

# **REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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## **MEETING SUMMARY**

Thursday, December 10, 2020 – 10:00 A. M.  
Houston-Galveston Area Council  
Virtual Teams Meeting

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### **MEMBER PRESENT**

City of Houston – Win Colbert  
City of Texas City – Gary Scoggin  
EXXON– Sherman Hampton  
Harris County – Aaron Dunn  
Waller County – Siddarth Rajmohan  
Harris County Pollution Control – Kristen Lee  
Fort Bend County – Joel Patterson  
City of LaPorte– Kristin Gauthier  
Environmental Defense Fund– Grace T. Lewis

### **ALTERNATE PRESENT**

METRO – Vincent Sanders  
TXDOT– Charles Airiohuodion  
EHCMA – Steve Smith  
HARC – Ebrahim Eslami  
Greater Houston Partnership – Steven Will  
Forte Bend County– Joe Carte  
American Lung Association– Paulette Wolfson  
HCPC– Stuart Mueller  
Air Alliance Houston–Harrison Humphries  
American General Contractors of America– Marc Anderson

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Qing Li  
Jackie Ploch  
Bradley Flowers  
Henry Goyette  
Nguyen Ly  
Larry Ogle  
Charles Gagen  
Tracy Hester  
Melanie Magee  
Mike Wilson  
Julie Eldredge

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis  
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carlene Mullins  
Houston -Galveston Area Council–Jamila Owens  
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall  
Houston -Galveston Area Council– Gilbert Washington  
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Sandra Holliday  
Environmental Protection Agency – Carl Young  
TCEQ– Katie Campbell  
TCEQ – Alison Stokes  
TCEQ – Graham Bates  
TERP– Nate Hickman

### **BRIEFING**

#### **Overview**

- a. The RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA update, TCEQ update, TERP Update, Regional Air Quality Monitoring update); 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**

Win Colbert called the meeting to order and members were introduced.

#### **ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summary (10-30-20)**

Meeting summary was approved.

### **AGENCY REPORTS**

#### **ITEM 2A. EPA Update (Carl Young)**

Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee  
December 10, 2020

**A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee on a few topics:**  
**Final Decisions on Review of the Particulate Matter Standards**

EPA reached final decisions for the review of the national ambient air quality standards for particulate matter (PM). EPA is retaining the current PM standards, without revision.

The Federal Register action with the final decisions was signed on December 4, 2020.

A link to the pre-publication manuscript: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-12/documents/frl-10018-11\\_12\\_4\\_2020\\_admin.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-12/documents/frl-10018-11_12_4_2020_admin.pdf)

**Proposal for a Revised Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Update for 2008 Ozone Standard**

In the October 30 Federal Register EPA published a proposal to revise the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) Update to address interstate air quality impacts for the 2008 ozone air quality standard. The proposal responds to a court decision which remanded the 2016 CSAPR Update to EPA for failing to fully eliminate significant contribution to nonattainment and interference with maintenance of the 2008 ozone standard from upwind States to downwind States.

The proposal would further reduce summertime emissions of nitrogen oxides from power plants in 12 states that contribute to downwind ozone problems. Louisiana power plants are included in the proposal because of contribution to ozone problems in the Houston area. The other 11 states are included because of contribution to ozone problems in Connecticut. EPA would also propose to find that the revised CSAPR Update fully addresses the obligation to prohibit Texas emissions which would significantly contribute to nonattainment or interfere with maintenance of the 2008 ozone standard in other States.

The comment period for the proposal closes December 14. More information, including a fact sheet is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/csapr/revised-cross-state-air-pollution-rule-update>

**Celebration of 50 Years of EPA**

On December 2, EPA celebrated 50 years. The first EPA Administrator, William Ruckelshaus, was confirmed by the Senate on December 2, 1970, which is the traditional date EPA uses as the birth of the agency.

**ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update (Graham Bates)**

**TCEQ staff gave an update on the following:**

Rules are being developed in 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 115 to implement reasonable available control technology (RACT) for the upstream segment of the oil and natural gas production industry in the Houston/Galveston/Brazoria and Dallas/Fort Worth ozone nonattainment areas.

Proposal is anticipated at the January 13, 2021 Agenda.

**Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Program and Rollback for Pollution Control Requirements**

On July 15, 2020, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality proposed rulemaking to revise Chapters 17 and 18 for the Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Program to address section 44 of Senate Bill 2, 86th Legislature, and update the Tier I Tables in 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §17.14(a) and §18.25(a). Specifically, the proposed rulemaking would revise the title of 30 TAC Chapter 18 and would update the Tier I Tables based on recommendations and advice provided by the Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee in December 2018 and in December 2019.

Additional information on the proposed rulemaking is available at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/prop.html> (Rule Project Number 2020-031-018-AI).

The rulemaking is scheduled to be considered for adoption by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality on December 16, 2020.

For additional questions or information about the proposed rulemaking, please contact Elizabeth Sartain of the Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Program at [Elizabeth.Sartain@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Sartain@tceq.texas.gov).

### Regional Haze

Members of the Air Quality Planning section held a virtual public hearing for the proposed 2021 Regional Haze SIP Revision (SIP Project No. 2019-112-SIP-NR) on December 8, 2020. The comment period for this SIP revision has been extended till January 8, 2021. If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Earnest of the SIP team at [margaret.earnest@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:margaret.earnest@tceq.texas.gov).

### **ITEM 2C. TERP Update (Nate Hickman)**

**TERP staff gave an update on available TERP programs.**

#### **Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)**

The Emissions Reduction Incentive Grants Program opened on November 12, 2020 and will be accepting applications on a competitive basis until 5 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on January 11, 2021. Approximately \$35.5 million is initially available on a competitive basis to upgrade or replace heavy-duty on-road equipment, non-road equipment, stationary equipment, marine vessels, and locomotives with newer, cleaner models.

The Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive Program remains open with more than 850 grants for electric vehicles still available, and approximately 994 grants for natural gas vehicles still available. The program will remain open until January 7, 2021.

The Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program remains open with approximately \$7 million in remaining grant funds available to replace or upgrade heavy and medium-duty on-road vehicles. The program will remain open until February 26, 2021, or until allocated funds have been awarded.

Keep updated on all programs by visiting the TERP website at [www.terpgrants.org](http://www.terpgrants.org). Questions about any of the TERP programs can be e-mailed to [terp@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:terp@tceq.texas.gov).

#### **Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program**

The TxVEMP program extended the grant round end date for the repower or replacement of class 7 and 8 refuse vehicles from October 8, 2020 to January 27, 2021. Vehicles eligible for funding 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. The Austin area has approximately \$2.8 million in available funding remaining.

Eligible projects will be processed for approval on a first-come, first-served basis. The TxVEMP program opened a grant round for freight vehicles on February 6, 2020. The grant round will close on January 27, 2021. Vehicles eligible for funding in this grant round include class 4 through 7 local freight trucks and class 8 local freight trucks and port drayage trucks that transport freight. 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. The Austin area has approximately \$3.2 million in available funding remaining. Eligible projects will be processed for approval on a first-come, first-served basis. The TxVEMP program opened a grant round for the purchase of Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Level 2 charging stations on September 10, 2020. Eligible projects must provide charging services to public places, workplaces, or multi-unit dwellings.

This grant round will provide up to \$2,500 per ZEV level 2 dual pedestal charging station. The program will remain open until September 9, 2021. This is a statewide program with approximately \$10.5 million in available funding. Eligible projects will be processed for approval on a first-come, first served basis.

Visit [www.txvwfund.org](http://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](mailto:VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov)

## **ITEM 2D. 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 70 ppb standard. At present, the regional design value for our region is 79ppb as measured at the Houston Aldine monitor.

Since were coming up on the end of the year. It seems prudent to take a look at our fourth highest values of the year to see how they compare to previous years. If you look at this year, we had a good year. Our fourth highest value was 75ppb and could be found at the Conroe local station by Deerbrook and Bayland Park monitors at the 73 ppb standard. Our best year was 2014. As far as ozone is concerned this was a good year.

Moving on, the PM 2.5 average at the Clinton Road monitor in November was 9.82 ug/mg3 and so far in December the average has been 9.74. Additionally, you can see the monthly average PM 2.5 concentration at the six local regulatory stations as well as the annual averages for those same six stations between 2001 and present.

In this month report we received an additional three months of data for the Houston North Loop Monitor showing the values coming in line with the rest of the region after the increased concentration at the beginning of the year.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **ITEM 3A. None**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **ITEM 4A.**

Larry Ogle gave an overview to the committee on some of the reasons we use mobile monitoring. Mr. Ogle discussed that it is used for regional investigation. The investigation is done through surveys, to see what is happening to the entire area. The monitoring capabilities are also used for emergencies. Two that were mentioned, ITC Fire, and Hurricane monitoring. The 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature approved almost 1 million in 2019 to update our capabilities. Those that were mentioned, a new rapid survey van, Ultraviolet analyzers, three Nephelometers particular matter monitor, and three meteorological systems for measurements in transit.

Overall, the goal was to expand the number of pollutants, monitor during transit and report results in real time to make decisions if necessary.

### **ITEM 4B.**

Charlie Gagen discussed with the committee members the State of the Air 2020 report. Air quality is a key part of what impacts our lung health. Discussion continued with two pollutants to focus on which are ozone and particle pollution. Each contribute to a variety of health concerns that can shorten life. Also mentioned, reason for the spikes contributes to a lot of wildfires on the west coast. Further discussion detailed which cities were safe and free of pollutants and which cities were most polluted.

In closing, the goal is to set carbon emissions goal, address climate change, with hopes to reduce emissions and bring us all cleaner air.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

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

Staff notified the committee the PM 2.5 report was approved by the EPA.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **ITEM 6A.**

**None**

Next meeting: January 28, 2021

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 11:41A.M.