's natural resources.

### **Tracy Carluccio**

CAC received written comments from Ms. Carluccio. The members were encouraged to read her comments.

### **Keith Myers**

A late video was received from Mr. Myers. The members were encouraged to view the video.

### **Allison Steele**

Ms. Steele is the Executive Director of the Environmental Health Project, which is a data-driven public health nonprofit headquartered in Pittsburgh that defends frontline families from oil and gas pollution. Ms. Steele encouraged the CAC and EJAB to urge DEP and Governor Shapiro to be ambitious in adopting a strong and sensible methane rule for PA, one that promotes public health and defends families from dangerous oil and gas production.

### **Melissa Ostroff**

Ms. Ostroff is a public health professional and a certified thermographer at Earthworks. She uses an optical gas imaging camera that detects invisible methane leaks at oil and gas well sites across Pennsylvania, which images demonstrate a clear need for ongoing leak detection and repair at every oil and gas well, no matter the production volume or age of the site. Her field work has found methane emissions at many of the small conventional and older well sites. Frequently seen are leaks from cracks and decaying or loose joints, from pipe fittings near wellheads, from hammer unions and stuffing boxes, separators, pneumatic devices, and from casing failures. Evidence from the University of Cincinnati demonstrates that many of these small wells leak more methane than they produce in a year. She is heartened that the new EPA methane rule required routine inspections at all wells regardless of production volume and quarterly AVO inspections at even single wellhead only sites. But DEP should treat the rule as a floor, not a ceiling.

### **JOINT CAC/EJAB**

The groups discussed possible November 2025 joint meeting dates.

### **CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Chairperson Barkanic reminded the members that the Strategic Issues committee had selected hydrogen hubs and associated issues as CAC's priority issue to provide guidance to DEP. From the presentation given by Max Schultz, there are clearly individuals within DEP that are thinking seriously about the regulatory framework. An attempt should be made to locate those individuals and request time with the CAC in terms of a presentation.

CAC is interested in growing the committee.

Future CAC topics: continue to collect information around hydrogen hubs, spend more time hearing about data centers, electronics recycling (particularly solar panels), possibly getting someone in from SEPTA as it endeavors to transition their fleet to more hydrogen fueled vehicles, whether there funding and resources for the Department to continue key programs it is implementing, and the extent to which there are possibly programs that are mandated but are not funded because of resource constraints.

### **EOB**

Chairperson Barkanic revisited Carol Collier be named as an alternate to the EQB to ensure procedures were properly followed.

**Chairperson Barkanic motioned that Carol Collier be named as an alternate to the EQB. Jacqui Bonomo seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and all were in favor. Motion passed.**

Trisha Salvia reported that there were three rulemakings up for vote at the EQB meeting:

- 1) Final omitted rulemaking for blast site clarification for non-coal mining operations which is part of 25 PA Code Chapter 77. It will correct inconsistency between the non-coal mining regulations in Chapter 77 in the storage, handling, and use of explosive regulations in Chapter 211. The non-coal mining mine operators are required to conduct blasting operations with explosives in compliance with these regulations. The final omitted rulemaking corrects an inconsistency in the use of the defined terms while maintaining an effective safe boundary for blasting operations. The EQB voted unanimously yes for moving forward with that final omitted rulemaking.
- 2) The second proposed rulemaking was a correction to additional RACT requirements for major sources of NO<sub>2</sub> and VOCs for the 2015 Ozone NO<sub>x</sub> or RACT 3 under 25 PA Code Chapter 129. The proposed rulemaking will correct a cross reference in numerical errors established in an optional alternative compliance demonstration method included in the recently finalized additional RACT requirements for major sources of NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs for the 2015 Ozone NO<sub>x</sub> final form rulemaking. The proposed rulemaking corrects administrative errors and does not change environmental protection outcomes. This rulemaking was also voted unanimously to move forward for a 60-day comment period.
- 3) The final proposed rulemaking provides additional clarity to the public and department staff as to which unauthorized discharges.....

### **Policy and Regulatory Oversight**

The committee reviewed the 40 CFR Part 60, Subpart OOOOc presentation we just heard.

### **Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board**

The committee has finalized their July 2023 – July 2024 Annual Report.

### **Radiation Protection Advisory Committee**

Typical business; nothing new to report.

### **Solid Waste Advisory Committee**

Typical business; nothing new to report.

## **NEW BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION**

The 2025 meeting dates must be published in the *PA Bulletin* by the end of December.

The bylaws and membership handbook must be amended to change the time for public comment from five minutes to three minutes.

There are available seats on the Aggregate Advisory Board and the Mining and Reclamation Board. Members interested in either or both committees should advise Ian Irvin or Bob Barkanic. Ian Irvin will send out a reminder email soliciting volunteers.

Ian Irvin will have the 2024 Annual Report drafted by the end of the year.

There are open seats on the AAB and MRAB. Anyone interested in being CAC's representative on either of those committees should advise Chairperson Barkanic. Ian Irvin will send out a reminder email on that as well.

The next EQB meeting is December 10. CAC does not meet again until January 14.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**The November 12, 2024, meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 4:11 PM.**