



Environment and Natural Resources Committee

DRAFT Minutes

October 5, 2011 –9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Mike Prusila – Lake County SMC, Sean Weidel – City of Chicago, Lenore Beyer-Clow – Openlands, Debbie Stone – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Laura Oakleaf – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Jon Grosshans – USEPA Region 5, Wally Van Buren – Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies, Christy Sabdo – Kane County, Nancy Williamson – Illinois DNR, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg

Staff Present: Jesse Elam, Ylda Capriccioso, Randy Blankenhorn, Hala Ahmed

Others Present: Ed Sitar – ComEd

1.0 Call to Order

Jack called the meeting to order at 9:34 am. A round of introductions followed.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

None.

3.0 Approval of Minutes from October 24, 2011

The minutes were approved as written.

4.0 Coordinating Committees Update

Lenore reported that the Local Coordinating Committee had not met since August. It was suggested that Jesse send an email alerting committee members when a coordinating committee agenda packet had been posted on the web, and he agreed to do so.

5.0 Smart grid and environmental initiatives by ComEd

Ed Sitar of ComEd gave a presentation on the utility's Smart Meter program and the pending legislation in the General Assembly that would help establish additional smart grid programs, recover their costs through electric rates, and incentivize certain energy efficiency programs, among other things. He said that the company had started a smart meter program on a pilot basis, but that an appellate court ruling determined that the Illinois Commerce Commission should not have allowed elements of the program. Legislation was therefore being sought to support the program. The proposed program would invest \$2.6 billion, half of it in smart meters and half in infrastructure

modernization (utility poles, underground cable, etc.), and generate around 2,000 jobs at its peak. The legislation carries mandates for reductions in the number and duration of outages and increases energy efficiency by tracking net metering and providing an improved platform for electric vehicles. Ed showed a video produced by the company that describes how smart meters work, saying that the meters would cost households about \$3 per month, which would pay for itself in energy savings. ComEd hopes to see the legislation brought up in the General Assembly veto session. He concluded that CMAP should support the legislation. There is general agreement, he said, that the smart grid is important, but the question remains as to how to pay for it.

A member asked whether the \$3 per month would cover an in-home energy management device. Ed responded that such a device would be part of the program, but a decision on a particular model had not been made yet. Another member asked how the smart grid / smart meter program would prevent outages. The answer was that the meters in a neighborhood would provide information back to the company to allow it to isolate the fault. A more general question was asked about how the entrance of other companies into the market, such as Spark or Constellation, affected ComEd. It was explained that deregulation permitted other companies to compete for the retail aspects of electricity service, but that since ComEd is still paid for distributing electricity. A member pointed out that the information handed out at the meeting said ComEd might voluntarily make investment commitments for the smart grid, yet the legislation imposed mandates for those investments. Ed said that if there were an error, he would have it fixed. Some discussion focused on whether a centralized grid system is an “old-fashioned” approach, and asked whether a different (distributed) approach would be better. Finally, a member pointed out that if higher rates went into effect for most or all customers immediately, yet the smart meter program would be rolled out over a number of years, then some customers would be paying for the program without receiving its benefits. Ed responded that that criticism was reasonable, but that, for practical reasons, it might not be possible to roll out the program faster. Jack pointed out a number of energy efficiency initiatives in the legislation, saying that Sierra Club and ComEd had worked together to develop them; these included incentives for “big box” stores to put renewable generation capacity on their roofs, that the state has to purchase some electricity from those sources, and that if the ICC finds funding energy efficiency is cheaper than purchasing new power, it would be required to fund these “negawatts.”

6.0 CMAP program updates

6.1 GO TO 2040 implementation update

Jesse described how CMAP is cataloging projects the agency and its partners are undertaking to implement GO TO 2040. He said he had asked committee members to provide a handful of projects their organizations are working on that could be highlighted in CMAP’s implementation report, expected in January. Nancy reported that Chicago Wilderness was undertaking green infrastructure mapping projects in the City of Woodstock and the Village of Bannockburn, that the Chicago Wilderness “Sustainable Watershed Action Team” would be collaborating with CMAP via a grant from the Boeing Foundation, and that DNR would be working to establish its Millennium Reserve in the Calumet area. Jesse verbally summarized the projects that other members had sent in.

6.2 Legislative update

Ylda handed out the draft FY12 CMAP legislative principles document, which applies the concepts in each of the twelve GO TO 2040 priority areas to state legislation, indicating the kinds of legislation CMAP would support. A member noted that she liked how the agenda related to GO TO 2040, but wondered if CMAP would be tracking bills by fitting them under the priority chapter headings. Ylda said that that could be how bills would be tracked, but had not finalized the system. Another member said that farmland protection should be added to the local food section. The upcoming veto session was discussed briefly.

7.0 Other business

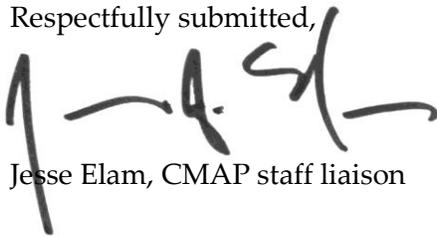
None.

8.0 Public comment

None.

9.0 Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jesse Elam', written over the typed name below.

Jesse Elam, CMAP staff liaison