

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, December 09, 2021 – 10:00 A. M.

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Virtual Teams Meeting

MEMBER PRESENT

American Lung Association – Charlie Gagen
Environmental Defense Fund – Grace Lewis
Fort Bend County – Joel Patterson
Exxon/Mobil – Sherman Hampton
METRO – Edmund Petry
Port Houston – Trae Camble

ALTERNATE PRESENT

Air Alliance Houston – Harrison Humphreys
Port Houston– Kenneth Gathright
Houston Advanced Research Center – Ebrahim Eslami
Harris County Pollution Control – Stuart Mueller
City of Houston – Grace Lewis
City of Houston – Darryl Tate
METRO – Vincent Sanders
TxDOT – Charles Airiohuodion

OTHERS PRESENT

Sophia Guevara
Matt Van Vleck
Teresa Penbrooke
Jeffrey Riley

STAFF PRESENT

Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ben Finley
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Francis Rodriguez
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Gilbert Washington
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carrie Evans
Houston-Galveston Area Council – James Garland
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carlos Lugo
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Mike Burns
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Patrick Mandapaka
Environmental Protection Agency – Carl Young
Environmental Protection Agency – Melanie Magee
TCEQ – Graham Bates
TERP – Nate Hickman

BRIEFING

Overview

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

Grace Lewis called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summary (9-30-21)

Quorum not met.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. EPA Update (Carl Young)

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

Draft Policy Assessment for the Particulate Matter (PM) National Ambient Air Quality Standards

In an October 8 Federal Register notice EPA released for public comment the draft Policy Assessment for the PM national ambient air quality standards. Comments on the draft policy assessment are due December 14, 2021. This policy assessment is part of the process for EPA determining whether to retain or revise the existing PM air quality standards. The Federal Register notice with instructions for submitting comments is available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-10-08/pdf/2021-22067.pdf>.

Reconsideration of the Decision to Retain 2015 Ground-level Ozone Air Quality Standard

EPA established the current standards at a level of 70 parts per billion in 2015 and retained them in 2020. Since then, EPA has received numerous legal challenges to the 2020 decision. On October 29 EPA announced that it will reconsider the 2020 decision to retain 2015 ozone air quality standard. EPA is targeting the end of 2023 to complete this reconsideration. More information about ground-level ozone and the most recent review of the ozone NAAQS is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution>.

EPA Proposal to Reduce Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and other Air Pollutants from the Crude Oil and Natural Gas Source Category

On November 15 EPA published a proposal to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and other air pollutants from the Crude Oil and Natural Gas source category. The proposal covers three distinct groups of actions: • A revision to the new source performance standards (NSPS) for GHGs and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) for the Crude Oil and Natural Gas source category to reflect the Agency's most recent review of the feasibility and cost of reducing emissions. • Proposed emissions guidelines (EG) for states to follow in developing, submitting, and implementing state plans to establish performance standards to limit GHGs from existing sources in the Crude Oil and Natural Gas source category. • Related actions pertaining to the Congressional Review Act disapproval of EPA's September 14, 2020, Policy Rule titled, "Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources Review". Comments must be received on or before January 14, 2022. More information about the proposal on emissions from the Crude Oil and Natural Gas source category is at: <https://www.epa.gov/controlling-air-pollution-oil-and-natural-gas-industry>. Executive Order Catalyzing America's Clean Energy Economy Through Federal Sustainability on December 8 President Biden signed an Executive Order to: • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions across federal operations • Invest in American clean energy industries and manufacturing, and • Create clean, healthy, and resilient communities. A copy of the Executive Order is at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidentialactions/2021/12/08/executive-order-on-catalyzing-clean-energy-industries-and-jobs-through-federal-sustainability/> A press release on the Executive Order is at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefingroom/statements-releases/2021/12/08/fact-sheet-president-biden-signs-executive-order-catalyzing-americas-clean-energy-economy-through-federal-sustainability>

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update (Graham Bates)

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

Senate Bill (SB) 604 Rulemaking □

The Texas Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) program will propose a rulemaking that would implement revisions to Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 504, required by SB 604, 86th Texas Legislature. □ The proposal was considered at the Commission Agenda on November 17, 2021 and is scheduled for a virtual public hearing on January 4, 2022. □ Contact I/M staff by phone at (512) 239-4905 or by email at nicholas.landuyt@tceq.texas.gov.

Point Source Emissions Inventories □

The 2022 Emissions Inventory (EI) Workshop will be hosted online and offered at no cost on January 27, 2022, from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM. □ The half day event will cover updates for the 2021 reporting year, basic terms and concepts, guidance for estimating emissions from equipment leak fugitive emissions sources, and Web-EI reporting. □ Registration is open. Please visit the Emissions Inventory Workshop webpage for registration details and agenda <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/industrialemissionsinventoryworkshop>.

Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee Nominations □

The Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee provides recommendations to the TCEQ on matters relating to use determinations for pollution control property/equipment and the implementation of Texas Tax Code Section 11.31. The advisory committee is made up of members selected to represent the following groups: industry, appraisal districts, taxing units, environmental groups, and members who are not representatives of any of those groups but have substantial technical expertise in pollution control technology and environmental engineering. □ Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee members serve four-year staggered terms, and seven member spots will be vacant after December 31, 2021. The TCEQ accepted applications for potential advisory committee members to fill the following pending vacant spots: three industry representatives, two appraisal district representatives, one taxing unit representative, and one independent technical expert. The TCEQ is considering the nominations received and is planning to present recommendations to the commission on December 15, 2021, Commissioner's Agenda. □ For additional questions or information about the committee, please contact Elizabeth Sartain of the Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Program at Elizabeth.Sartain@tceq.texas.gov.

ITEM 2C. TERP Update (Nate Hickman)

Terp staff gave an update to the members on the following information:

Light Duty Motor Vehicles Purchase Release Incentive Program:

- Rebate of \$2500.00 for eligible with a purchase of an electric vehicle in Texas. Also, up to \$5000.00 on eligible natural gas back on a light duty vehicle in Texas.
- We can offer up to \$2000.00 in grants for electric vehicles and \$1000.00 for natural gas vehicles.

Seaport Rail Yard Emission Reduction Program:

- This program is open for qualified heavy- duty equipment on road trucks, 18-wheeler, drayage equipment that operate around the ports and large rail yards.

Application will be received on a first come first served basis.

Texas Clean School Bus Program:

- Looking for January or February opening date. Will see expanded funding from what we had previously. This is always a highly subscribed program. Funding is based on a first come basis.

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

Since our last meeting in September, there have been three exceedances of the 2008 75 ppb ground-level ozone standard. We had three in October, none in November and December. We had four exceedances of the 2015 70 ppb standard. All four were in October. We have seen none for November and December.

So far this year, the region's maximum 4th highest value is 83 ppb at the Houston Croquet monitor and the design value for the 2019 through 2021 period remains at 70 ppb as measured at the Bayland Park monitoring station.

Moving on, the final PM2.5 average at the Clinton Road monitor in October was 13.72 µg/m³ and so far in November we have seen an average of 10.41. This set of charts as well as all the materials from today's meeting can be found and downloaded from the RAQPAC website

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 3A. (Andrew DeCandis)

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. Assessing Community Health Impacts at Port of Houston (Teresa Penbrooke)

Teresa Penbrooke from GP Red gave an overview of her ongoing work with TTI and the CARTEEH Center to understand how transportation and health issues impact the community of La Porte near the Port of Houston. The focus is on parks, recreation, open space trails and other quality of life amenities and how those things impact community development. In further discussion communication in air quality is one of those aspects. In addition, the focused on smart infrastructure. Especially around hubs. In conclusion, the members were presented with a brief presentation and overview of the work with a short focus group session regarding RAQPAC member's perspectives.

ITEM 4B. Update on the Harris County Community Air Monitoring Program (Matt Van Vleck)

Matt Van Vleck gave an overview to the members on their community air monitoring program. It is referred to as "CAMP." As discussion continued it is designed to measure pollution levels that affect environmental health and public health across Harris County and highlight patterns and trends that may support environmental regulatory activities.

ITEM 4C. Air Quality and the Infrastructure Investment and Job Act (Andrew Candis)

Andrew DeCandis gave an overview to the Stakeholders of the recently passed infrastructure Investment and Job Act.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021:

- Passed House and Senate on November 5, 2021,
- Signed into law on November 15, 2021

Existing Programs:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (\$72B) – Adds electric charging infrastructure and vehicle-to-grid infrastructure to allowable funding
- CMAQ Program (\$13.2B) – Adds micromobility and EVs as eligible projects

- Low/No Program (\$5.25B) – Purchase or lease of zero-emission or low- emission transit buses
- RAISE Grants (\$7.5B) – Surface transportation projects of regional significance
- Port Infrastructure Development Program (\$2.25B) – Newly eligible projects:
 - o Improvements to address sea-level rise, flooding and/or extreme weather
 - o Port electrification
 - o Procuring new equipment
 - o Installing electric vehicle/alternative refueling infrastructure

New Transit/Air Quality Programs:

- Clean School Bus Program (\$5B) – Grants to replace school buses with zero- and low-emissions replacements
- EV Charging Infrastructure (\$5B) – Funds EV infrastructure only
- Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants (\$2.5B) – Promotes public infrastructure deployment for alternative fuels. Funds fueling for both EVSE and alternative fuels
- Healthy Streets Program (\$500M) – Grants to reduce urban heat centers and improve air quality in underserved communities
- Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities (\$400M) – Grants to reduce port-related emissions from idling trucks
- Passenger Ferry Grant Program (\$250M) – Grants to purchase electric or low-emissions ferries

New Alternative Fuel Programs:

• Hydrogen:

- Regional Clean Hydrogen Hub (\$8B) – Develops at least four large-scale hydrogen production and utilization projects across the country
 - o
- Clean Hydrogen Electrolysis Program (\$1B) – Demonstration, commercialization, and deployment of electrolyzer systems
- Clean Hydrogen Manufacturing and Recycling (\$500M) – Supports a clean hydrogen domestic supply chain
- Clean Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap – Directs the development of the first US national strategy to facilitate a clean hydrogen economy

Biodiesel:

- Extended \$1 per gallon tax credit for fuel blenders through 2026
- introduces a new clean fuel tax credit in 2027. Awards credits based on the GHG intensity of fuel

New Climate/GHG Programs:

- Carbon Reduction Program (\$6.4B) – Formula funds provided to states
 - o States must distribute 65% of funds on a per capita basis
 - o Eligible projects:
 - Establishing or operating a traffic monitoring, management, and control facility
 - Public transportation projects
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Advance transportation and congestion management technologies
 - ITS capital improvements and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications equipment
 - Efficient street lighting and traffic control devices
 - Congestion pricing, mode shift, and transportation demand management (TDM)
 - Projects to reduce environmental and community impacts of freight movement
 - Alternative fuel vehicle deployment support

New Climate/GHG Programs:

- Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (\$7.3B) –
- Carbon Utilization Program
- Carbon Capture Technology Program
- Carbon Dioxide Transportation Financing
- Carbon Storage Commercialization
- Carbon Removal – Develops four regional direct air capture projects

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A. H-GAC (Houston Galveston Area Council) Update (Andrew DeCandis)

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

None

Next meeting: January 27, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:40A.M.