TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

# MIDDLE GEORGIA CLEAN AIR COALITION

## Thursday, January 11, 2024

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

175 Emery Highway, Suite C | Macon, GA 31217

*We will act now to reduce NOx and Ozone in the Middle Georgia Community to ensure that we protect the region's public health, maintain a robust economic growth, and show leadership in environmental sustainability.*

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| 4:00 | Call to Order / Approval of Minutes | Clifford Holmes, Vice-Chair |
| 4:05 | Financial Reports | Sam Kitchens, Treasurer |
| 4:10 | Updates on Clean School Bus Projects | Sam Kitchens |
| 4:15 | Review of Goals and Plans for 2024<br>a. Existing Goals from 2023<br>b. New Priorities<br>c. Climate Pollution Reduction Grants | Greg Boike |
| 4:45 | Clark Group Contract Update | Greg Boike |
| 4:55 | Discussion | MGCAC Members |
| 5:00 | Adjournment | Clifford Holmes, Vice-Chair |

***Next Meeting Date:***
***Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.***
***Middle Georgia Regional Commission***

**MEETING MINUTES**
**MIDDLE GEORGIA CLEAN AIR COALITION**
**REGULAR MEETING**
Thursday, November 16, 2023, 3:30 pm
Middle Georgia Regional Commission

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Executive Board Members Present:

Mayor John Harley, City of Centerville*
Former Chairman Ned Sanders, Houston County *
Mayor Eric Wilson, City of Forsyth*
Commissioner Wade Yoder, Peach County*
Commissioner Jackie McCowan, Crawford County*

Other Local Officials, Staff, and Stakeholders Present:

Tiffany Davis, Jones County*
Mike Greenwald, Macon-Bibb Planning and Zoning
Claudette Ayanaba, Georgia EPD
Anna Aponte, Georgia EPD
Jameson Hamilton, Georgia EPD
Melvin Harris, Oglethorpe Power
Mark Strozier, Macon Transit Authority
Bryan Jones, Robins Air Force Base
Sarah Bauer, Mercer University
Kelly Sheckler, EPA Region 4

***Denotes Voting Member or Local Government Staff Proxy for Voting Member**

Support Staff Present

Ray Clark, The Clark Group
Greg Boike, MGRC Director of Planning and Public Administration
Kim Stanton, MGRC Executive Assistant

Welcome/Call to Order

Greg Boike called the November meeting of the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition to order at 3:30 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was determined that a quorum was not present at the moment, and the committee was not yet able to conduct business.

Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG)

a. Presentation by Georgia EPD

Anna Aponte and Claudette Ayanaba with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division reported on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funds that are available to focus on Greenhouse Gas reduction measures and reduce hazardous air pollutants. Ms. Ayanaba talked about the eligibility, application process, and the evaluation criteria. More information can be found at https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/climate-pollution-reduction-grants.

b. Discussion of MGCAC Opportunities

Greg Boike reported to the Coalition that the MGRC can assist the local communities with this grant process or that MGRC could take the lead on a regional coalition application. He highlighted the importance of communities identifying their top priorities for grant funding.

Establishment of Quorum

Following the discussion of Climate Pollution Reduction Grants, Greg Boike determined that the Coalition had attained a quorum of its membership and was able to conduct business.

Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections to the minutes of the October 12, 2023 meetings; they were unanimously approved on a motion by Eric Wilson and a second by John Harley.

Financial Report

Greg Boike provided the Financial Report beginning October 1, 2023, through October 31, 2023. Revenues included bank interest and member contributions totaling $19,621.86 and expenditures in the amount of $5,853.00; the ending balance as of October 31, 2023, was $101,931.23.

The Financial Report was unanimously approved on a motion by Jackie McCowan and a second by Wade Yoder.

MGCAC 20-Year Review

Greg Boike and Ray Clark reported on the 20th anniversary special event celebration that will take place on December 14 at the MGRC. The group discussed the general plans for the evening and the event.

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MGRC Activity Report

Greg Boike reported that they are still waiting to hear from DOT regarding the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant that was submitted in June. Mr. Boike is continuing to attend sessions on the CPRG program. He also reported that the regional plan stakeholder meetings were about to begin and that air quality would once again be a topic.

Discussion

Ned Sanders discussed the latest news and progress pertaining to electric vehicles, solar power, and technology independence. This included articles on energy for the future, natural gas, and carbon reduction.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the November MGCAC meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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It was announced that the next meeting of the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition will be held on December 14, 2023, at 5:30 pm to celebrate the MGCAC's 20th anniversary celebration at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission.

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**Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition**

**Financial Report**
**As of December 31, 2023**

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|---|---|---|---|
| Beginning Balance -November 30, 2023 | | | $ 155,193.70 |
| Revenues | | | |
| Bank Interest | $ 7.06 | | |
| Reimbursement from I-75 CCC for the Clark Group | $ 22,500.00 | (deposited Jan 2024) | |
| Member Contributions | 35,224.00 | | |
| Total Revenues | | | $ 57,731.06 |
| Subtotal | | | 212,924.76 |
| Expenditures | | | |
| Ray Clark | 5,000.00 | | |
| Total Expenditures | | | 5,000.00 |
| Ending Balance -December 31, 2023 | | | $ 207,924.76 |

# 2023 MGCAC Goals and Implementation Strategies

Building on the past commitments of the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition (MGCAC), the Executive Board has developed a series of goals, priorities, and implementation strategies for the 2022 calendar year, based on the results of a planning session on December 8, 2021. MGCAC member governments are encouraged to proactively budget for projects that will support these four goals. As local projects are identified that align with each goal, the MGCAC can apply for federal funding to undertake said projects.

## Goal #1: Improve Readiness for Electric Vehicle Transitions

- Create a brand for this initiative (Example: "Charge Forward Middle Georgia")
- Partner with Georgia Power & EMCs to cross-promote incentives for installation of chargers
- Further develop and refine an EV deployment strategy for Middle Georgia
- Apply for federal transportation grant funding to install EV charging infrastructure, and leverage the MGCAC Clean Air Incentives Grants to help match funding for new federal grants
- Provide technical resources and identify financial resources for local governments and school systems interested in converting fleets and machinery to EVs and other clean alternative fuels

## Goal #2: Expand Middle Georgia Solar Programs

- Pursue SolSmart recognition for Middle Georgia region
- Assist cities and counties with enactment of Model Solar Ordinance, and partner to provide training opportunities on best practices for solar permitting and inspections
- Support education and workforce development related to the solar industry
- Identify next signature project opportunity for large-scale solar development, and apply for funding through the Rural Energy Pilot Program ($10M allocation of USDA funding)
- Implement new Solar Energy Procurement Agreements (SEPAs) to install solar panels on rooftops and canopies for schools and local government facilities
- Focus on industry partnerships for new potential solar installations
- Develop annual targets for new solar installed capacity within the region
- Explore research partnerships to deploy additional energy storage technologies

## Goal #3: Undertake Projects for Green, Efficient, and Healthy Buildings

- Continue technical assistance for energy savings audits and HVAC system improvements on public buildings and encourage retrofits of outdated lighting and building mechanical systems

## Goal #4: Support Transit and Smart Growth Planning to Improve Air Quality

- Continue financial partnership with the I-75 Central Corridor Coalition (I-75 CCC) as a model for Smart Growth potential in Georgia
- Utilize data from the EPA GLIMPSE model to highlight the benefits of new mass transit systems and smart growth development patterns within the I-75 Central Corridor
- Support efforts of the I-75 CCC to develop passenger rail from Hartsfield to Robins AFB

## Goal #5: Tell the Story of 20 Years of the MGCAC

- Identify metrics on NOx reduction, cost savings, energy savings, and Ozone/PM2.5 measures
- Develop a report that can be shared to highlight our strategies and successes
- Identify new "good news" stories and share these with the press monthly
- Work with Middle Georgia Innovation Project and Living in Middle Georgia Initiative to market our environment as why Middle Georgia is a great place to live