

**CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2025
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Rachel Carson State Office
Building, and via Teams**

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:

In-Person:

Chairperson Elizabeth Marx
Jaret Gibbons
Joe Sherrick (for Chairperson DeFrank)
Adam Walters

Kevin Warren
Steven Krug
Flora Cardoni
Greg Czarnecki (for Cindy Dunn)
Perry Stambaugh
Rep. Ben Sanchez
Kevin Warren
Rep. Perry Stambaugh
Terry Bossert
Zachery Smith
Christopher Sandvig

Online:

Vice Chairperson Lindsay Baxter
Jason Kelso
Jennifer Greenburg
Joe Morinville (for Marc Mondor)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sara Innamorato, Paul Morris, Daryl Metcalfe

PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP) STAFF:

In-Person: Lindsay Byron, Chris Nafe, Danielle Lewis, David Althoff, Jessica Kelly, Kelsey Irvine, Lena Smith, Louie Krak, Megan Porta, Naimul Islam

Online: Amanda Amsbaugh, Collen Unroe, Laura Rigge, Maria Solomidou

INVITED GUESTS:

None

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Online: Kimberly Bradford, Daniel Mayer, David Hess, Evan Franzese, Glendon King, Roy Gothie, John Seitz, Laura Edinger, Trent Machamer, Nate Eachus, Rachel Gleason, Michael Roth, Robert Routh

MEETING: The February 18, 2025, meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC or Committee) was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Elizabeth Marx. With 11 of 21 seated members present at the start of the meeting; a quorum was established.

MINUTES: The December 17, 2024, CCAC meeting minutes were presented to the Committee for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Joe Sherrick

and seconded by Mr. Adam Walters. No one opposed the motion. The motion to approve the minutes without amendments was 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 Comment

Mr. Nathan Eachus provided public comments addressing CCAC meeting minutes and impacts of the oil and gas industry in Pennsylvania. His written comments were provided to CCAC members by Ms. Lindsay Byron.

CPRG Planning Grant Update – Public Outreach

Ms. Danielle Lewis and Mr. Naimul Islam provided an update on the upcoming in-person and virtual public outreach opportunities, as well as sector-specific virtual workshops happening this spring across the state. Mr. Islam and Ms. Lewis provided a walkthrough of the draft Climate Action Plan Story Map, including an overview of the climate impacts, strategies, and opportunities within the map for residents to provide feedback on the plan. This Story Map also will include links to federal and state resources.

Discussion

Chairperson Elizabeth Marx clarified the date of the Lancaster Workshop. Mr. Islam confirmed the date will be March 18th.

Mr. Terry Bossert asked if the climate impacts information included in the Story Map was the same information in the Climate Impacts Assessment previously reviewed by the committee and if the modeling was based on the higher emissions scenarios. Ms. Byron confirmed this information comes from the CIA that was reviewed by the committee and confirmed the impacts shown on the map are from the higher emissions scenario.

Chairperson Marx inquired about the groups of stakeholders who would be welcome at the sector-specific outreach sessions, for example, who would be invited to the utility meeting, strictly utility representatives or a broader audience including non-profits and advocates in the space. Ms. Byron confirmed that a wider audience would be welcome during these meetings.

Mr. Chris Sandvig requested registration information for sector-specific workshops and the link to the Story Map. Ms. Byron clarified that the department aims to publish the Story Map ahead of the public outreach sessions and registration information to be shared with the committee members.

RISE PA Update – Application Requirements and Evaluation

Mr. Louie Krak provided an update on the application requirements and evaluation process for the RISE PA program. He reviewed the application requirements for small-scale applicants and

medium/large-scale applicants, as well as the criteria used to evaluate potential grant recipients. He provided an overview of the expected timeline for the application process for this program. More information is available on the RISE PA website:

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/programs-and-services/energy-programs-office/rise-pa.html>

Discussion

Mr. Sherrick inquired if the program launch was still anticipated for the first quarter of 2025. Mr. Krak confirmed he is optimistic about the current program timeline. Mr. Sherrick also asked about how the Act 129 incentives available to companies will account for the cost-sharing information for applications. Mr. Krak responded he would confirm and follow up with the committee after the meeting. Ms. Marx also asked about the alignment of this project grants and Act 129. Stephen Krug responded that those pursuing Act 129 incentives should still be eligible for the RISE PA grant, Mr. Sherrick confirmed they are looking for coordination between the two programs.

Mr. Sherrick asked about CHP as a potential project for RISE PA and Mr. Krak confirmed this is an eligible project.

Mr. Kevin Warren inquired about where to look for guidance on the MMV approaches for applicants. Mr. Krak offered that guidance can be found in the application guidance on the webpage.

Mr. Adam Walters inquired about the project scope requirement that projects must be within state boundaries might apply to potential projects that may span state lines (i.e. hydrogen projects). Mr. Krak affirmed that they can only fund projects within state boundaries, but potential projects that expand beyond state lines could be considered for the portion within state boundaries.

Chairperson Marx inquired about the federal funding pause and progress on RISE PA. Mr. Krak responded that the direction from the Governor's office is to continue to move forward. He clarified the application process will move forward, but they will evaluate the next steps as additional guidance is provided to states.

Chairperson Marx asked about the status of the legal agreements and contracts of the grant given recent federal guidance. Mr. Krak clarified that DEP has a signed contract with the EPA for this grant and noted that this is an evolving situation that DEP will continue to monitor.

Chairperson Marx also asked about the prioritization of low-income communities given the new federal guidance. Mr. Krak confirmed that the community benefits bonus remains a cornerstone of the program and that it will be a key part of the program.

DEP Updates

Ms. Jessica Kelly provided an update on the Grid Resilience Grant (PA GRG) Program including an update on the first round of the program which has awarded \$15 million to projects across the state. The Energy Programs Office is preparing to release the next round of grants. There will be a webinar to review the program guidance for the second round which will open in late spring or early summer 2025. Mr. David Althoff clarified that the update is related to the grant solicitation timeline and Ms. Kelly confirmed that the second round will follow a similar process to the first including the initial concept paper.

Discussion

Mr. Sherrick requested an overview of the awarded PA GRG projects, current status, and anticipated outcomes in the next meeting. Ms. Kelly confirmed that DEP can provide the information at the next meeting. Mr. Althoff added additional details about the status of the projects explaining that they are under review status with federal partners at the US Department of Energy (DOE). Mr. Steve Krug also expressed interest in the details of the project. Chairperson Marx inquired if there was additional information on the locations of the projects. Ms. Kelly noted that the projects will be able to be shared once confirmed with DOE. Chairperson Marx inquired if investor-owned utilities are eligible. Mr. Althoff confirmed they are eligible and expect to see their applications in the second round.

Mr. Warren inquired if the main purpose of the resilience program is to increase reliability or manage increased demand and connect renewable energy sources. Mr. Althoff responded that the first round of the program focused on more modernization of the grid, but also on creating additional capacity for the grid and increasing connectivity through these projects.

Next Meeting

Ms. Byron reminded the committee that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2025, and shared a proposed agenda for the meeting.

Chairperson Marx presented an idea for a future meeting. She asked the committee if they would be interested in inviting executive directors of the majority and minority house and senate energy and environment committees to share important legislative updates. Mr. Krug supported the idea but noted it would be important for the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Story Map to be released ahead of those meetings, so legislators can be informed of the work of the committees. Mr. Jaret Gibbons noted that the Senate will be in session in April, but August may be better for the availability of the legislative staff.

Mr. Krug requested an update on the HER/HEAR programs as an additional potential agenda item.

Chairperson Marx noted that there was limited discussion of data centers in the current CAP, but there may need to be an exploration of this topic in the future CAP. Mr. Krug also noted that the Governor has released an energy strategy and that might be useful for the committee to have a briefing. Mr. Warren expressed his support for this topic as well.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Sherrick and seconded by Chairperson Marx, motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:44 am.

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