

**EPA Local Government Advisory Committee**  
Summary of Public Meeting held on January 10, 2025

3:00 pm

**Call to Order**

*Frank Sylvester, Designated Federal Officer*

LGAC DFO Frank Sylvester opened the meeting and welcomed all who were present, in-person and virtually. This was followed by a rollcall of LGAC members and welcoming of non-members and guests who were present.

**Welcoming Remarks**

*LGAC Chair Leirion Gaylor Baird, Mayor of Lincoln, Nebraska*

Welcoming remarks were then provided by The Honorable Leirion Gaylor Baird. Mayor Gaylor Baird welcomed everyone for joining and she noted the unique position the committee is in to take a moment to both reflect on work done in the past, namely recommendations made to the EPA over the last handful of years, and to look forward to the new presidential administration about to begin. Mayor Gaylor Baird noted the committee's work on environmental justice, PFAS, climate, and EPA implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. She reflected on the committee's consistent advocacy for stronger partnerships between EPA and local governments and for continued technical and financial assistance to meet communities where they are. She also took some time to thank outgoing members with deep appreciation for their skills, expertise, and camaraderie. Lastly, Mayor Gaylor Baird informed the committee that she'd continue on in her role as committee chair until the new administration identifies a new chair and vice-chair at which point she'll transition to a new role as immediate past chair.

**Message from EPA**

*Michelle Marchello, Senior Advisor for State and Local Relations*

Marchello thanked Chair Gaylor Baird for all her efforts and involvement leading the committee and then turned to thank the entire committee for their tremendous work over the last several years. She noted how impactful the feedback has been to the Biden Administration and how the LGAC members were involved and engaged right from the start of much of the transformative work EPA undertook recently, from environmental justice, PFAS, and infrastructure. She also noted a few items related to upcoming transitions. First, Marchello noted the regular annual process of new membership is almost complete and so some existing members will roll off the committee and new ones will join. Then, Marchello noted that acting designated federal officer (DFO) Frank Sylvester would be ending his assignment on January 17, and Paige Lieberman would return to her role as DFO.

2:15

**Presidential Transition – Letter to Incoming Administration**

*Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird, LGAC Chair*

Chair Mayor Gaylor Baird then turned the meeting's attention to the topic of communicating and reaching out to the incoming Trump Administration. She noted that the topic of drafting a letter to the new administration was discussed at the last public meeting in late September. She informed the committee that a few members, including the executive committee, drafted a letter to President Trump's EPA Administrator nominee, Lee Zeldin, which was attached to the day's meeting. Mayor Gaylor Baird gave a brief summary of the letter's contents, pointing out that it congratulates Mr. Zeldin on his appointment, provides an overview of the LGAC and the value of the advice it provides and how it can, and does, help make federal environmental policies work at the local level. She also noted that the letter highlights a few consistent themes from recent LGAC recommendations including continued infrastructure funding and technical assistance resources, improving efficiency, eliminating waste, and maintaining affordability.

LGAC member County Attorney Christian Menefee, of Harris County, Texas, spoke in favor of the draft letter and said he thought the letter echoed his own willingness and eagerness to work with the incoming administration. LGAC members Mayor Mary Lou Pauly, of Issaquah, Washington, and Director Gary Brown of Detroit, Michigan also expressed support for the letter's tone and content.

DFO Frank Sylvester then facilitated a vote by the committee and all present were in favor of finalizing the letter.

2:40

#### **Updates from the Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee**

*The Hon. Supervisor Ann Mallek and Councilmember Hattie Portis-Jones, co-chairs;*

Next on the agenda, Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee (SCAS) co-chairs Supervisor Ann Mallek and Councilmember Hattie Portis-Jones provided a quick overview of the SCAS report on the most pressing environmental priorities for small towns. Councilmember Portis-Jones summarized the four key issues identified in the report: aging infrastructure, access and affordability to necessary services and utilities, resources for technical assistance, and increased collaboration between smaller municipalities and federal and state governments. Councilmember Portis-Jones and Supervisor Mallek pointed out the similarities between many of the issues raised in the LGAC letter. The SCAS report will be attached to the LGAC's letter.

2:45

#### **Public Comment**

Next, DFO Frank Sylvester opened the meeting for comment from the public. The committee was happy to welcome comments from none other than Lucy Vinis, who had just retired as mayor of Eugene, Oregon, and served as the LGAC's vice-chair until she left office on January 2, 2025. Vinis expressed her thanks to everyone on the committee for their collegiality and efforts not just on the transition letter but on recommendations made over the last few years. Returning DFO Paige Lieberman noted to members that the group's final climate and resiliency resource produced by the LGAC's Climate Workgroup is now available on the EPA's website (<https://www.epa.gov/ocir/epa-state-and-local-governments>).

3:00 pm

#### **Meeting Close**

*Frank Sylvester, Designated Federal Officer*

Frank Sylvester then officially closed the meeting.