REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY
Thursday, August 30, 2018 – 2:00 P.M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments
3555 Timmons Lane, 2nd Floor, Houston, Texas 77027 (Meeting Held in Room 2A)

MEMBER PRESENT
City of Houston – Loren Raun
City of Texas City – Gary Scoogg
Greater Houston Partnership – Steven Hansen
Harris County – Ronnie James
Harris County Pollution Control – Bob Allen
Houston Advanced Research Center – Mustapha Beydoun
Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) – Edmund J. Perry

ALTERNATE PRESENT
Associated General Contractors of America – Marc Anderson
Harris County – Matt Van Vleck
Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) – Vincent Sanders
Port Houston – Kenneth Gathright
TxDOT – Houston – Charles U. Airiohuodion

STAFF PRESENT
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Laurie Chandler
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Alan Clark
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Graciela Lubertino
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Patrick Mandapaka
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Karen Owen
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Shelley Whitworth
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality – Lola Brown
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality – Walker Williamson
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Carl Young

BRIEFING
Overview
a. The RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA update, TCEQ update, Regional Air Quality Monitoring update); action items; a series of discussion and information items were delivered; and the meeting concluded with announcements.

b. Go to http://www.h-gac.com/board-of-directors/advisory-committees/regional-air-quality-planning-advisory-committee/meeting-materials.aspx to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. - EPA Update (Carl Young)

ITEM 2B. - TCEQ Update (Lola Brown, Walker Williamson)
TCEQ staff gave updates on various topics including the following highlights: Staff changes, TCEQ Autumn Environmental Conference and Expo, HGB One-hour and 1997 Eight-hour Ozone redesignation and maintenance plan SIP, Infrastructure and Transport SIP revisions for the 2015 Ozone Standard, Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, and Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation trust. The full report is available from the link above.

ITEM 2C. - Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update (Andrew DeCandis)
Since the last meeting in July, there were 10 exceedances of the 2008 75 ppb ozone 8-hour standard—four were in July and the other six were in August. There were 14 exceedances of the 2015 70 ppb 8-hour standard, seven in July and seven in August. The fourth highest design value this year was 88 ppb which was recorded at the Houston Aldine monitor. The current design value is 78 ppb which is at the Houston Aldine monitor as well. In addition to the 8-hour standards, so far in 2018 there have been two exceedances of the one-hour standard which had not occurred for about three years. The Clinton PM 2.5 monthly average was 16.4μg/m³ mostly because of the lingering effects of the African dust.

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ACTION ITEMS
ITEM 3B. - Comment Recommendations for the Draft Texas Volkswagen Settlement Beneficiary Mitigation Plan
(Shelley Whitworth)
Shelley Whitworth discussed the TCEQ draft version of a beneficiary mitigation plan indicating how the agency plans to administer the $209 million Texas allocation of the Volkswagen State Environmental Mitigation Trust that will be distributed within the state over the next decade. TCEQ has indicated the agency intends to use 4% ($8 million) for administration—the agency intends to work directly with applicants to administer project funding; 15% Light-Duty EV Supply Equipment ($31.4 million) to help prepare Texas for increased and sustained use of fuels for electric and hydrogen-hybrid powered vehicles; and 81% ($169.6 million) for Vehicle or Engine Replacement. Of the $169.6 million, TCEQ has indicated it intends to distribute most of the funding to Priority Areas where air quality is closest to the current 2015 ozone standard. Two-thirds of these Priority Area funds will be distributed by population among San Antonio, El Paso, and Beaumont-Port Arthur regions. The remaining one-third of the funding will be divided by population between the Houston-Galveston and Dallas-Fort Worth regions. Furthermore, the TCEQ draft proposal funds government projects at lower levels than allowed by trust. The purpose of the Settlement Trust is to mitigate environmental damage resulting from fraudulent diesel vehicle emissions by Volkswagen diesel engines. Based on the draft plan, H-GAC has developed recommendations to enhance program effectiveness and provide additional emission reduction benefits for the Houston-Galveston region. Recommendations include:
- Disperse state Settlement allocation with a focus on non-attainment and near non-attainment regions and based on the number of affected vehicles found within the region as a fraction of affected vehicles statewide.
- For government recipients, increase the proposed maximum funding percentage from 60% to at least 80%.
- For larger regions, disperse Settlement funds by a single local administrator via third-party contracts and interlocal agreements.

Quorum was not reached for this meeting, so no action was taken.

DISCUSSION ITEMS
ITEM 4A. – Implications of CAFE Standard Rollback on Houston Air Quality (Graciela Lubertino)
Graciela Lubertino led a discussion on the implications of the relaxation of Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards on efficiency rules. When the current CAFE standards took effect, they were designed to bring a large reduction to VOCs. She expressed concern that the rollback of the more stringent standards would affect the State Implementation Plan, which includes emission budget calculations based on the current rules. It was argued that lowered fuel efficiency rules would result in higher emissions. A member provided an explanation regarding fuel economy standards. There are two standards regulated by two federal agencies—emissions pollutants (grams per mile) and fuel economy standards (miles per gallon). To illustrate how the standards are different, the member stated that a car that gets 100 miles per gallon without emissions equipment will emit more VOC and NOx than a car that gets 10 miles per gallon with emissions equipment. It was stressed that it is emissions equipment that treats the what comes out of the combustion chamber before it is emitted from the tail pipe. It was agreed that the more efficient a car the easier it is to reduce emissions.

ITEM 4B. – 2018 PM 2.5 Path Forward Report Review (Andrew DeCandis)
Andrew DeCandis gave a preview of the annual PM 2.5 Path Forward Report. The goal is to seek final RAQPAC approval of the report at the September meeting. The PM 2.5 Report and Advance Program is a voluntary EPA and local government collaboration with the goals to reduce emissions for public health protection (ozone and PM 2.5), position areas to remain in attainment, and direct resources to developing issues. Participant regions commit to the program for five years with the option to extend and must develop and submit annual Path Forward report, which includes background and status for PM2.5 within the region. H-GAC requested to join the program in 2013. In 2014, an initial Path Forward report was drafted and approved by RAQPAC and stakeholders. 2018 marks the fifth Path Forward report drafted. This year, the report contains an overview of the regional air quality, a report on the status of PM2.5 in the region, ongoing initiatives by H-GAC, initiatives by regional stakeholders, and future and upcoming initiatives. The regional PM 2.5 network includes six stations—the oldest ones became operational in 1999 and the most recent one, Houston North Loop, became operational in 2015. Since 2005, the region has shown progress in reducing PM 2.5 concentrations. In 2018, the report includes information received from City of Houston, Harris County, METRO, Port Houston, Port Terminal Rail...
Association and TxDOT. There were significant new additions. Houston Airport Systems provided information on what the agency is doing to improve air quality. There were also additions of bicycle and active transportation projects and initiatives throughout the region.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A. and 5B. (Shelley Whitworth)
Shelley informed members that she will mail out TERP comments discussed in subcommittee to entire RAQPAC membership for additional comments. After the subcommittee met, the State announced the VW Settlement Plan and Shelley will not go to the Board with TERP funding until after the VW Settlement is addressed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A. – Draft VW Settlement Houston Public Meeting
Staff urged members to attend the Draft VW Settlement Houston Public Meeting on September 10, 2018, 2:30 p.m. at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3600 Westcenter Drive, Houston, TX 77042.

ITEM 6B. – Texas Energy Summit
The Texas Energy Summit was previously known as the CATEE Conference. This year the TES will be held at the Houston Galleria Hyatt Regency from September 24 to the 26. There are scholarships available for members of local government. More information and registration can be found at: https://texasenergysummit.com/.

ITEM 6C. – Draft VW Settlement Beneficiary Plan
TCEQ is accepting comments until October 8, 2018.

ITEM 6D. – TCEQ HGB SIP Redesignation Substitute Public Hearing
HGB SIP Redesignation Substitute Public Hearing will be held on October 8, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

Next meeting September 27, 2018.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 3:37 P.M.