

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, January 07, 2010
H-GAC Conference Room A
3555 Timmons Lane, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77027

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dana Blume	<i>Edmund J. Petry (Alternate for Kimberly Slaughter)</i>
Patrick Buzbee (Via Phone)	Jeff Suggs (Via Phone)
Elena Craft (Via Phone)	Mathew Tejada (Via Phone)
Catarina Cron	<i>Melanie Oldham (Alternate for Mathew Tejada)</i>
Dan Hoyt	Beth Whitehead
Mark McClelland	Paulette Wolfson
Stuart Mueller	Julie Woodard
Cynthia Redwine (Via Phone)	
Ron Schultz (Via Phone)	

STAFF PRESENT:

Shelley Whitworth (H-GAC)	Carl Young (EPA) (Via Phone)
Lola Brown (TCEQ) (Via Phone)	Lily Wells (Port of Houston Authority) (Via Phone)
Ben Finley (H-GAC)	Diana Sullivan (TCEQ) (Via Phone)
Lauren Hoff-Ovshak (H-GAC)	
Crystal Spencer (H-GAC)	

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Craig Beskid	Matthew Kuryla
Laura Blackburn	Robert Lanham
Elvia R. Cardinal	Snehal Patel

CALL TO ORDER:

1. Ms. Paulette Wolfson called the meeting to order at 2:07 P.M. and welcomed attending members.
2. Approval of the December 03, 2009 meeting summary.
 - a. The meeting summary was approved with no amendments.

AGENCY REPORTS:

1. TCEQ Update – Ms. Lola Brown

a. PM_{2.5} Designation

The TCEQ submitted the designation recommendation that Harris County remain in attainment for the PM_{2.5} standard to the Governor on January 5, 2010. The letter to the Governor and other related documents are posted on the SIP Hot Topics web page at:
<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/air/sip/Hottop.html>.

b. Federal Clean Air Act Section 185 Comment Period Extension

The comment period regarding proposed rule language to implement the Federal Clean Air Act Section 185 has been extended two weeks to Monday, January 25, 2010. EPA guidance issued

on the Section 185 rule will be posted at:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/implementation/air/industei/psei/sipsection185.html>.

c. TCEQ Rulemaking Hearings

TCEQ will host two rulemaking hearings at H-GAC on January 19, 2010:

- i. House Bill 1526 Supplemental Leak Detection, at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room B
- ii. Fugitive Emission Leak Detection and Repair (LDAR) Alternative Work Practice, at 2:00 p.m. in Conference Room A

A complete list of hearings is posted at: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/rules/hearings.html>.

2. EPA Update – Mr. Carl Young

a. Reconsideration of the 2008 Ground-level Ozone Standard

On January 7 EPA announced that it is proposing to strengthen the 8-hour “primary” ground-level ozone standard, which protects public health, at a level between 60 and 70 parts per billion (ppb). The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee recommended these ranges. In 2008 EPA lowered the 8-hour ozone standard to 75 ppb.

EPA is also proposing to set a separate “secondary” standard to protect the environment, especially plants and trees. This seasonal standard is designed to protect plants and trees from damage occurring from repeated ozone exposure, which can reduce tree growth, damage leaves, and increase susceptibility to disease.

EPA will take public comment for 60 days after the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register, and will hold a public hearing on the proposal in Houston on Feb. 2, 2010 (Moody Ballroom of the Hilton Houston Hobby Airport). More information may be found at www.epa.gov/groundlevelozone.

b. Greenhouse Gas Findings Notice

On December 15 EPA published the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in the Federal Register.

EPA made two distinct findings regarding greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act:

- i. *Endangerment Finding*
EPA found that the current and projected concentrations of the mix of six key GHGs – carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆) – in the atmosphere threaten public health and welfare.
- ii. *Cause or Contribute Finding*
EPA found that the combined emissions of the well-mixed greenhouse gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare.

More detailed information including the Technical Support Document, Response to Comments and a Question and Answer document are at: www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html .

c. Training on the Greenhouse Gas Mandatory Reporting Rule

On January 28, 2010 at the Marriott Hotel-Hobby Airport there will be a one-day training session about the National Greenhouse Gas Mandatory Reporting Rule.

The training will focus on the regulation’s general provisions, and reporting for stationary fuel combustion, electricity generation, cement production, and municipal landfills. The training will be held from approximately 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with registration beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Attendance for this training is limited to approximately 150 individuals. To register for the EPA session go to the website: www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/training.html page down to "Schedule" and click on "Register". Also at this website is information for webinars and presentations on greenhouse gas emissions reporting.

Additionally, on January 27, 2010 at the Marriott Hotel-Hobby Airport there will be a separate advanced level training session on greenhouse gas reporting for petrochemical production, refineries, and petroleum products. This training is being held in cooperation with the National Petrochemical and Refiners Association. There is a fee for this training, and a separate registration is required. Registration for the January 27 meeting is through the National Petrochemical and Refiners Association website at: www.npra.org/forms/MeetingCalendar/.

d. 185 Fee Guidance

On January 5, 2010 EPA issued guidance on developing Clean Air Act section 185 fee programs for the 1-hour ozone standard. Clean Air Act section 185 calls for the State Implementation Plan in severe and above ozone nonattainment areas to include fee collection from major stationary emission sources if the area fails to attain the ozone standard by its attainment date. The guidance discusses:

- i. The Clean Air Act section 185 fee program;
- ii. A possible equivalent alternative program; and
- iii. Where a fee program might no longer be required

3. Regional Ozone Update – Ms. Diana Sullivan

(Please refer to handout.)

a. 8 Hour Ozone Standards

The Houston area had 28 days of exceeding 8 hour ozone standard at regulatory stations. An additional four days of exceeding were observed in the non-regulatory stations.

b. 1 Hour Ozone Standards

The Houston area had four days exceeding the 1 hour ozone standard at regulatory stations. Two additional days of exceedences were observed at non regulatory stations.

c. Comparisons

The California south coast area observed 116 days exceeding the 8 hour standards and the 1 hour standard for 2009.

PRESENTATIONS:

No presentation was given.

ACTION ITEMS

(Please refer to handout.)

1. Vote on Recommending H-GAC Board of Directors to Submit Comments on National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) – Mr. Dan Hoyt

- a. Ms. Paulette Wolfson began this Action Item with a briefing; stating that the next RAQPC meeting will have a presentation from Mr. Steve Smith from HRM providing an air quality monitoring update in detail.
- b. Mr. Dan Hoyt gave a brief background on how the subcommittee arrived with the comment background paper and letter. The main issue of discussion regarding this action item was the agreement of recommending a specific concentration limit or a new standard that should be adopted within the suggested range of 50 ppb to 100 ppb.

- c. The revisions made to the comment supporting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) are as follows:
 - i. The hourly NAAQS for SO₂ should be revised as proposed by EPA to establish a 1-hour standard of between 50 and 100 ppb to protect the public health.
 - ii. A portion of monitors should be located or relocated to sites of expected maximum concentrations of SO₂ as determined by the emissions inventory and other data sources.
- d. A discussion followed regarding proposing to the H-GAC Board wither to endorse the proposed range, or to endorse the lower end of the range (50 ppb) to better protect the public.
 - i. Some members believe that not recommended a specific number weakens H-GAC's endorsement to the point where a comment letter is no longer needed. Other members expounded that it is important that the standard is most protective of human health, and therefore the lowest range of the proposed range is appropriate.
 - ii. Other members maintained that the proposed range is currently within the range that protects human health, as understood by the EPA. Not enough scientific evidence was offered at RAQPC to justify identifying a number in the range.
 - iii. The RAQPC members were reminded that a consensus should be met for votes of this nature.
- e. The action item to accept recommending H-GAC Board of Directors to submit comments on National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) as revised was motioned, seconded.
- f. The motion passed with one member voting against, favoring a more stringent 50 ppb NAAQS instead of the 50 to 100 ppb range.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Attendance Update – Mr. Ben Finley

The Attendance Update was canceled due to weather advisory concerns.

2. H-GAC Update – Ms. Shelley Whitworth

The RAQPC members were encouraged to review the H-GAC Update highlights lists on the agenda.

3. Outreach Update – Ms. Paulette Wolfson

- a. Mr. Ben Finley will email the new outreach database website address to the RAQPC Committee Members.

4. Reference Guide Update – Ms. Paulette Wolfson

- a. The Reference Guide Draft will soon be ready for review and Mr. Ben Finley will email the website link to RAQPC Committee Members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Acknowledgements:

- a. No public comments available.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Upcoming Events:

- b. No Upcoming Events available.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Requesting Volunteer for Committee – Ms. Paulette Wolfson

- a. EPA will soon to propose a new ozone standard, which will begin a sixty day comment period. Committee volunteers are needed to generate a comment submittal to EPA.

- b. Ms. Catarina Cron volunteered to chair the subcommittee.

1. Discussion on RAQPC Recording and Documentation – Ms. Paulette Wolfson

- a. The RAQPC monthly meetings are audio recorded to support the meeting summaries.

2. The next RAQPC meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2010 at 2:00 P.M.

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.