EQB Advisory Panel

Meeting Summary
April 20, 2017
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Present Members: David Zoll, Willis Mattison, Jason Aagenes, Michele Ross, Carissa Slotterback, Timothy Nelson, Andi Moffatt, Josh Fitzpatrick, Randall Doneen, Louise Miltich, James Atkinson, Kathryn Hoffman.

EQB staff: Will Seuffert and Courtney Ahlers-Nelson

Management Analysis & Development (MAD) Staff: Barbara Tuckner and Henriët Hendriks

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Updates

Barb welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda.

Courtney provided the following updates:

- Based on a discussion during the March meeting of what success meant to each panel member, EQB staff has updated the long-term schedule. This updated schedule was handed out to panel members.
- Courtney confirmed that EQB staff can provide notes on discussions to the panel before the next meeting. The meeting minutes will be posted on the website.
- Panelists were handed a spreadsheet that showed the possible tools to make changes to the environmental review process. This includes for instance rule changes, but also changes to the EAW form and custom forms.

Will provided context for the discussion around climate change by talking about Minnesota's current work and state goals on climate change. He emphasized that while the conversation today is not about where Minnesota is going with climate change goals but that this information is important to understand when the panel discusses the role of climate change in environmental review.

In response to panel members' questions and comments about current federal actions, Will stated that while EQB doesn't get its authority from NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) the panel should be aware of the discussion at the federal level. He emphasize that the federal environmental policy governs federal projects; state law governs state projects.

Courtney provided some additional information of how GHG calculations and climate change analysis currently factor into environmental review:

- When it comes to basic GHG calculation, this is only required in the Air Pollution category. Broader climate change analysis is not required anywhere. Last year, EQB sent a survey to all state RGUs to ask which projects have done climate change analysis.
- Air Pollution EAW Category: There was a rulemaking proposal in summer 2016 and EQB's proposal was to remove the GHG calculation requirement, which led to comments.

Assigned Readings

Panel members explained why they had picked particular readings for the panel to read in advance of the meeting.

Panel members then shared what stood out to them in the readings. One panelist said he was hoping to find that other states had solved the problem which was not the case. Another panelist wondered how we are going to move the dial: Everyone's impact is small, so where do we make differences.

Addressing Climate Change at a State and Local Level

Carissa Slotterback gave a brief presentation on her research around the first state-level examples around climate change analysis. Overall, she found that this is a slow-moving policy area but she noted that her research findings are as current as 2011. She also mentioned that there is state action in this space in the absence of federal action.

GHG Calculations and Climate Change Analysis

Louise Miltich provided a brief discussion on questions around GHG calculations and climate change analysis and what type of information these might provide.

Panel Discussion on Question 1: Pros and Cons of Competing GHG Calculations and Climate Change Analysis

See supporting document that contains the notes on this discussion.

Public Comment

One audience member commented many regulations and rules are out-of-date and that sometimes EAWs are required that don't make sense. He suggested to remove redundancies and think about alternative review options and encouraged the panel to address a lot of the issues that were brought up today.

Another audience member commented she was gratified to hear that we need to look at both impact of climate change on the project and of the project.

Next Meeting: Climate Change

Will notes that the next meeting's topic is also climate change and asked panel members for additional resources, mostly on other states/non-MN resources.

Willis asked whether EQB staff can send out documents earlier before meeting so people have time to read it. Courtney confirmed this is possible, but that documents should come through her.

Jason asked whether at the next meeting the panel will review the proposed rule change for the EAW category. Will confirmed that they want to hear concerns and get the panel's temperature on this rule change.

The meeting ended at noon.