Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt Governor

Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

Atif Chaudhry
Secretary

Nelson E. Reichart
Deputy Secretary

OFFICE OF DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, & ENERGY

Maryland Green Purchasing Committee Meeting

Thursday Feb 9, 2023, 10:00 A.M.
Virtually Held

Purpose: Quarterly Meeting of the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee (GPC)
Attendees:

Atif Chaudhry, DGS (Chair)
Emily Soontornsaratool, DGS*
Kshirajaa Ramesh, DGS**
Sam Linton, DGS**
Nina Baxter, Towson University
Franklin A. Bridge, DPSCS
Deborah Cook-Slade, DHS
Nicole Copeland, DPSCS
Paul Dickman, DHCD
Dinesh Gandhi, MDE
Monica Hariri, MDH
Thomas Hickey, USM*
Carroll Hicks, MDTA
Rod Johnson, DGS
Joanna Kille, STO*
Brenda Lee, DOC
Edward Lukemire, MDOT*
Luis Luna, DGS
Sabrina Malloy, DHS
Shannon McDonald, MDE
Tanya Mekeal, State Treasurer's Office
Victoria Nellis, Judiciary
Cindy Osorto, MDE
Joana Pei, DPSCS
Falena Robinson, DHS
Marsha Rowe, STO
Amanda Sadler, DHCD
Xylina Sanders, DPSCS
Martha Shrader, UMD College Park
David St. Jean, DGS
Carla Thompson, DoIT
Henry ThorStraten, DHS
Candace Ward, DoIT
Patricia Watson, Towson University
Yolanda Waugh, DHS
Marie Weber, Towson University
Akia Wheeler, MDH
Debbie Groat, Baltimore County
Stuart Kaplow, Green Building Council
Richard Keller, Baltimore County
Arhea Lazzelle, BISM
Joanna Pi-Sunyer, Baltimore City
Glenn Roscoe, Morgan State University

* Designee

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Minutes:

I. Welcome and Introductions – provided by Emily Soontornsaratool

- Emily welcomed Committee members and attendees and reviewed virtual meeting logistics. Emily introduced the new DGS Secretary, Atif Chaudhry, to the group. Atif thanked all the attendees for their efforts and expressed his support for green purchasing initiatives.

- Approval of Meeting Minutes
  - Thomas Hickey motioned to approve meeting minutes. Matthew Smith seconded the motion, and the meeting minutes were approved.

II. GPC Business – provided by Emily Soontornsaratool

- Committee Protocols and Expectations
  - The GPC must have a designee for the agencies listed in State Finance and Procurement Article §14–410.
  - The Department of General Services shall serve as chair and is responsible for staffing the committee.
- Current Membership
  - The vacancies to be filled with agency designees are the Department of Education, Department of Information Technology, and the Department of Natural Resources.
  - The Department of General Services will be issuing letters to the head of each statutory agency. This letter will state the designee that is currently listed and ask to confirm if this is correct or requires an update.
- GPC Membership
  - Designee – A position that may be appointed by their agency Secretary. Designees are the main point of contact for coordinating their agency's feedback and are involved with voting for the purpose of approving

specifications produced by the GPC staff. Meeting attendance for Designees is required.

- Participant – A position that is not a voting member of the Committee but may optionally attend meetings and provide feedback.
    - Emily thanked participants of the Committee for their involvement and mentioned that the sustainability expertise of the environmental agencies has been very helpful.
- Staff – A position provided by DGS that coordinates all the functions of the GPC.

- GPC Responsibilities
    - Promote sustainable purchasing.
    - Education and training.
    - Develop and implement state policies, programs, best practices, and regulations.
    - Publish environmentally preferable specifications.
    - Develop a framework for State agencies to report green purchasing data.
    - Annually report the State's progress in sustainable procurement.
- GPC Designee Expectations
    - Designees are required to attend GPC meetings and working meetings, serve as their agency liaison and for providing feedback and expertise, participate in subcommittee meetings, and coordinate with their agency's participants and reporting designee.
        - Emily mentioned that sub-committees have not been established in the past few years; this topic can be up for future discussion.

III. FY 2022 Year in Review – provided by Kshirajaa Ramesh

- Green Purchasing Annual Report
- Total Green Spend
    - The State of Maryland spent $49,983,826 on environmentally preferable products and services in the fiscal year of 2022, verified by the Green Purchasing Committee. The total green spend consisted of procurements on statewide and agency level contracts, renewable energy, electric vehicles, and EV charging infrastructure. To track what product categories, the State allocates their spend, it has been broken down by the targeted commodities (construction & maintenance, electronic & IT products, food service ware, janitorial supplies, lighting products, office supplies, electric vehicles, EV charging infrastructure, and renewable energy) in the annual report.
- Impact of Benefits
    - The GPC was able to quantify the environmental, economic, and social impacts of Maryland's green spend:
        - $3,008,973 cost savings.
            i. Kshirajaa mentioned this was due to purchasing more energy efficient electronic and IT products.
        - 2,207,080 tons of CO2e avoided.
        - 41 GWh of electricity saved.
        - 15,303 tons of material conserved.
        - 30,656,142 gallons of water conserved.
        - 633 tons of waste avoided.
        - 2,771 tons of pollution reduced.

These benefits were broken down by specific product categories to calculate the cost savings, pollution and emissions reduction, and materials conserved for buying the following products:

green IT products, LED lighting, electric vehicles, and high yield & remanufactured toner cartridges, recycled paper, recycled non-paper products, and renewable energy.

- Kshirajaa invited attendees to contact her if they had questions regarding the methodology for calculating the benefits.
- An attendee asked what products fall under the category of construction and maintenance. Kshirajaa replied that pipes, bolts, HVAC systems, and other products and services are used to maintain State buildings. Paints and coatings are separated from construction and maintenance in the reporting template. The GPC provides guidance on agency reporting that explains the different commodities that are tracked in green purchasing reports.

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
  - KPIs were included in the GPC annual report for the first time. They were referenced with the UN Sustainability Goals to measure the State's progress in comparison to the international standards of sustainability. These indicators were separated into program and product focused goals that quantified several aspects of the program's goals.
    - Kshirajaa thanked Hilal Efe for the help in developing the KPIs that are most relevant to green purchasing.
    - Emily thanked Kshirajaa for her dedicated efforts to quantify the benefits. She mentioned the importance of having numbers to show why sustainable purchasing matters and where it can improve.

IV. FY 2023 Action Plan – provided by Kshirajaa Ramesh and Sam Linton

The GPC has seven goals for FY 2023:

1. Continue to build a robust library of specifications.
2. Communicate the benefits of green purchasing.
3. Expand training and learning opportunities.
4. Recognize agencies for their green purchasing successes.
5. Simplify the green purchasing process for procurement staff and purchasers.
6. Promote the development of recycled content markets.
7. Continue to engage and support vendors to increase awareness and compliance.

- Year to Date Progress – provided by Kshirajaa Ramesh
  - Specifications
    - EV Charging Infrastructure (update)
    - Office Supplies (new)
    - Flooring & Adhesives (update)
    - Electronics & IT (update)
    - Landscaping Plants (update)

    The GPC continues to update specifications to ensure that it is consistent and references new legislation.
  - New Data Points for Environmental Benefits
    - Pollution reductions in relation to EV charging stations. These calculations were aided by the Maryland Department of Environment.
      i. This data is under the assumption of a ten-year life cycle of an electric vehicle.

        - GHG reductions, electricity savings, and material conservation from buying products with recycled content.
    - Procurement Integration
        - The GPC specifications are now linked with the Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) in Maryland's online procurement tool, eMMA. Procurement Officers will be able to find the product categories in their contract that are covered by GPC specifications. This integration is a step forward in automating the process of implementing environmentally preferable specifications for State procurement.
    - Vendor Engagement
        - The GPC staff held meetings with three Statewide vendors to provide support, promote their green products, and ensure environmental compliance.
- Upcoming Projects – provided by Sam Linton
    - Vendor Engagement Phase 2
        - In FY 2022, over seventeen hours was delegated to vendor engagement which consisted of ten vendor one-on-one sessions. The GPC coordinated with vendors to develop green purchasing guides that identify the green products available on their website.
            i. Sam asked the attendees to provide feedback on what resources besides green purchasing guides would be useful for agencies and purchasers to have when searching for or buying green products.
    - Green Purchasing Specialization (GPS)
        - The GPS is an added certification for Certified Maryland Procurement Officer (CMPO). This is the second year the GPS

module will be held. The course registration will be available in April, and the second cycle will begin in June. There are expected to be twenty-five to thirty students to enroll.

- Specifications

  There are four upcoming specifications that will be put forward for Committee vote and approval.

  - Landscaping Supplies:

    i. Covers requirements for several common landscaping materials (compost, mulch, fertilizer, pesticides, hoses, plastic lumber, garden edging).

    ii. Compost and fertilizer must be OMRI listed or STA certified.

    iii. Recycled content percentage requirements for plastic landscaping materials.

    iv. Environmentally preferable attributes section for powered landscaping equipment, mulch, and other soil amendments.

  - Landscaping Services:

    i. Covers requirements for several types of landscaping services, including plant selection and installation, fertilizer application, groundskeeping and maintenance, irrigation, and landscape design.

    ii. Includes a list of landscaping certifications for contractors and on-site supervisors that are environmentally preferred.

  - Integrated Pest Management:

i. Includes requirements for site preparation, pesticide usage and application rates, and pest monitoring and control strategies.

- Joanna Kille of the State Treasurer's Office stated the Department of Agriculture has statutory authority over integrated pest management, and offered to send the regulatory requirements section on their website related to IPM. Kshirajaa said the IPM specification is in the initial stages of development, and the GPC staff intends to consult with MDA. Shannon McDonald of the Department of the Environment added that MDE's involvement with IPM is setting requirements for pesticide application near waterways. These typically are done when the State Highway Administration applies for permits to use pesticides on their projects.
- Kshirajaa mentioned that once the drafts of specifications are shared, it can be reviewed and discussed at the next GPC working meeting in April. Emily stated depending on the feedback they receive on the specifications and the changes made, they will decide if it's acceptable to put for a vote to approve at the next quarterly meeting in May.

- Safer Sealants:

i. Requires an update in response to HB 133, prohibiting the selling, supplying, and soliciting of sealants with a PAH concentration greater than 0.1%.

ii. Effective October 1, 2023, violators will be subject to a $2,500 fine for each offense.

- Low Carbon Concrete
  - Following the Green Building Council report that set limits for Average Global Warming Potential (GWP) in ready-mix concrete products, the GPC intends to contact manufacturers for Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) and analyze them in comparison to the averages in the report.
    - i. Stuart Kaplow, Acting Chair of the Green Building Council added that requesting EPDs is a good idea to pursue, however the availability of EPDs are still minimal. Many manufacturers are in the process of developing EPDs but the timeline for completing them is uncertain.
    - ii. Kshirajaa asked Stuart to estimate a timeline for the widespread introduction of EPDs in Maryland. Stuart answered saying he does not have enough information to give an exact estimate, and the timeline may vary depending if legislation passed in the future will decide to dismiss the use of EPDs and make GWP thresholds to be the mandatory requirement for concrete.
- On-Demand Vendor Training Videos
  - Following the feedback given from Maryland's statewide vendors, the GPC intends to provide on-demand training videos to vendors in order to increase their engagement and awareness on sustainable purchasing, and to promote their green products. The information in these presentations will include:
    - i. Green Purchasing definitions

ii. Basic vocabulary on climate change

iii. Environmental certifications

iv. Green Purchasing in relation to state operations

v. Identifying Maryland's green standards

vi. Green Purchasing guides

V. Legislative Update – provided by Emily Soontornsaratool

- HB 31 – Environment – Products and Packaging – Labeling, Marketing, and Advertising for Recycling.
  - This bill establishes new labeling requirements for plastic materials by prohibiting the recycling symbol labeled on non-recyclable material.
    - Emily said it would provide clarity and prevent greenwashing by giving labeling standards that properly specify the product material. She added that the possible next steps could be sending a letter of information for this bill.
    - Thomas Hickey of the University System of Maryland asked if there was any direction from the Secretary about letters of recommendation that can support or oppose legislation. Emily answered saying she will check with the legislative staff on this matter.
- HB 284 – Environment – Reducing Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility (EPR)
  - Requires MDE to conduct a recycling needs assessment every ten years.
  - Producers must submit a recycling plan for packaging material to MDE for evaluation by April 1, 2026.
    - Richard Keller gave remarks that the Maryland Recycling Network (MRN) has been analyzing this bill extensively in the past. There were several questions to be addressed before the bill passes. Their primary recommendation is to conduct the needs assessment

first, and consider EPR. Emily asked if MRN will be submitting written testimony, and Richard said yes. Emily added this bill will be monitored by the GPC as well.

- HB 342 – Environment - Plastic Products - Post Consumer Recycled Content (PCRC) Program
  - The program shall be developed by MDE, covering PCRC requirements for several single-use products that must be verified by a third-party certification.
    - Kshirajaa added that the PCRC requirements vary by the product category.
  - Requires a registration fee for all plastic producers in the state that is proportional to the weight of plastic sold by that entity in Maryland.
    - Rod Johnson of DGS asked for clarity on who identifies producers and added that many plastic producers are not local to Maryland. Shannon McDonald replied saying the entity that created the product is the one responsible for reporting recycled content. She mentions the State is required by law to develop the regional market for plastics recycling and remanufacturing.
    - Richard Keller of Baltimore County asked how many producers this affects and how it applies to plastics coming out of the State. Kshirajaa added that this bill applies to plastic products sold in the State as well.
- HB 261 – Public Projects - Global Warming Potential of Materials (Buy Clean Maryland Act)
  - Requires DGS to set GWP limits for concrete and issue specifications that are on the industry average of that material.
  - Bidders must submit EPDs for evaluation to be awarded the contract.
    - David St. Jean of DGS added that this bill is now limited to concrete only.

- HB 586 – State Procurement - Purchasing Preferences - Compost, Mulch, and Soil Amendments
    - Requires the State to give preference to soil amendments produced from municipal solid waste, sludge, food waste, yard waste, and clean wood waste.
    - Products will be considered reasonably priced if they do not exceed 10% above the price of a product derived from virgin material.
        - Kshirajaa stated that there are human health effects when using municipal solid waste and sludge as soil amendments. The amount of PFAS, heavy metals, and microplastics found in these materials should be considered.
        - Eddie Lukemire of the Department of Transportation mentioned that MDOT worked on a document in coordination with MDE for reusing dredged materials by category and location for use. These materials are blended and assessed prior to being applied on State projects. He shared the guidance document for these projects done in the past.

VI. Open Discussion

- Paddy Watson of Towson University asked for any video training provided by the GPC to be shared with purchasers and procurement officers in her department. Emily said yes, they are available on the Maryland Green Purchasing website in the purchaser training section, and they intend to continue these training sessions. Paddy followed by asking if the GPC had a methodology for calculating environmental benefits. Kshirajaa answered that the methodology is linked at the bottom of the FY2022 Green Purchasing Annual Report.

- Eddie asked the GPC to notify the designees prior to sending letters to the agency Secretary. Emily agreed to give agency designees notice.

- Shannon asked if GPC staff had considered doing specifications relative to banning plastic bags and totes and giving preference to other alternatives with

recycled content. Emily replied saying the GPC has considered developing a specification for event giveaways and tote bags may be included.

VII. Upcoming Events

- Working Meeting: April 13, 2023, 1:00-3:00
- Quarterly Meeting: May 11, 2023, 10:00-12:00
- Working Meeting: July 13, 2023, 1:00-3:00
- Quarterly Meeting: August 10, 2023, 10:00-12:00

VIII. Conclude

- Emily and Kshirajaa thanked all the attendees and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sam Linton,
Staff, MD Green Purchasing Committee

Kshirajaa Ramesh
Staff, MD Green Purchasing Committee

Emily Soontornsaratool
Designee, MD Green Purchasing Committee