

Draft Minutes
Governor's Energy Policy Advisory Council (GEPAC)

Thursday April 23, 2009
House Room 1, Capitol Building, Richmond, Virginia

Called to order: 09:37 a.m.

GEPAC members present:

Stephen Walz as Chair, The Honorable L. Preston Bryant, Jr., Alleyn Harned for The Honorable Patrick O. Gottschalk, Larry Blanchfield, Karl Bren, Darlene Burcham, Bill Greenleaf, Eva Hardy, Dr. Irene Leech, John Lewis Jr., George Minor, and Bill Tayler.

GEPAC members absent:

The Honorable Aneesh P. Chopra, The Honorable Patrick O. Gottschalk, Ken Moss and Michael Quillen

Welcoming remarks and introductions were made.

Minutes from the September 5, 2008 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved on a motion by L. Preston Bryant Jr., seconded by Larry Blanchfield.

GEPAC Chair Stephen Walz gave an overview of 2009 energy legislation. A summary of this legislation is being sent to GEPAC members and will also be available on our website.

GEPAC Chair Stephen Walz discussed key points of an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) power point presentation handout.

- What amount of funding is coming to Virginia?
 - \$76.4 million to the State Energy Program (SEP)
 - \$9.7 million EECBG (Energy, Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant) funds for small cities and counties
 - \$44.5 million EECBG funds for larger cities and counties
 - \$94.1 Million to the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
- The Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) will submit the final State Energy Program ARRA application by May 12, 2009. A preliminary application was submitted last month.
- We would like input from members and the public on potential uses of funds.
- We need to look at the long term value of work efforts to Virginia.
- Should ARRA funds be used to do a lot of smaller projects or just a few large ones? Committee members recommended that we should consider a mix of large and small.
- Broad goal -- Look to the Virginia Energy Plan (VEP), Commission on Climate Change (CCC) and legislation. Is there a way to meet goals with ARRA funds?
- Department of Energy is developing a \$25 million competitive grant that we should apply for.

GEPAC member William Tayler discussed off-shore wind issues.

- Virginia is rather silent on the subject of off-shore wind; we need to be more vocal in our wind goals.
- We should put together a consortium of stakeholders to discuss military concerns with certain areas of the Atlantic Ocean.
- We should take European technology and experiences and apply them to Virginia.
- The Eastern United States has Class 5 & 6 wind capacity.
- DMME staff will follow up with Mr. Tayler regarding what the military is doing with energy efficiency and research so we can conduct a parallel path. We will include Alleyn Harned at the meeting.

Note: Corrections were made to the original handout

- The US Department of Energy's website was included on page 2 under Information sources.
- Correction was made to page 9 under EECBG allocation. \$44.6 million directed to 28 Virginia localities instead of 38.

Al Christopher, Director of the Division of Energy with the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, discussed the Virginia Energy Progress Report.

- Reducing energy consumption is "joined at the hip" with the consumer education program being implemented by the State Corporation Commission (SCC) to begin July 1, 2009, called "Virginia Energy Sense"
- Dominion Virginia Power is filing with SCC to do several Demand Response programs beginning July 1, 2009.
- How successful are the local tax reduction programs in 21 Virginia localities for homeowners who install renewable energy equipment? We should work with Virginia Municipal League (VML) and Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) to collect data.
- The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) updates building codes every three years, and will adopt the latest code revisions later this year.
- New stimulus projects will have positive effects on Virginia Energy Plan (VEP) goals.
- Natural Gas presentation is being sent to GEPAC members and will be available on our website.

The Honorable L. Preston Bryant Jr. spoke to the Council regarding the Governor's Commission on Climate Change.

- Governor Kaine took the Commission's work very seriously.
- A final report was issued in December 2008.
- The number one recommendation was energy efficiency based on ACEEE's report on Virginia.
- The hard working and concerted effort by the Commission on Climate Change members represented a good model of how government can work together.

Al Christopher, Director of the Division of Energy with the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, discussed updating of the Virginia Energy Plan (VEP).

- Plan has to be completed and released by July 1, 2010.
- We should look at actual change from where we were in 2007 versus 2010?
- We must present baseline information to the new Governor for review and approval in early 2010.

Suggestions

- Listen to the citizens of Virginia. Repeat listening sessions similar to the ones held during the implementation of the VEP. Can be done by region, topic, etc. Keep it simple.
- Hold sessions at universities to attract younger attendees.
- Set up website similar to Stimulus.Gov to receive input, Town Hall virtual approach.
- Use utility bill inserts to focus, direct people to website for input.
- Work with localities through the Virginia Municipal League and Virginia Association of Counties to get diverse opinions from different perspectives at the listening sessions.
- Make personal connections through marketing strategies to get people to attend listening sessions.

Other Business

- Dates will be sent to members to schedule next GEPAC meeting to possibly be held in July.

Public Comment:

- Larry Land, with the Virginia Association of Counties, offered cooperation to help advance energy policy and prepare localities for major changes in energy sources and funding in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Prepared by Eileen Leonard, Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, May 4, 2009