

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday,
December 07, 2006
H-GAC Conference Room A
3555 Timmons Lane, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77027

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dana Blume, Catarina Cron-Gonzales, Steve Kilpatrick, Robert Lanham, Mark Peak (Phone), Karl Pepple, Edmund Petry, Betin Santos, Adam Smith, and Frances Smith

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Craig Beskid, Alex Cuclis, Delvin Dennis, Dee Ann Haney, Stephen Jovicich, Bud Karachiwala, Matthew Kuryla, Brandt Mannchen, Mark McClelland, Ronald Schultz, Jeff Suggs, G. Michael White, and Beth Whitehead

STAFF PRESENT:

Andrew DeCandis (H-GAC), Dick Flannery (TCEQ), Stephanie Lee, (H-GAC), Graciela Lubertino (H-GAC), Crystal Spencer (H-GAC), Christine Smith (H-GAC), and Shelley Whitworth (H-GAC)

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Catarina Cron-Gonzales called the meeting to order.

APPROVE MEETING SUMMARY

The October 26, 2006 RAQPC meeting summary was not approved due to low attendance and a lack of quorum.

AGENCY REPORTS:

TCEQ UPDATE –Emily Barrett

Ms. Emily Barrett began her update with announcing TCEQ filed backup material on November 21, 2006 for hearing by the TCEQ commissioners on the proposed SIP scheduled for December 13, 2006. The backup material is available online for review. The December 13, 2006 hearing is dedicated to the Rule Packages. If the commissioners approve the proposed SIP, there will be a public comment period lasting until February and the proposal will be published in the Texas Register.

EPA UPDATE – Peggy Wade

Nothing to report from EPA.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

CLEAN SCHOOL BUS RESOLUTION – Andrew DeCandis

Mr. Andrew DeCandis began his discussion by announcing that through the action of the Policy Subcommittee and the Executive Committee action was taken to pass a resolution to request the H-GAC board and TPC legislative committees add the Clean School Bus resolution to their respective legislative packages. This occurred because after the Policy Subcommittee meeting occurred in November, we realized that quick action was needed in order to get the resolution on the legislative slates. The decision was made to invoke the Executive Committee who worked with the H-GAC staff in lieu of a regularly scheduled RAQPC meeting. Mr. DeCandis continued his discussion by explaining the role of the Executive Committee. No questions or comments followed the discussion.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND RAQPC BYLAWS – Andrew DeCandis

Ms. Catarina Cron-Gonzales began the discussion by stating the discussion with the executive committee passing this resolution and the need to clarify the bylaw and the action the committee can take. Mr. Andrew DeCandis continued the discussion by informing the committee that, historically, RAQPC acts on consensus. Ms. Catarina Cron-Gonzales suggested the best thing is to look at the bylaws and it would be helpful to form a subcommittee to review the bylaws and make recommendations regarding the necessary revisions. Ms. Betin Santos discussed the bylaws Article 8 and Article 9 meaning votes are allowed. Also, many of the bylaws are currently in place. Ms. Shelley Whitworth discussed the bylaws, emergency situations, and defined mechanism. In general agreement, the committee needs clarification of the powers in process to the executive committee bylaws. Brief questions and comments followed the discussion.

DATE CHANGE FOR MONTHLY MEETINGS DUE TO TCAWG – Andrew DeCandis

Mr. Andrew DeCandis began his discussion by informing the committee that he received an email from the Texas Clean Air Working Group (TCAWG) stating that their meetings will be moved to the last Thursday of each month. Mr. DeCandis suggested that RAQPC change their meeting date to avoid conflicts with TCAWG's new meeting date. It was agreed that the last Wednesday of the month will be RAQPC's new meeting date.

LOW PRESSURE EVAPORATIVE FUEL TEST FOR TEXAS – Vince Mow

Mr. Vince Mow began his presentation by discussing the low pressure evaporative test and how it would fit into our current emission inspection. ESP is the company developing and releasing the equipment. The tank tester was developed in California which, like Texas, has issues with ozone compliance. The tank tester is capable of much higher levels of accuracy and repeatability than previous versions of this test due to a version of the technology which compensates for variables that have to do with fuel vapor effects and pressure changes. Mr. Mow explained that the reduction of one ton of hydrocarbons reduces carbon dioxides by three tons. Some of the air toxics can contaminate the different compartments of the vehicle and are responsible for some serious illnesses. The risk of exposure to VOCs exists 24 hours per day, not just when the vehicle is running. As a result, studies have shown that the benzene levels inside of homes with an attached garage is equivalent to the benzene level inside automobiles. The California Air Resources Board estimates the low pressure fuel tank test benefit at 14 tons per day of reactive organic gases (ROG) or unburned gasoline by 2010. Mr. Mow continued his presentation by discussing the estimates of emissions benefits throughout Texas, evaporative program economics, and the technical/developmental status of the tester. The committee watched a short video explaining the procedure of the tank tester operation. Mr. Mow outlined the shop investment analysis from the California BAR. The draft specification for the California programs has been completed and released. Mr. Mow concluded his presentation by summarizing the reasons to implement tank testing. No questions or comments followed the discussion.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

H-GAC DIRECTION – Shelley Whitworth

Ms. Shelley Whitworth began her presentation by informing the committee that our Air Quality Leadership Group which consists of elected officials and others from around the region will be meeting on the December 18, 2006. Our Transportation Improvement Program is currently evaluating submitted projects which are funded using federal transportation funds. In October, the H-GAC Board took action on twelve clean vehicle projects. In November, the H-GAC board took action on three pilot transit projects under the CMAQ funds. The Vanpool and NuRide programs are both growing tremendously. Ms. Whitworth stated that they are currently working on improving air quality websites. The air quality staff has met with cooperative purchasing staff to develop some specifications for the purchase of school buses. Additionally, several supplemental environmental program (SEP) funds have arrived at H-GAC to help level off the CMAQ funds.

Ms. Stephanie Lee announced that AERCO is working with the El Paso Corporation to start a private sponsorship. The private sponsorship has developed a package that accepts donations for school buses. They are currently working on an official application with the Greater Houston Partnership. We are moving forward and a lot of great things are happening right now.

Ms. Shelley Whitworth announced that the telework program has an estimated sixteen-hundred participants. No questions or comments followed the presentation.

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – Karl Pepple

Mr. Karl Pepple began his report by informing that the policy subcommittee have meet in November and spent most of the time discussing the diesel school bus issue. Mr. Pepple proposed to cancel the meeting scheduled for December because most have been busy working on SIP-related matters. The next scheduled is January 09, 2007. The committee is open to anyone who wants to participate. No questions or comments followed the discussion.

AIR QUALITY REPORT – Dick Flannery

(Please refer to handout.) Mr. Dick Flannery began his presentation by announcing there have not been any exceeding readings above standards within the last month. Within the HGB region, as of 12/06/2006, there were 42 days exceeding the 8-hour standard and 22 regarding days exceeding the 1-hour standard. The maximum number of days that any one station exceeded the ozone standard is 15 days. No questions or comments followed the discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No comments available.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No announcements available.

NEW BUSINESS:

PROPOSED ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTHS AGENDA:

No proposed items for next month agenda.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, January 31, 2007 starting at 1:30 P.M.

ADJOURN