

**CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 22, 2024
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Rachel Carson State Office
Building, and via Teams**

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:

In-Person:

Chairperson Elizabeth Marx
Vice Chairperson Lindsay Baxter
Patrick Henderson
Jaret Gibbons
Joe Sherrick (for Chairperson DeFrank)

Jennifer Greenburg

Paul Morris

Marc Mondor

Kevin Warren

Steven Krug

Jennifer Greenberg

Zachery Smith

Terry Bossert

Glendon King (for Rep. Stambaugh)

Rep. Ben Sanchez

Online:

Greg Czarnecki (for Cindy Dunn)
Jason Kelso

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rick Siger, Flora Cardoni, Christopher Sandvig, Daryl Metcalfe, Sara Innamorato

PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP) STAFF:

In-Person: Lindsay Byron, Megan Porta, Kerry Campbell, Laura Rigge, David Althoff, Christopher Nafe, Naimul Islam, Danielle Lewis, Louie Krak, Daniel Eitzman

Online: Colleen Unroe, Amanda Amsbaugh, Garrett Strunk, Robert Young, Thomas Donohue

INVITED GUESTS:

Neil Fowler

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Online:

Brian Smiley, Michael Roth, Megan Dennis, Robert Gottlieb, Trent Machamer, Andrew W. McMenamin, Jeaneen Zappa, Bill S, Nick Manning, Ria Pereira, Nick Troutman, Evan Franzese, Julia Kortrey, Paul DiRenzo, Carol Armstrong, Roy Gothie, Robert Routh, Rachel Goodgal, Matt Henderson, Faith Zerbe, Nate Eachus, Matt Henderson

MEETING: The October 22, 2024, meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC or Committee) was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairperson Elizabeth Marx. With 16 of 21 seated members present at the start of the meeting; a quorum was established.

MINUTES: The August 20, 2024 CCAC meeting minutes were presented to the Committee for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Lindsay

Baxter and seconded by Paul Morris. No one opposed the motion and Joe Sherrick abstained from voting. 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

Nathan Eachus from Luzerne County provided a public comment addressing the August CCAC meeting minutes and environmental and human health impacts of the oil and gas industry in Pennsylvania.

CPRG Planning Progress

Lindsay Byron presented an overview of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) planning process, emphasizing the phased approach, deliverables, and broad-reaching engagement efforts.

Discussion

Chairperson Elizabeth Marx opened a discussion on the importance of broad measures in PCAP with particular emphasis on building electrification and energy efficiency. She noted that feedback from recent listening sessions highlighted overwhelming support for efficiency upgrades in homes, particularly in low-income and disadvantaged communities. She emphasized the need for whole-home resilience, integrating energy and water efficiency, and asked if these specifics would be more clearly outlined in future expansions of the Act 70 Climate Action Plan.

In response, Lindsay Byron affirmed that whole-home energy work was a common theme in public outreach, with energy efficiency measures included in the Act 70 Climate Action Plan. She explained that these elements would transition to the expanded CAP Plus Plan, where they would be further developed to accommodate additional measures identified by the committee.

Chairperson Marx further encouraged coordination with the Housing Action Plan currently led by the Governor and DCED (Department of Community and Economic Development), expressing hope that DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) would play a role in this planning. She stressed that improving low-income housing conditions is vital for enhancing energy access and addressing existing disparities within Pennsylvania's disadvantaged communities.

Steve Krug raised concerns about achieving the NetZero Electric Grid Challenge, given the complexity of coordinating stakeholder involvement. Lindsay responded that much of the engagement would rely on established partners and ongoing connections with key stakeholders. Chairperson Marx reminded attendees that public comments or questions are not accepted during committee meetings, as this policy upholds the structured nature of the department's procedures for public feedback.

RISE PA

Louie Krak from the Office of the Governor's Critical Investments presented an overview of the RISE PA (Reducing Industrial Sector Emissions in Pennsylvania) program, funded with \$396,108,225 to support emission reductions in industrial settings. RISE PA targets eligible project types including energy efficiency, electrification, process emissions reduction, low-carbon fuels, on-site renewable energy, carbon capture utilization and storage, and fugitive emissions reductions. Key emissions sources addressed by the program include industrial fossil fuel combustion, process emissions, on-site electricity use, natural gas and oil systems, and coal mining. For questions or comments, participants were invited to email RA-EP-CPRG@pa.gov.

Discussion

Joe Sherrick inquired about who would be evaluating projects for the RISE PA initiative. Louie explained that small projects would be evaluated by PAP, while medium and large-scale projects would fall under DEP's evaluation. Additionally, there is funding available for third-party contractors to assist with technical and feasibility evaluations. Joe further asked if PennTAP and DEP would use the same criteria. Louie clarified that while PennTAP would establish the criteria for small projects, DEP would maintain oversight, and the guidance document contains specific evaluation criteria for each type of project.

Patrick Henderson questioned the expected emission reductions, aiming for an 8 million metric ton reduction by 2050, which equates to approximately 3% of Pennsylvania's emissions. He pointed out that industrial emissions comprise 30% of total emissions, and the target is to reduce this by 10% over the next 25 years. Patrick asked about the cost per ton for these reductions compared to the voluntary carbon market, highlighting the importance of return on investment. Louie responded that DEP's program design currently estimates the cost at \$83 per metric ton, which is lower than the EPA's social cost of carbon at \$192 per metric ton. Louie also noted that reducing emissions in the industrial sector is particularly costly, estimating it will require over \$34 billion to achieve an 80% reduction by 2050.

Further discussions arose regarding grant requirements and incentives. Steve Krug sought clarification on wage rate requirements, to which Louie responded that projects receiving a 30% grant need not follow wage rates but may qualify for a bonus if they do. Projects must meet federal prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements under EPA rules, with additional criteria for fair labor bonuses based on project size.

Marc Mondor requested a copy of the presentation and asked about pollutants beyond greenhouse gases, specifically those targeted by the program. Louie confirmed that specific pollutants are listed in the program guidance. Marc also raised concerns about the timing, suggesting that larger projects may face challenges meeting deadlines, while smaller projects could be more feasible. Louie acknowledged these concerns, adding that the program allows for a 12-month extension if needed, with the option to reallocate funds from large to smaller projects based on demand.

Elizabeth Marx asked if DEP considered partnering with environmental justice organizations to assist with scoring community benefit bonuses, leveraging local expertise. Louie supported the idea, mentioning that organizations like Reimagine Appalachia and Riverwalk, which have experience in community benefit planning, could provide valuable input. Elizabeth further inquired about coordination with existing programs, such as Act 129, which could affect the industrial sector. Louie confirmed that they aim to align the programs to complement one another, potentially stacking funding opportunities to maximize impact across initiatives.

DEP Updates

DEP provided updates on several initiatives highlighting its ongoing commitment to community engagement and sustainable energy development. For climate outreach, Chris Nafe shared details about the National Council on Electricity Policy (NCEP) Annual Meeting on October 29-30, titled "*Engaging with Communities to Support their Energy Future.*" DEP's Director of the EPO, Dave Althoff, will serve as an Executive Committee Member at the meeting, moderating sessions focused on pressing electricity issues and fostering trust and partnerships with communities. This event aims to identify collaborative opportunities among state policymakers to enhance community engagement. Following this, on November 20-22, EPO staff will present various programs and initiatives at the Pennsylvania Municipal League Sustainability Conference, providing municipal stakeholders with sustainable strategies. Additionally, a tour of the Phoenixville Wastewater Hydrothermal Carbonization Facility is planned for December, showcasing wastewater-to-energy advancements.

Under the IIJA/IRA updates, Daniel Eitzman introduced the Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grants Program, which is designed to strengthen the state's grid resilience by supporting infrastructure improvements. Robert Young presented the Renewable Energy Siting through Technical Engagement and Planning program, which focuses on identifying strategic sites for renewable energy projects through technical assistance and comprehensive planning. Lastly, Garrett Strunk discussed the Industrial Energy Assessment Program, aimed at helping industries conduct energy assessments to boost efficiency and reduce costs through targeted recommendations.

Next Meeting

Lindsay Byron reminded the committee that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2024, and shared a proposed agenda for the meeting.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Joe Sherrick and seconded by Marc Mondor, motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:31 am.