

**MINUTES OF  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL  
March 12, 2024**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jerome Shabazz, Chairperson  
George Ambrose  
Robert Barkanic  
Jacquelyn Bonomo  
Cynthia Carrow  
William Fink

Jason Foster  
Trisha Salvia  
John St. Clair  
Thaddeus Stevens  
John Walliser  
James Welty

**CAC STAFF PRESENT:**

Ian Irvin, Executive Director  
Ian Harlow, Deputy Secretary for Administration  
Ezra Thrush, Policy Office  
Max Schultz, Policy Office  
Casey Damicantonio, Policy Office

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Shabazz called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM.

**DEP UPDATE**

Deputy Secretary for Administration Ian Harlow provided the following update:

*Governor's Budget*

- Provides over \$10 million in funding for the Department to increase permitting staff at regional offices across the Commonwealth and to upgrade, improve, and modernize permitting IT systems.
- Allocates \$11 million from the General Fund to continue the important work finding and plugging abandoned wells and other activities.
- Invests \$1.5 million in new capabilities to test for PFAS contamination.
- Proposes \$1.1 million to improve the Bureau of Air Quality's air monitoring capabilities, allowing it to conduct intensive long-term air studies.
- Includes \$2.5 million to support experts within the Department's Energy Programs Office with a dedicated focus on transmission planning and environmental justice.

Q & A included positions not requiring a four-year degree and working with OA regarding positions that are hard to fill and staffing to manage grants focused on the energy programs.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

### **E-Waste Recycling in PA**

**Sarah Alessio Shea, Deputy Director, Pennsylvania Resource Council (PRC)**

PRC is a statewide environmental nonprofit organization created in 1939 whose vision is a Pennsylvania where nothing is wasted. Details were provided on the scale of e-waste generation, illegal dumping, and access to collection sites. PRC believes House Bill 1607, “Electronic Waste Recycling Modernization Act,”<sup>1</sup> should be expanded; certain sections clarified, specifically the maximum amount of eco-deposits; whether the eco-deposits can cover collection, preparation, transportation and the recycling of components; tracking of brands by the collector; and the manufacturer’s role in e-waste.

Q&A included the need for recovery of precious metals in devices and the need to categorize the list of equipment rather than defining by word.

### **Cryptocurrency and Pollution**

**Charles McPhedran, Earthjustice**

Cryptocurrency is an alternative to the dollar with no central authority that governs how it is exchanged. For matters of energy use and environmental consequences, Earthjustice believes there needs to be other ways to validate cryptocurrency transactions. The energy impacts on Pennsylvania from cryptomining include the underlying energy source, greenhouse gases, combustion waste, subsidies, water, e-waste, air pollution, and noise. DEP and citizens of the Commonwealth have the tools to require, enforce, and improve permits; conduct new source reviews; address new fuels; and eliminate fossil incentives and noise pollution.

Q&A included where Pennsylvania stands relative to the rest of the country in terms of managing the energy demands of cryptocurrency systems, whether the cryptocurrency facilities are operating off the grid or have plants that power them, and whether the proof of work requirement continues when transactions are dealt with using crypto or if that energy demand stops with the generation of the final coin.

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<sup>1</sup> There is companion legislation in the Senate, Senate Bill 734.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chris Davies

Following up the presentation by Charles McPhedren related to cryptocurrency, Mr. Davies stated that, from his own research, it has not been proven and likely introduces security vulnerabilities, which invalidate some the main purposes of cryptomining, so crypto may not be the panacea that crypto enthusiasts are excited about. Some folks disagree with the Federal Reserve and the printing of money, but that is a problem that cannot be addressed by trading the planet for computers to do uninteresting math equations for tasks that are already done by banks. The noise pollution issue should not be understated as it is a clear breach of the right to quiet enjoyment of our property. Mr. Davies would like an outright ban on cryptomining for anything beyond outright residential levels of energy usage.

Mr. Davies' comments related to PFAS Initiatives and the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program can be found at: [Citizens Advisory Council Meeting Schedule 2018 \(pa.gov\)](#)

## **PRESENTATION:**

**Suzy Baker, Stakeholder Engagement Lead**

**Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations**

**U.S. Department of Energy**

This presentation provided details on the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations' (OCED) H2 Hubs Overview-ARCH2, including OCED's mission, mandate, and scope, the seven regional clean hydrogen hubs that are currently in the negotiation phase, and the four pillars of community benefits. Ways to engage while in the negotiations stage were offered, next step negotiations, and how to engage during the next four phases of resources, location, communities, and project development partners.

Q&A included: whether all of the hubs are being progressed at the same time; to what extent the timeline takes into consideration engagement or any work that state regulatory agencies would need to do around bringing the projects to fruition; CAC's interest in being engaged in as many details as possible; infrastructure siting and priorities around environmental impacts and adding additional burden to communities, and the safety of this technology.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Chairman Shabazz solicited additions or corrections to the January 9, 2024 Minutes. Hearing none:

**Jim Welty motioned to approve the Minutes of the January 9, 2024 meeting. Cynthia Carrow seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

## **CAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### ***Legislative Committee***

The Executive Director is attempting to schedule a meeting between the DEP technical folks and this subcommittee to talk about e-waste issues. Future presentations are being scheduled with the South Carolina E-Waste Recycling Program, the Executive Director of the National Center for Recycling, and regulators from the State of California.

### ***Strategic Issues Committee***

The committee met on March 1 to discuss the ongoing focus of this year being cryptomining, more on e-waste recycling, and hydrogen hubs. The Executive Director will work with stakeholders to get more presentations.

### ***EQB***

The February meeting was canceled. An update will be provided next month.

### ***Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board***

The next meeting will be April 25.

### ***Aggregate Advisory Board***

Met on February 21, which was mostly updates on the Bureau of Mining Programs.

### ***Low Level Radioactive Waste***

Has not met.

### ***Solid Waste Advisory***

Will meet on June 26.

### ***Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board***

Meeting on March 19.

### ***Radiation Protection Advisory Committee***

Has not met.

***Sewage Advisory Council***

Next meeting is March 20.

**NEW BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION:**

The Executive Director has drafted the 2022 and 2023 CAC Annual Reports, including draft transmittal letters to the Governor and the General Assembly, and will send those out to the CAC members for comments and edits and will then begin to finalize the documents.

The Executive Director has also assembled a New Member Handbook combining historical data, members since 1971, all chairpersons who have served, by-laws, pertinent statutes, etc. which will also be sent out to the members in draft form for comments and edits.

The next meeting of the CAC will be April 9, 2024 at 12:30 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With no further business, Cynthia Carrow moved to adjourn the meeting. Jim Welty seconded the motion, and all were in favor.**

**The March 12, 2024 meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 3:04 PM.**