

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, September 28, 2023 – 10:00 A. M.

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Virtual Teams Meeting

<p><u>MEMBER PRESENT</u> City of Houston – Win Colbert Harris County Pollution Control – Latrice Babin Fort Bend County – Joel Patterson Waller County – Brooke Bacuetes City of Houston – Nguyen Ly Harris County Precinct 2 – Kristen Lee Environmental Defense Fund – Grace Lewis Dow Chemical – Sherman Hampton Baylor College Medicine – Winifred Hamilton American Lung Association – Charlie Gagen ECHMA – Mary Jane Mudd Dow Chemical – Will Nipper</p>	<p><u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> TxDOT – Charles Airiohuodion City of Houston – Darryl Tate Air Alliance Houston– Harrison Humphreys Harris County Pollution Control– Stuart Mueller Houston Advanced Research Center – Ebrahim Eslami METRO –Vincent Sanders Port Houston – Kenneth Gathright</p>
<p><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> Texas A& M University– Ivan Rusyn Texas A& M University – Weihsueh Chiu City of Houston – Hannah Cobb</p>	<p><u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carrie Evans Houston-Galveston Area Council – Caroline Bailey Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ben Finley Houston-Galveston Area Council – Jamila Owens Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ayo Jibowu Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Veronica Waller Houston-Galveston Area Council – Gloria Brown Houston-Galveston Area Council – Qun Zhao Houston-Galveston Area Council – Craig Raborn TCEQ – Vanessa DeArman EPA – Jeffrey Riley TCEQ – Alison Stokes TCEQ – Denine Calvin</p>

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA Update, TCEQ update, and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with information items and no 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. Introduction

Joel Patterson called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summaries (7-27-2023)

Meeting summary approved.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. EPA Update (Jeff Riley)

A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee:

MOVES4 Model Posted on EPA Website

On August 30, 2023, EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) announced the [web posting of MOVES4](#), the latest version of EPA's on-road & non-road mobile source model for estimating air pollution emissions from cars, trucks, motorcycles, and buses, as well as many categories of nonroad equipment. The MOVES4 version captures the benefits from newer promulgated regulations, the latest available vehicle & emissions data, and offers improved functionality – especially for modeling electric vehicles. The MOVES4 software is available for download on the website linked above, as well as associated documents (Questions & Answers, Overview Report, MOVES Policy Guidance, MOVES Technical Guidance, and technical reports documenting data & algorithms used in MOVES4).

EPA published a [September 12 Notice of Availability](#) in the *Federal Register* announcing the availability of MOVES4 for SIP and transportation conformity purposes. The notice of availability established the September 12, 2025, end date for the 24-month MOVES “grace period”, after which the MOVES4 model must be used for conformity analyses.

OTAQ hosted a MOVES4 webinar ([more info](#)) on September 13, 2023, which covered the following:

- Overview of how MOVES4 emission results compare to MOVES3.
- Guidance on how and when to use MOVES4 for SIP development, transportation conformity, and other purposes.
- Information on MOVES4 tools & inputs, including how to update MOVES3 inputs to work with MOVES4.

EPA Initiates New Review of the Ozone NAAQS to Reflect the Latest Science

On August 21, 2023, EPA announced that the reconsideration effort of the Agency's December 2020 decision to retain the 2015 ozone NAAQS would be rolled into a **new review** of the Ozone NAAQS. The EPA Administrator Regan made this decision upon consideration of the advice & recommendations of the independent Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) ozone panel to ensure the ozone standards reflect the most current, relevant science and protect people's health from these harmful pollutants. ([more info](#))

EPA originally targeted December 2023 for completion of the Ozone NAAQS reconsideration effort; this timeline does not apply to the new Ozone NAAQS review. EPA has not yet announced the NAAQS review schedule/milestones, such information will be shared with RAQPAC when it is available.

On August 25, 2023, EPA published a Call for Information in the Federal Register, a request for research studies & published data to inform the Agency's development of a new Integrated Science Assessment for Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants. The Call for Information closes October 24, 2023.

2022-2023 DERA Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity

On August 2, 2023, EPA announced the 2022-2023 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Grants notice of funding opportunity (NOFO). Grants will be awarded to implement cleaner technology projects to reduce emissions nationally from the existing fleet of older diesel engines. The funding opportunity closes December 1, 2023. Subject to availability of funds, the quantity/quality of applications received, and other considerations, EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$115 million in DERA grants funding. ([more info](#))

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update (Vanessa DeArman)

TCEQ staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Attainment Demonstration and Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions

On May 31, 2023, the commission approved the proposal of the executive director's recommended HGB moderate area attainment demonstration and reasonable further progress SIP revisions.

The HGB 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS SIP proposal documents are available at the HGB Latest Ozone Planning Activities webpage.

TCEQ held a public hearing on the proposed SIP revisions in Houston on July 11, 2023, and the public comment period closed on July 17, 2023. TCEQ staff are evaluating comments received during the public comment period.

The HGB moderate area attainment demonstration and reasonable further progress SIP revisions are scheduled for adoption on November 8, 2023.

Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) 2008 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Attainment Demonstration and Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions

TCEQ is currently developing the HGB severe area attainment demonstration and reasonable further progress SIP revisions for the 2008 ozone NAAQS.

TCEQ is planning a public hearing on the proposed SIP revisions in Houston in January 2024. The date and location have not yet been determined.

Quadrennial Review

The TCEQ is conducting a review of agency rules in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). This process is undertaken to comply with statutory requirements at Texas Government Code, Section 2001.039 and the regulations at 1 TAC Chapter 91, Subchapter D. The purpose of rule review is to determine if the need for TCEQ's rules continues to exist and is limited to consideration of its rules for re-adoption, re-adoption with amendments, or repeal every four years. During this review, the commission will assess whether the reasons for initially adopting its rules continue to exist. Recommended changes to the rules in each applicable chapter of the TAC will not be considered for rule amendments as part of this review. Any such changes may be considered in a future rulemaking action by the commission.

To view the TAC chapters the commission is currently taking comment on, please visit the Comment Online with TCEQ Public Comments link on TCEQ's Rules and Rulemaking webpage. Thirty-day public comment periods for the chapters being reviewed open as notices are published in the Texas Register. To view the complete rule review schedule, please visit the View TCEQ's Rule Review Plan link on TCEQ's Rules and Rulemaking webpage.

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update (Andrew DeCandis)

Since our last meeting in July, there have been twenty -three exceedances of the 2008 75 ppb ground-level ozone standard and twenty-seven exceedances of the 2015 70 ppb standard.

So far for 2023, the region's maximum 4th highest value is 90 ppb as measured at the Houston East Monitor. Also, for the year the partial year regional design value for the 2021 through 2023 period is 83 ppb as measured at the Houston Bayland Park monitor followed by 79 ppb at the Houston East Monitor.

Moving on to PM conditions, you can see the annual average concentrations for all the region's regulatory PM 2.5 monitors region going back to 2001 as well as the readings for those same stations over the most recent 12 months.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 3A.

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. *My Eco Reporter: A Prototype for AI-facilitated Community-Based Pollution Reporting* – (Weihsueh, Chiu, and Ivan Rusyn, Texas A& M)

Weihsueh Chiu gave an overview to the committee on the research program which is focused on chemical contamination after disasters. This was a pilot project that was funded through institutional funds to develop a facilitated community. A pollution reporting tool that can supplement the existing types of communications that the public can have with different agencies. Discussion continued with the motivation for this is to bring awareness to the environmental releases. Whether they're intentional or accidental. They can only be noticed by members of the community.

It was further discussed with the infrastructure in place the customization would take weeks to a month. It takes a few months to set up, get the prototype prompts working, then the connections, between the SMS System, the database managing, and the chat TTP API. In terms of the actual infrastructure, the monthly cost is minimal. The setup depends on defining clearly as to what the chat box would be collecting.

In closing, it takes time once it's put in place, making sure it's working properly, and then once you release it, it can be modified, but to maintain it, it's fairly low cost.

ITEM 4B. *Climate Pollution Reduction Act Update (CPRG)* – (Pharr Andrews, H-GAC)

Pharr Andrews gave an update to the members on climate pollution reduction act program some of the benefits of the program and how the region can benefit from implementing this program. Discussion continued with the primary goal for this program is to reduce greenhouse gases while supporting the creation of jobs, delivering cleaner air, and lowering energy costs for families. As well as looking into emissions produced from buildings and energy production industry, agriculture, and waste. The program will be implemented in two phases by the EPA. There are many benefits to incorporating this program in our region. It was further discussed this program will strengthen regional collaborations and help build a platform to have conversations about climate related issues. Also, we can accelerate existing planning efforts by mirroring strategies in this planning process.

In closing, the end is to get ahead so these projects will help to build resiliency in our workforce development and stimulate the economy.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A.

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

None

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: October 26, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:18 A.M.