REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
Thursday, December 12, 2019 – 2:00 P. M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120, Houston, Texas 77027
(Meeting Held – Second Floor, Agency Conference Room A)

MEMBER PRESENT
City of Houston – Win Colbert
Harris County – Aaron Dunn
Greater Houston Partnership – Kaitlyn Murphy
The Dow Chemical Company – William Nipper
Houston METRO – Edmund Petry
Harris County – Kristen Lee

ALTERNATE PRESENT
American Lung Association – Paulette Wolfson
Harris County – Matt Van Vleck
Houston METRO – Vincent Sanders

STAFF PRESENT
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Alan Rodenstein
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Sandra Holliday
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Gilbert Washington
U.S. EPA – Carl Young
TCEQ – Allison Stokes

BRIEFING
Overview
a. The RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA update, TCEQ update, Regional Air Quality Monitoring update); a series of discussion; 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-material.aspx to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER
ITEM 1A. Introductions
Andrew DeCandis called the meeting to order and members introduced themselves.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summaries (10-31-19)
There were not enough members present to meet quorum. The meeting summary will be revisited for approval at a future meeting.

AGENCY REPORTS
ITEM 2A. EPA Update (Carl Young)
A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee on two topics:

1. EPA action on the Houston Area Redesignation/Maintenance State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision for the Revoked 1-hour and 1997 8-hour Ozone Standards
On May 16 EPA published a proposal to:
   • Determine that the Houston area is continuing to attain the 1979 1-hour and 1997 8-hour ozone air quality standards and has met the Clean Air Act criteria for redesignation.
- Terminate all anti-backsliding obligations for the Houston area for the 1-hour and 1997 ozone standards.
- Approve the plan for maintaining the 1-hour and 1997 ozone standards through 2032 in the Houston area.
- Approve the Severe Ozone Nonattainment Area Failure to Attain Fee SIP revision to address section 185 of the CAA for the 1-hour ozone standard.

EPA is currently working on a final rule responding to the comments received on the proposal. The proposal and comments can be viewed in the regulations.gov website under docket number EPA-R06-OAR-2018-0715.

2. Request for Applications for Diesel Emission Reduction Projects
Nationally, EPA is soliciting applications for projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, especially from fleets operating at goods movements facilities in areas designated as having poor air quality. Applicants may request funding to upgrade or replace diesel-powered buses, trucks, marine engines, locomotives and nonroad equipment with newer, cleaner technologies. Priority for funding will also be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended.

Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through the grants.gov website (www.grants.gov) no later than Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at 10:59 pm (CT) to be considered for funding. Nationally, EPA anticipates awarding approximately $44 million for these projects.

Information webinars are scheduled for Wednesday, December 18 and Tuesday, January 14. More information including details about the webinars and a Q and A document are available at: www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-diesel-national-grants. More information on more information on the National Clean Diesel campaign is available at: www.epa.gov/cleandiesel.

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update (Alison Stokes)
TCEQ staff gave an update on various topics including the following:

1. 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone NAAQS Emissions Inventory (EI) SIP Revision for the HGB, DFW, and Bexar County Nonattainment Areas
   - On November 20, 2019, the commission approved the proposal of the 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone NAAQS EI SIP Revision for the HGB, DFW, and Bexar County Nonattainment Areas (Non-rule Project No. 2019-111-SIP-NR).
   - The proposed SIP revision satisfies the Federal Clean Air Act EI reporting requirements for areas designated as nonattainment for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS. The revision would also include a certification statement to confirm that the emissions statements and nonattainment new source review requirements have been met in these nonattainment areas.
   - The public comment period opened on November 22, 2019 and will close on January 10, 2020, A public hearing on the proposed SIP revision will be held on January 8, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) District Office in Houston. Additional hearings will be held in Arlington on January 7 and in San Antonio on January 9, 2020.

2. Emissions Banking and Trading (EBT)
   - An EBT Seminar will be held on Thursday January 16, 2020 at the TxDOT District Office. The seminar will begin at 10:00 a.m. and is expect to conclude at 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be on your own. Attendance is free and reservations are not required; however, please plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early to sign-in. For questions regarding this event, please contact Melissa Ruano at (512) 239-4496 or melissa.ruano@tceq.texas.gov.
• Allowance trades for 2019 compliance with the Mass Emissions Cap and Trade (MECT) and Highly Reactive Volatile Organic Compounds CAP and Tract (HECT) Programs must be submitted no later than January 30, 2020. Trade requests submitted after this date will not be accepted. Trades must be submitted electronically through the State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System (STEERS) (https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/).

3. 2020 Emissions Inventory Workshop
• Early registration for the 2020 Emissions Inventory Workshop opened on October 29, 2019.
• The workshop will be held on January 30, 2020 at the J.J. Pickle Research Campus in Austin.
• The workshop will cover updates for the 2019 reporting year, Web-EI reporting, applicability requirements, and common emissions sources. There will be a presentation from Emissions Banking and Trading on web submissions for applications.
• Additional information is available on Emissions Inventory Workshop webpage. (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/industrialemissonsinventoryworkshop)

4. Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)
• The Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program (TNGVGP) opened on October 15, 2019 and will remain open for 16 months or until allocated funds have been awarded.
• The Alternative Fueling Facilities Program (AFFP) opened on November 22, 2019. This is a competitive grant round with approximately $12 million in grant funds available. The grant round will remain open until March 18, 2020.
• The Texas Clean School Bus (TCSB) program is scheduled to open in December 2019. This is a state-wide, first-come, first-served grant round with approximately $6.2 million in grant funds available. The grant round will remain open for 12 months or until allocated funds have been awarded.
• Keep updated on all programs by visiting the TERP website at www.terpgrants.org.

5. Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program
• The TxVEMP program opened a grant round for the repower or replacement of refuse vehicles on October 8, 2019. Vehicles eligible for funding in this grant round include the following: garbage trucks, recycling trucks, dump trucks, chipper trucks, street sweepers, and roll-off trucks. Electric and hydrogen infrastructure may also be included in a grant application for charging or refueling all-electric or hydrogen-fuel cell vehicles in the project.
  o Approximately $41 million in grant funds will be available under this round of funding.
  o Eligible projects will be processed for approval on a first-come, first-served basis.
• Visit www.txvwfund.org to stay updated on future grant rounds and to find eligibility requirements, grant materials, and project summary reports.
• Contact TxVEMP staff by phone at (833) 215-TXVW (8989) or by email at VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov.

ITEM 2C. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update (Andrew DeCandis)
Andrew DeCandis gave an update since the last meeting in October, there have been zero exceedances of both the 2008 75 ppb standard as well as the 2015 70ppb standard. At present, our regional design value remains at 81 ppb as measured at the Houston Aldine monitor. I anticipate that this will be our final design value for the year. I anticipate that the final count for one-hour exceedances for 2019 will be limited to two exceedances of the 1-hour standard. One in June and one in August.

Moving on, the PM 2.5 average at the Clinton Road monitor in December was 10.28 ug/m3. Additionally, you can see the monthly average PM 2.5 concentration at the six local regulatory monitors on the next page of the handout.
**ACTION ITEMS**

**ITEM 3A. None**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**ITEM 4A. Continuity and Innovation in CMAQ Commuter Transit and Pilot Programs** (Alan Rodenstein, Houston-Galveston Area Council)

Alan Rodenstein presented on commuter transit pilot project continuity and innovation, a two-track strategy, doing what has been working and trying to do some new things that has been different from the past.

Pilot projects fund operations of transit services up to three years for eighty percent of operating cost. With providers they can supplement the funding after the three years is over. With the federal operating funds, they can use the fair box to be able to fund the services ongoing. This has been very successful in the last ten years. Fort bend and The Woodlands has used this service successfully.

Metro and Regional Transit Systems are comprised of, nine total transit providers, six now provide commuter bus/park and ride, and regional transit is non-metro. The commuter bus service route is flexible transit mode at relatively low cost. In Houston, commuter bus benefits by extensive barrier separated Hov vs Hot network. It will work best for areas of moderate suburban demand and high suburban demand. People will ride commuter transit, it is viewed positively by non-dependent riders.

Under the guidelines of the CMAQ program, Houston Galveston Area Council served as local government with pilot programs since 1999. It was heavily used for regional commuter bus service in the last 15 years. As a non-attainment area, it needs to reduce NOx emissions. Some key problems were mentioned, for regional population growing rapidly and outward. Need to expand issues with growth, no commuter bus expansion in fastest growing areas. The region is falling further behind in transit commuter share. No congestion mitigation and air quality (CMAQ) program funding can be used. There is very little state and local funding that can be accessed. To generate applications, HGAC must work closely with transit agencies and municipalities. Also, develop forward looking concepts in CMAQ and increase revenue by developing outreach and preapplication meetings. Each situation is different, most involve CMAQ funding. All involve coordination with H-GAC and transit providers. Many are innovative and all meet regional needs. The emphasis is on more distant transit services within 25 miles or more.

The demand for commuter bus service is exploding. Conroe entered an intergovernmental agreement with Metro that was implemented on April 1. The Woodlands energy corridor, suburb to suburb service may not begin in 2020. Pearland’s private for-profit commuter transit service started July 8. Fort Bend county has some issues with procurement and getting authorization for vehicles service to downtown Houston should begin in 2021.

The City of Pearland has struggled to establish commuter service in the growing suburban city. The need for the service is undisputed. The financial issues have been challenging. Pearland applied for CMAQ grant but later decided to implement without federal participation.

Fort Bend is the largest suburban county in the region. Currently, there is no commuter service to Downtown Houston. Likely, implementation for new transit is early 2021.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**ITEM 5A. H-GAC Update** (Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC)

There were no updates to be given.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ITEM 6A.**

Sandra Holliday notified the members that Clean Vehicles is looking into off fuel charging stations and starting a campaign to call schools to see if they need assistance in replacement for school buses.
Next meeting will be held on January 30, 2020

**ADJOURNMENT**
Meeting adjourned at 2:52 P.M.