

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **AIR QUALITY FORUM**

**February 14, 2023**

**10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

#### **Members and Alternate in Attendance:**

Angela Markley, Unified Government  
Krystal Voth, City of Leavenworth  
Janeé Hanzlick, Johnson County  
Kelly Gilbert, MEC  
Cameron Weeks, MDNR  
John Neuberger, Sierra Club  
Carol Adams, Env. Management Commission  
Britni O'Connor, MODOT

Jodi Gooseman, City of Kansas City, Mo.  
Allison Smith, KDOT  
Gayle Bergman, UG Public Health  
Carol Adams, KCMO EMC  
Richard Rocha, Bayer  
Rollin Sachs, Johnson County

#### **Other Attendees:**

Jim Starcev, KC Digital Drive  
Rumela Bhadra, EPA Region 7

Rayan Makarem, Clean Air Now  
Allison Crowther, KSU

#### **MARC Staff:**

Karen Clawson, MARC  
Kate Ludwig, MARC  
Ron Achelpohl, MARC  
Rachel Krause, MARC

Doug Norsby, MARC  
Bridget Koan, MARC

- 1. Introductions and Determination of Quorum**  
Meeting introductions were made.
- 2. February Meeting Summary\***  
The meeting agenda was APPROVED.
- 3. Air Quality Forum Bylaws**  
Ms. Clawson shared the bylaws in advance of the meeting. She noted that why staff was seeking amendments to the bylaws and the bylaw changes. The bylaws add Lee's Summit and Miami County representation and adjusted the total number of representatives from the Unified Government and KCMO representation, which were previously over-represented.

There were no questions regarding the bylaws amendments. The bylaws amendments were APPROVED.

**4. FHWA Carbon Reduction Program**

Tom Jacobs provided an overview of the Carbon Reduction program, a new program of the FHWA granted by the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law. The program's funds are suballocated from the states to metropolitan planning organizations, like MARC. MARC will receive approximately \$4.6m per year, for five years.

MARC will program these funds for local government projects with a call for projects launching by April. The program will fund projects that reduce transportation emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>) from on-road highway sources. Eligible projects are listed in the program guidance, but include public transportation, bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, congestion management, electric vehicles and infrastructure, etc.

MARC convened a workgroup to establish goals and guideline for the program. The groups supported targeting a minimum of half of the projects funded be non-vehicular transportation and/or green infrastructure projects. MARC will prioritize projects that are collaborative in nature, and will score projects based on emission, sustainability co-benefits, and traditional transportation factors.

A joint committee made up of representatives from TTPC (and relevant subcommittees), AQF, SPPC and CEC will review and deliberate on project funding before approval by TTPC and the MARC Board of Directors.

The timeline for the applications is as follows:

- March 29th: Call for projects
- April 6th: Pre-application workshop
- May 19th: Applications due
- May-June: Staff scoring and public comment
- June-July: Workshop deliberation
- August-October: TIP Public comment period and TTPC/Board approvals

Kelly Gilbert had a clarifying question on the 50% to non-vehicular and if the remaining 50% is to any project type or any eligible project type. It is any eligible project type.

There was another question about whether the funds could be used toward the electrification of mass transit. This would be an eligible project.

**5. Proposed Revisions to EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter**

Karen Clawson presented EPA proposed changes to the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. On January 5, 2023, EPA proposed to strengthen the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Particulate Matter (PM NAAQS) to protect millions of Americans from harmful and costly health impacts, such as heart attacks and premature death. Reconsideration of the December 2020 decision to retain the PM NAAQS on the basis that the available scientific and technical information which indicated that the existing standards may not provide adequate protection. This proposal reflects extensive review of the scientific record and input from the public and EPA's Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee. The proposed rule will advance environmental justice by leading to reductions in particle pollution, which disproportionately burdens communities of color and other vulnerable communities. On-the-books regulations and available control measures can reduce particle pollution in a highly cost-effective manner, leading to large net public health benefits.

For those who are unfamiliar or need more information on particulate matter, particulate matter is a mixture of solid and liquid droplets. Primary particles are emitted directly from sources such as smokestacks, fires, or construction sites. Secondary particles are produced through complex atmospheric reactions of chemicals such as NO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub>, emitted by sources such as power plants, automobiles, and more. Sizes of particles are defined by their aerodynamic diameter and are broken down as such:

- Coarse particles (PM<sub>10</sub>), aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 10\mu\text{m}$
- Fine particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 2.5\mu\text{m}$
- Ultrafine particles (UFPs), aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 0.1\mu\text{m}$

There is both an annual and 24-hour standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub> and a 24-hour standard for PM<sub>10</sub>. The annual standard is the daily, base line levels where the 24-hour standards will pick up on the peaks seen in the region. The current PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard is  $12\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . The proposed revision is to drop the standard to anywhere from  $11\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  to  $8\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

Additional proposed changes include a revision to the Air Quality Index (AQI) to improve public communications about the risks from PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposures, and to make changes to the monitoring network to enhance protection of air quality in communities overburdened by air pollution.

The proposed revisions to the Primary Annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards from EPA conclude that the available scientific information calls into question the adequacy of the public health protection afforded by the current primary annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard and that it is appropriate to consider strengthening this standard. Recent studies suggest adverse health effects from exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> are occurring at concentrations allowed by the current standards, with additional studies demonstrating improvements in public health, including reductions in mortality, following reductions in PM<sub>2.5</sub> in areas with air quality below current standards.

EPA's quantitative risk assessment estimates that the current primary standards could allow thousands of PM2.5 associated deaths per year.

EPA proposes modifying the PM2.5 network design criteria to require monitoring in at-risk communities where there are anticipated effects from sources in the area contributing to poor air quality. Specifically, for areas with required SLAMS (State and Local Air Monitoring Systems), a monitoring station is to be sited in an at-risk community where there are anticipated effects from sources in the area, for example, a major port, rail yard, airport, or industrial area. As written, the network design proposed change does not add a requirement for new monitors, rather it utilizes existing sites and ensures at risk communities are considered if sites need to move. An important note is that any new or moved monitors as a result of the modification in the PM NAAQS rule revision would not be in effect for the upcoming PM2.5 designations cycle.

Doug Norsby presented a local PM2.5 analysis, looking at PM2.5 design values for each of the region's six PM2.5 monitors. There are six monitors in the region. The locations are in KCK, Heritage Park, Troost, Blue Ridge/I-70, Liberty and Richards-Gebaur South.

The local PM2.5 monitors show that the KCK monitors has a yearly PM2.5 reading from 10.40 – 11.03 in the past three years. The three-year average is 10.77 for the KCK monitor. With the proposal to lower the PM2.5 standard, this monitor would be of the most concern. The other monitor with potential concern is Heritage Park with a three-year average PM2.5 reading of 8.85. All other monitors have a three-year average reading below 7.85. If the standard is lowered to 8, Heritage Park may be of concern.

Looking at data from 2016 to 2022, Wyandotte/KCK shows no data simply because there is no data for that monitor. The two monitors of concern, KCK and Heritage Park, are both trending upward with Heritage Park being at a steeper increase. The other monitors have a flat or downward trend with Troost having a significant drop, perhaps due to an energy use change from the nearby facility.

The designation and implementation timeline simply states that within two years after a final NAAQS EPA must "designate" areas as meeting (attainment areas) or not meeting (nonattainment areas) the final NAAQS considering the most recent air quality monitoring data and input from states and tribes. All PM2.5 nonattainment areas are initially designated as "Moderate". Within 3 years after a final NAAQS the states must submit state implementation plans (SIP) revisions to show they have the basic air quality management program components in place to implement the final NAAQS. With 18 months after the effective date of designation the nonattainment area PM2.5 state implementation plans are due. By the end of the 6th calendar year after the effective date of designations is the "Moderate" area attainment date.

Possible comments would be to support strengthening the annual PM standard and if we want to advocate for a specific standard, which we have not done in the past. EPA does not plan to add new monitors but proposes moving monitors to more adequately cover at-risk populations. With the region potentially at-risk for nonattainment for a new standard, there would be a request of EPA to provide resources and funding to help implement new control measures. Comments to EPA are due March 28th.

Comments and questions regarding the proposed reduction of the PM2.5 standards are:

- Doug Watson - From the states perspective disappointed that they haven't set a standard but that they are choosing to set a range. Transitioning from a filtering to continuing monitoring system. Continuing showing a bias to PM2.5, especially in smoke events, can EPA correct and adjust for that bias. EPA should have addressed the bias before.
- Rollin Sachs- probably won't be finalized until December, so there is some time. Community monitoring would be a different subject. PM is different from ozone; PM tends to be more reactive and fluctuates. Need to think about forecasting ability but doesn't play into comments from the forum
- Doug Watson – comments, money and effort to relocate monitors, EPA expectations on monitor movement. Won't happen overnight.
- Rollin Sachs- already in locations that will meet the requirement. Only need to be moved if you are placing a new monitor and would depend on final ruling.
- Doug Norsby- area that is unrepresented, then the monitor might need to be moved
- Rollin Sachs- historically we have had a saturated network
- Kelly Gilbert- When monitoring first went into effect, to saturate in areas to make an impact, would it make sense to do that again now for a few test years to make sure they are located in the correct locations, especially with growth and transportation networks? Also, are the monitors located in the areas where people breathe? If we are in nonattainment after the final rule making, are there more resources for additional monitors? What are the chances this gets thrown out before it has a chance to be finalized?
- Karen Clawson-Instead of putting out permanent monitors to do testing, there would be other testing monitors to see if it is placed in the right spot or need to be moved.

- Rollin Sachs- suggests modeling to collect that data. Also, confirms that the monitors are fixed to the ground and are about 6 feet tall. The point is that they are at the breathable level.
- Karen Clawson- We have applied for monitor funding last year for low-cost sensors. Does not know what the final outcome will be.
- Richard Rocha – maybe moving monitors will hurt us from a data collection point of view. Also, the location of the existing monitors seems random. Maybe we can add but not relocate monitors to fill in gaps.
- Doug Norsby- feels the same way. Moving monitors is a bad idea. Are there hot spots we haven't covered?
- Doug Norsby – are there implications of the smoke management plan?
- Doug Watson – have had discussions with EPA Region 7 about the 2010 smoke management plan to do revisions and updates. EPA would have an easier time approving with the revisions. A set standard would make smoke management easier than having a range.
- Dr. Neuberger – surprised that there is not much chemistry and chemical reactions, why they haven't done anything about putting
- Doug Watson- secondary formation. It is easier to understand. Not sure how to directly answer the question.
- Tom Jacobs- the health impacts on the chemicals and particulates which leaves room for more nuanced conversations.
- Rollin Sachs- Primarily from the capabilities of the monitors. Technology may change those capabilities but for now, that does not exist.
- Jim Starcev- There are studies over this being done at a University in Dallas but it is expensive and not field worthy now.
- Jim Starcev– it seems like it would be more practical to do a mean vs average calculation. Is there a standard on the range of the monitor?
- Rollin Sachs- does not recall at a regional scale. Has to go in the most populated part of the region.

- Tom Jacobs- Data from EPA shows a rapid attenuation of particulates based on distance so it speaks to the need for extra monitoring near transportation and rail facilities.
- Doug Norsby – mean vs median, the annual standard is the mean for each quarter and then average those.
- Rayan- Justice 40 communities. Would you want the number to be 10 to stay in attainment, or are there more long-term goals and objectives to get the numbers lower regardless of the EPA standards for all communities and community health?
- Doug Watson – understand why we are seeing the rise in numbers, local or more long range. Is it in state or out of state? The understanding can help with determining which standard we could advocate for and how to stay in attainment.
- Rayan – The KCK monitors show that the transportation related monitors are reading higher, especially compared to monitors in other counties and locations not near transportation.
- Tom Jacobs – Carbon reduction program would be an excellent source of funding for tree planting near those areas of concern.
- Rayan – wanting to try to get ahead of the curve with potential solutions.

**6. State Rules in Progress**

Doug Watson said that KDHE is updating indoor lead regulations. There are two sets of comments on gas and methane. They are expecting some sort of GHG regulations coming out for electrical generating units.

**7. Transportation or Partner Updates**

Kelly Gilbert - Department of energy has released a notice of intent and RFI for interested parties at metroenergy.org under the survey tab. Finalizing the local organizations targeting rural and urban communities to subcontract to lead communities in listening sessions and EV information on the website under funding. Leading a bi-state proposal for building codes, support for the final design. Kelly@metroenergy.org

**8. Other Business**

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.

**9. Next Meeting – Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.**