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MEETING SUMMARY

AIR QUALITY FORUM

May 9, 2023
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Members and Alternate in Attendance:

Angela Markley, Unified Government
Krystal Voth, City of Leavenworth
Allison Smith, KDOT
Doug Watson, KDHE
Kelly Gilbert, MEC
Richard Rocha, Bayer
Andy Savastino, Kansas City, Mo
Allison Crowther, K-STATE PPI

Jodi Gooseman, City of Kansas City, Mo.
Dan Williams, City of Kansas City, Mo.
Mark Leath, MoDNR
Gayle Bergman, UG Public Health
Justus Welker, Johnson County Transit
Britni O'Connor, MODOT
Carol Adams, KCMO EMC

Other Attendees:

Blake Butler, City of Kansas City, Mo.
John Neuberger, Sierra Club

MARC Staff:

Tom Jacobs, MARC
Kate Ludwig, MARC
Ron Achelpohl, MARC
Rachel Krause, MARC

Doug Norsby, MARC
Bridget Koan, MARC

1. Introductions and Determination of Quorum

2. April Meeting Summary*

Motion to approve by Doug Watson and seconded by Brian Alferman.

3. 2023 Ozone Season Public Awareness Survey Results

There are four major findings.

1. *Perceptions of Air Quality:* Concerns around health consequences are trending downward. This may have an influence from COVID where it may have been higher. May have to keep an eye on this trend. What people think about the air quality in KC is trending up despite it being pretty good. There may be some pessimism for general environmental and ecological knowledge.

2. *Importance of SKYCAST, OZONE ALERT Days, and the Reduction of Air Pollution:* Very important for news stations to report SKYCAST. Television is a fundamental cornerstone for information. 43% have seen SKYCAST with the weather forecast. Consistent in people feeling the importance of receiving an ozone alert day. This may be because people are not in homes as much and are on the move.

3. *Communication and the Impact of Air Quality Efforts:* Percentage of people who have seen or heard advertisements is higher than it ever has been. The awareness for the AirQ program has gone up but is still very low. Knowledge of Operation Green Light has also increased. However, the percentage of people who have seen SKYCAST on local TV stations has gone up this year. Again, most people have seen ozone alerts on TV, with radio being second. The majority of people understand that an ozone alert means the air is dirty and polluted. Need to meet people where they are with information.

4. *Willingness to Improve Air Quality:* A lot more awareness of environmental and social justice issues correlating with what would motivate people to make changes to habits for air quality. These habits or actions include adopting better driving habits, being weary at the gas station, and changes in outdoor grilling habits. Looking to government to invest in transit and in proper infrastructure to help facilitate changes. The colored arrows are noting an upward or downward trend.

Summary: Respondents believe that air pollution is either staying the same (37%) or getting worse (42%). Fewer respondents saw SKYCAST information during the past year. 43% saw SKYCAST information during weather forecasts local television news last year, a 4% increase from 2022. 46% of respondents indicated they had seen or heard promotional media about air quality in Kansas City during the past year, a decrease of 2% from 2022. Television and radio are still primary and preferred sources of information. Mostly (76%) of respondents feel their awareness of air quality issues remains unchanged. Health effects and global warming/climate change are respondents' two most important reasons to reduce air pollution. Respondents are less willing to change certain behaviors on OZONE ALERT days. Not overfilling/ "topping off" gas tank was the one behavior most

respondents indicated they did regularly last summer regardless of OZONE ALERT. Most respondents are in support of local municipalities reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Missouri and Kansas Workplans for EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grants

Mark Leath covered Missouri's Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant. March 17th Gov. Parsons signed the participation of intent for the grant. On April 28th, Missouri submitted the work plan for the grant. There are two phases for this grant under the Inflation Reduction Act. Phase one is the planning phase and phase two is the implementation phase. The implementation funding needs projects that are developed in the planning phase.

The overall goal for Missouri is to ensure as many feasible projects and eligible entities are eligible for CPRG Implementation funding as possible. Because KC and St. Louis are both eligible for their own planning grants, the state plan will coordinate with these areas, but focus on other areas of the state that are not receiving a planning grant. The starting point is the Missouri Action Options for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2002) as a sort of climate action plan because Missouri does not have one. Five sectors of GHG emissions being electrical generation, building energy use, transportation, agriculture and forestry, and solid waste management as a starting point for goals. Many policy options and some may still be relevant.

The Air Program expects to coordinate with other divisions like Energy and the Geologic Survey, other Departments like Agriculture and Transportation, county and municipal governments, regional air planning groups, communities, citizens, industry, and other related stakeholders. The plan is to have as inclusive of an industry as possible. As for public engagement because they cannot incur funds for the grants until June 1st, the plan is to have public and stakeholder meetings as early and often as possible. EPA expects to award funding in August. There is an informal 30-day public comment period prior to plan due date. A draft and the final plans will be posted to the DNR webpage.

One of the main deliverables on the fastest timeline is the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP). The PCAP requirements include a GHG emissions inventory, quantified GHG reduction measures, low income/disadvantaged community benefit analysis, and a review of existing authority. Some encouraged and optional parts of the plan include a benefit analysis, intersection with other funding, and workforce planning analysis. Per the EPA guidance, may focus on a specific sector or sectors (priority measures). Air Program expects 'priority' projects to be shovel-ready projects that communities and industry may already be considering. In two years, the second deliverable is due, which is the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). All the elements of the PCAP are required including the optional elements.

The challenges Missouri and most states and municipalities face is that the timelines are daunting. The PCAP is due in March 2024 and the CCAP due in 2025. They have also seen staffing challenges.

EPA expected to include new Environmental Justice requirements that have not yet been defined. Missouri does not have established GHG inventories or modeling. Questions can be sent to Wesley.fitzgibbons@dnr.mo.gov and mark.leath@dnr.mo.gov.

Questions and Comments

Tom Jacobs comment, it would be good to coordinate with your plans and if there is any way MARC can help, they would like to. Note on how they will incorporate health and human services and coordinating with the different funding opportunities. Mark unsure of health and human services but may know more specifics about community outreach. Believe coordination will be equally important as well. Having a one stop shop for funding sources.

Doug Watson KDHE and Kansas's CPRG (Climate Pollution Reduction Grant) activities. The only thing done historically was a GHG inventory, so the state is kind of starting at square one. Grant funds from Inflation Reduction Act and Kansas is one of 46 states to apply. Will be working with Wichita, Topeka, Lawrence, and Manhattan to help and assist with climate action plans. Two phases will be the planning and implementation phases included in the States Priority Action Plan.

Phase one is to develop the plan that occurs at the state level. This is a lot of work in a short time period to find projects that are shovel ready to reduce emissions to put in Priority Action Plan with short turnaround from EPA. KDHE is hiring people to help with these phases and planning. Kansas is very much in the same boat as Missouri, so they will be working quickly. Questions can be sent to douglas.watson@ks.gov and jayson.prentice@ks.gov.

5. Kansas Fire/Smoke Season Summary

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. MARC's Proposed Electric Vehicle and Tree Canopy Targets (ConnectedKC 2050)

MARC uses performance-based planning to measure performance-based goals, Selena Zapata – Bur and Doug Norsby covered two of those measures, VMT per capita and tree canopy, which are both voluntary measures. They are working to create targets based on these goals.

The VMT per capita measures enables the progress towards regional goals in reduction. This ties back to ConnectedKC 2050 and the Climate Action Plan (2021). Reduction in VMT per capita would benefit air quality and mitigate effects of climate change. The target setting methodology used the 2010-2019 VMT growth rate and the MARC 2050 population forecast to calculate a "do-nothing" scenario for 2050 VMT per capita. Based on research, it assumes a 20% reduction by 2050 through implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies which include parking management, increases in transit and rideshare services, and multi-modal facility investments. The methodology also used a discounted value for VMT in 2050 the MARC 2050 population forecast to calculate 2050 estimated VMT per capita, which would be the region's 2050 target. MARC then

worked backwards from 2050 to arrive at a VMT per capita target for 2030. The “do-nothing” scenario projects a steep increase where the 20% reduction would grow but at a discounted rate.

Questions and comments:

Angela Markley notes that with COVID people are working from home or working from home on some days, like Fridays. Traffic seems to be lighter on those days and may have an effect as well.

Tom Jacobs adds that the Climate Action Plan required a VMT reduction. Would like feedback on the proper goal and metric for the reduction. Is this appropriate for the region? Selena adds the other targets of other cities who have differing methodologies.

David Albrecht adds to what degree do you include working from home in the modeling process. COVID showed it is do able but will it last. Selena replies that the data may reveal that information because there are things still changing and it will need to be watched carefully.

Brian Alferman notes, it seems like this is appropriate and should be primary metric to gage success but 20% seems aggressive for Kansas City. David Albrecht and Angela Markley agrees. Should we consider a 15% reduction? Brian Alferman comments on 10% being during COVID. 10% may be more realistic.

Tree Canopy Measure with Doug Norsby dives into setting regional targets for a greener, cooler, and cleaner region. Trees help with many transportation, pollution, and sustainability concerns. Land use mapping is key for looking at the tree canopies. Extracting measurements from activity centers and corridors shifts the geography. The recent past meets a vision of the future. Because of the shifts it has been hard to track trends. There is a two-target approach to tracking. Approach one keeps the activity centers and corridors in place and looks at the public spaces, multimodal, microclimate where you live, work, and play, and looks at the hardscape with the greenspace. The second approach looks at the overall regional coverage which consists of the privately owned spaces, water quality and stream protection passive cooling and heat island abatement, and rural areas with urban areas.

Target setting for the tree coverage metric includes the activity centers and corridors and the overall regional canopy percentage. The activity centers and corridors have no peer comparisons available, it needs accommodation, but need to determine a target relative to the overall regional tree canopy percentage and how aggressive the target needs to be. It is currently 9.3%. The regional canopy percentage has target comparisons with peer communities but needs to determine the climate biome or what is possible and how aggressive the target needs to be. It is currently 13.5%. The question remains, how aggressive should we be?

Questions and Comments:

Angela Markley when you plant a tree, it doesn't create that canopy tomorrow, so how does the growth of the tree factor into the rate of tree canopy cover? Land use mapping tools to evaluate is only available every other year, so we might not see the results for a tree planted today for five or six years but it will still show upward or downward trends.

Carol Adams adds that it makes a lot of sense. To get trees planted and watered is harder. It might be best to have an aggressive goal and give people carrots for complying and there are ways to help people on their own. Tom Jacobs added that the KC Tree Master Plan estimated coverage at 30% with a goal of 35%.

David Albrecht agrees that the goal needs to be as aggressive as possible thinking that not everything planted will take or grow as planned so it is best to over prepare than under prepare. Doug Norsby added that it is reflected in the tentative targets and there may be room in the activity centers and corridors. Can also try to influence new development. Access to influence and maintaining influence.

Brian Alferman notes that it needs to be tied back to the goals we have already like carbon sequestration and storm water runoff and where we need the trees to be. Having a percentage goal might not be enough but looking at the where and the impact there. Doug Norsby adds that there are internal water quality concerns where trees can be useful, adding to parks with the battle of maintenance and uses. Finding it difficult to just set a target on what is ideal with the changes from stakeholder to stakeholder.

7. State Rules in Progress

No updates.

8. Transportation or Partner Updates

No updates.

9. Other Business

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.