

Governor's Energy Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 10, 2025

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Delaware Department of Agriculture
2320 S. Dupont Hwy, Dover, DE 19901

Virtual option via Zoom

Members Present: Chairman Ed Kee, Sen. Stephanie Hansen, Rep. Debra Heffernan, Secretary Greg Patterson, Secretary Shante Hastings, Jameson Tweedie, Kimberly Cole, Cassandra Marshall, Lisa Oberdorf, Dale Davis, Kris Ohleth, Bahareh van Boekhold, Dr. Alan Greenglass, Christophe Tulou, Dr. Steve Hegedus, Lori Murphy Lee, Dallas Winslow, Steve Baccino, Kimberly Schlichting, Drew Slater, Joseph Poppiti, Christian Fuess, William "Don" Clifton, Lori Murphy Lee

Members Absent: Rob Book, Mark Baker

Designees Present: Nikko Brady, Matt Hartigan

DNREC SEO Staff Present: Tom Noyes, Brett Swan, Susan Love, Janet Redman, Scott Hunter

Consultants Present: Gretchen Calcagni, Collin Smith, Annalise Stein

1. Roll Call of Council Members

Ed Kee, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

Tom Noyes from DNREC took attendance of council members and designees present.

All members introduced themselves.

2. Opening Remarks

Chairman Kee welcomed the GEAC Workgroup Members.

Mr. Noyes noted that the recommendations from the Workgroup Members are in the State Energy Plan. The Energy Plan and the Climate Action Plan should be aligned.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 20, 2024

Chairman Kee asked for a motion to approve the draft of the previous meeting minutes. Don Clifton made the motion. Dale Davis seconded. Five GEAC Workgroup Members abstained. The meeting minutes were approved.

4. Briefing on the 2025 Delaware Climate Action Plan

Susan Love presented an overview of the 2025 Delaware Climate Action Plan.

Jameson Tweedie asked about the low, intermediate, and high emissions and where the state currently falls within that trajectory.

Ms. Love responded that they are already at the intermediate level. However, there is potential to make a difference for the future. Sea level rise is impacted by emissions already made.

Dallas Winslow asked if there is data about emissions that have changed based on economic and social activities of the state.

Ms. Love replied that the emissions data includes imported energy from out of state. She commented that it is a good estimate based on the regional grid.

Mr. Davis noted that Ms. Love reported a 24% reduction in Delaware's 2025 emissions. Mr. Davis asked how much of the 24% is related to the change from coal to gas fired equipment.

Ms. Love responded that the greenhouse gas inventory shows the actual trajectory over time with each of the different sectors. A lot of the emission reductions are from the electricity sector.

Kimberly Schlichting asked if there are discussions about collectively working with other states.

Ms. Love replied that Delaware is a founding member of the U.S. Climate Alliance. The U.S. Climate Alliance is composed of several states who are working together and who have set emission reduction targets. There are two annual meetings where they work together to share best practices and provide an opportunity to accelerate action or learn about new economies of scale.

Mr. Noyes commented that this discussion will continue after reviewing updates to the State Energy Plan.

Ms. Schlichting asked if the state recognizes that as transmission decreases the generation will need to increase.

Ms. Love commented that modeling efforts provide a deeper look into decarbonization interacting with the grid.

Mr. Noyes commented that page 45 of the Energy Plan speaks to the kind of work needed to prepare the grid to accommodate electric vehicles.

Ms. Love noted that it is not just electric vehicles, it is also heat pumps, induction stoves, and electrification over time.

Mr. Winslow asked if Ms. Love has access to specific information and details for generation.

Mr. Noyes replied that the granular data can be found with the division of air quality at DNREC.

Chairman Kee thanked Ms. Love for the presentation and opened the floor to questions from GEAC Workgroup Members.

Kris Ohleth asked about funding needs of DNREC and how it works for the Climate Action Plan.

Secretary Greg Patterson replied that it goes through the normal state budget process. Each division in DNREC will specify what they ideally or pragmatically need, and this will arrive to the Secretary who puts a list together. Generally, they are given a target to prioritize their funding and goals for the year. The Governor weighs in towards the end of the process and then it is presented to the General Assembly.

Ms. Love commented that there are challenges with implementation because of the restrictions in receiving funding.

Ms. Schlichting commented that it is important to prioritize goals and recognize the budget.

Dr. Alan Greenglass asked where the modeling of healthcare costs is in the Climate Action Plan.

Ms. Love replied that their consultant did a rough cost benefit analysis, which included health. However, this analysis was done at a high level. Ms. Love noted that they had an economic report done around 2021 that reviewed the costs of inaction with public health impacts.

Bahareh van Boekhold encouraged a focus on building electrification. Ms. van Boekhold commented that utilities are often siloed. They need to know how much emissions reductions are needed from the building sector. There are successful examples of other states, particularly in New York and New Jersey.

Mr. Tweedie asked how much of an impact data centers have on the Climate Action Plan.

Ms. Love replied that data centers have recently become a significant issue for the electricity sector. The Climate Action Plan does not consider the type of data centers that were recently proposed. This will require a different and larger workstream. There are efforts in the legislature, county council, and in other state agencies to address those.

Mr. Tweedie commented that the proposed data center in New Castle would be 1,200 megawatts, which is almost a 50% increase in the entire state's energy.

5. Public Comment

Chairman Kee opened the floor to public comment.

Dave Stevenson addressed Secretary Patterson and noted that DNREC continues to exaggerate the impacts of climate change. Mr. Stevenson noted that the models from the United Nations have been incorrect thus far. These models have been used by DNREC in various reports despite the United Nations throwing the case out. Mr. Stevenson commented that reliability is a significant issue, as there will be an increase in blackouts over the next several years. There is also a crisis with electric prices. There were eleven bills in the legislature last year driving the increase in the electric rates. Mr. Stevenson encouraged the group to look at the Energy Plan and note what raises electric demand, hinders electric generation, raises the cost of housing construction, and to advise the Governor.

Peggy Shultz asked if there are any possibilities for reducing those emissions because the Refinery in Delaware City represents 90% of industry's contribution to GHG emissions in Delaware. Ms. Shultz asked if offering incentives for the Refinery to change operations could have an impact. Ms. Shultz commented that the federal government appears to have taken a Delaware offshore wind project off the table. Ms. Shultz asked if there is a possibility of meeting state goals without offshore wind.

Ms. Love commented that there are strategies in the Climate Action Plan that address different types of industrial processes.

Keith Steck asked what coordination is happening with county governments and local governments. Mr. Steck commented that onsite energy production, such as solar and other renewable options, is crucial to the future.

Ms. Love replied that county and municipal governments were invited to join stakeholder workshops.

Mr. Noyes encouraged Mr. Steck to follow up with DNREC about opportunities to promote distributed or onsite energy resources.

Evan Vaughan, Executive Director of the Mid Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition, agreed with Mr. Stevenson. There needs to be more energy and firm capacity on the grid. Mr. Vaughan commented that offshore wind has one of the highest effective load carrying capacities.

The GEAC Council took a break from 10:35 AM – 10:45 AM.

6. Update on the State Energy Plan

Mr. Noyes presented updates to the State Energy Plan and progress to date addressing the strategies laid out in the Energy Plan.

Janet Redman noted that the RFP for a solar market potential study was published on October 7th and there are two bidders who have expressed interest. All questions are due to the team by October 22nd.

Scott Hunter commented that the RFP is online for review.

Ms. Schlichting asked if the ten thousand plus solar installations includes municipals.

Mr. Noyes replied that the data used includes customers with solar installations in Delaware. These are registered with the Public Service Commission's database. The data is statewide, even though it is collected by the Public Service Commission.

Dale Davis noted that this is only for those who apply to be a registered renewable energy generator through the Public Service Commission. There are probably some missing that never went through the Public Service Commission certification, but this likely captures 95%.

Mr. Noyes commented that they have worked with US Wind to enable them to connect to Delaware. They are working with states on a path forward for best practices and long-term regional opportunities. Mr. Noyes commented that there are discussions happening with other states on working together for procurement planning and coordination, transmission planning, supply chain, and workforce coordination.

Mr. Tweedie commented that CAPS, Consumer Advocates of PJM States, is focused on ratepayer costs. Data centers are a significant part of their focus right now.

Matt Hartigan commented that there are requests that PJM have more state representation.

Mr. Noyes noted that this requires coordination among state agencies in Delaware.

Mr. Davis asked if there are opportunities to require data centers at the local level or PJM level to put in a significant composite capital letter of credit as part of a requirement.

Mr. Noyes replies that there are states looking at that kind of requirement. However, they all need to work together in a fast environment.

Lisa Oberdorf commented that these details focus on the regulated utilities. Data centers will not go just to the regulated utilities. Ms. Oberdorf asked if they will bring in the municipals and co-ops in the requirement to establish specific rates, tariffs, and others.

Mr. Noyes commented that they do not have regulatory authority over DEC and DEMEC.

Ms. Schlichting noted that this already happens within the rate tariffs of individual utilities for each sector. Ms. Schlichting commented that the size of the data centers may not fit within most of the municipal counties.

Mr. Tweedie commented that the independent market monitor estimated that \$16 billion in excess costs that eventually get distributed to ratepayers are the direct result of data centers and how quickly they are growing and the demands they are creating.

Senator Hansen noted that Senate Bill was not listed under the legislation that would affect data centers. This was released on September 22nd. This bill would require any person or entity who wants to begin the business of using 30 megawatts of electricity or more to have to get a certificate to operate from the Public Service Commission.

Lori Murphy Lee commented that the Critical Issue Fast Path (CIFP) is a fast-track process through PJM's stakeholder process. PJM is looking to ease the burden and make sure that data centers pay their fair share. Ms. Lee encouraged states to make laws about data centers.

Steve Hegedus asked what kind of guidance is being given to regulators in terms of tailoring the rates for large data centers.

Ms. Schlichting commented that the state needs and wants are crucial within these discussions as well.

Mr. Tweedie commented that the petition before the Public Service Commission was a joint petition with the intention to require Delmarva to create a larger load tariff. This will incorporate possible expenses that these facilities impose on the electrical system.

Mr. Winslow noted that they need a better system.

Mr. Davis asked if there is a way PJM can buy for people at the capacity auction.

Dr. Greenglass asked if this needs to be taken to the code and study the implementation in order to see the scale.

Mr. Noyes confirmed that Dr. Greenglass was referring to microgrids and storage.

Ms. Schlichting noted that they are looking to put in batteries with solar projects.

7. Public Comment

Chairman Kee opened the floor to public comment.

Dustyn Thompson submitted comments for the Climate Action Plan, several of which focused on data centers. Mr. Thompson noted that they need to expand the storage market in order to get capacity ratings needed to reduce costs with technologies that can deploy at the time scale with data centers.

Mr. Steck, with the Delaware Coalition for Open Government (DELCOG), commented that they are concerned about public awareness and the opportunity to make sure their voice is heard. Mr. Steck asked how to protect residents from becoming the bearers of the huge cost of supplying energy to attract new customers.

Mr. Noyes commented that there is a docket open with the Public Service Commission and several pieces of legislation that have been introduced. Different members of this council are working to protect the public interest.

8. Future Council Meetings

Chairman Kee reviewed the future Council meetings for October 24th, November 14th, and December 12th.

Mr. Noyes noted that the October 24th meeting is an interactive energy modeling exercise suggested by Senator Hansen. Mr. Noyes encouraged members of the Council to attend the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 PM.