

**The Minutes of the
Air Improvement Resources Executive/Advisory Committees Meeting
Alamo Area Council of Governments
Wednesday, October 25, 2006, 9:30 a.m.
8700 Tesoro, Suite 100, San Antonio, Texas 78217**

Executive Committee Members

Chairman Jay Millikin, Comal Co. Commissioner
Mayor Patrick Heath, City of Boerne
Judge Donald Schraub, Guadalupe County
Judge Marvin Quinney, Wilson County

Technical Committee Members

Renee Green, Bexar County, Chair
Liza Meyers, City of San Antonio

Guests

Debra Engler, SAWS
Jesse Balleza, FHWR
Sally Farris, COSA
Mark Langford
Eric Dribben, TCEQ (on phone)

Advisory Committee Members

Susan Ghertner, HEB
David Newman, City of San Antonio
Forrest Mims, Guadalupe County
Rick Hite, TCEQ

AACOG Staff

Al Notzon, Executive Director
Dean Danos, Deputy Director
Peter Bella, Director, Natural Resources
Steve Smeltzer, Environmental Manager
Heather Willden, Commute Solutions Assistant
Berti Vaughan, Administrative Assistant

I. Roll Call Chairman Millikin called the meeting to order. He asked that the roll be called. Dean Danos called the roll and declared a quorum.

II. Citizens to be Heard Mark Langford signed up to speak on Item # VI.a.i later on the agenda. His comments can be found behind these minutes.

III. Approval of Minutes Chairman Millikin asked for a motion to approve the August 23, 2006 minutes. Mayor Heath Moved to approve the minutes. Judge Quinney seconded the motion. Chairman Millikin asked for the vote. The motion passed.

IV. Ozone and Particulate Matter Report

a. New PM Rule Finalized

Mr. Bella reported the fourth-highest ozone values remained the same since the last AIR Exec/Advisory Committees meeting two months ago. Mr. Bella explained that because 87 parts per billion was the fourth highest at Camp Bullis in 2006, and 86 parts per billion was the fourth-highest at Camp Bullis last year, the fourth highest 8-hour average ozone reading at Camp Bullis must be below 82 ppb during the 2007 ozone season in order to average below 85 ppb for 2005-2007.

Addressing the particulate matter data Mr. Bella reported that the PM 10 and PM 2.5 data at the two different TEOMs monitors remained well below the threshold levels indicated in the current standards. Mr. Bella informed the committee that on September 21, 2006, the US Environmental Protection Agency issued a final rule revising the national air quality standards for particle pollution. Mr. Bella explained the change in the PM 2.5 standard revision lowers the threshold from 65 ug/m³ to 35 ug/m³ for the 24 hour averaging period and the standard averaged annually retains the current threshold of 15.0 ug/m³. He said the PM 10 standard had been replaced and the revision changes the definition so that it covers only particles between 10

and 2.5 micrometers in diameter. The final PM 10-2.5 standard is a 24-hour standard set at 70 ug/m³. The revision of the standard did not include an annual standard for PM 10-2.5.

Discussion followed comparing the old with the new standard. Mrs. Green referenced the milestone dates for the new PM standard. She remarked that the state recommendations regarding attainment status would be made to EPA during December 2007. With no Federal Reference regulatory monitors now in place and without exceedence values recorded by the non-regulatory monitors, it was not anticipated that San Antonio would be recommended for non-attainment by the state in 2007. The AIR Tech Committee will monitor the issue.

Mr. Mims commented that the EPA's Science Advisory Board would make a final decision in March about lowering the ozone standard to 70 parts per billion from the current 85. After some discussion, Mrs. Green said they would try to get information from the EPA as to the status of the Science Advisory Board's recommendations for the February 2007 meeting.

b. Review: June 2004 Ozone Exceedences in the Houston region

Mr. Bella explained that Mr. Mims had brought up the journal for review by the AIR technical committee, which implies a linkage between the fires that occurred in Alaska and Canada and high ozone readings in the Houston region in 2004. Mr. Mims read the closing statement on the paper entitled "Alaskan and Canadian Forrest Fires Exasperate ozone Pollution Over Houston, Texas on 19th and 20 July on 2004". Mr. Mims pointed out that the San Antonio region had experienced an ozone problem on the 19th of July. Mr. Mims said the reason he brought it up to the AIR Technical Committee was that any air pollution arriving across an international border is excluded under the Clean Air Act. He was hoping that Houston would appeal to the EPA to remove those violations. He pointed that those events were some of the largest violations they ever had. Mr. Mims said this proved the connection between smoke and ozone.

V. AIR Public Education Committee Update

a. AQHA Banner Update

Mr. Bella reminded the Committee that there had been a request made by Councilman Haass during the last meeting to use both print and community events to promote the air quality message. Mr. Bella directed their attention to the back of the room where staff had assembled materials, which were produced for use during outreach media, public, and school events. Mr. Bella complimented the quality and quantity of materials produced by staff to the various markets in the community for their understanding of Air Pollution and Air Quality. Mr. Bella said that Councilman Haass had also mentioned using movie events in the park as a way to work within the communities throughout the city. Mr. Bella reported that staff was working with Time-Warner to coordinate a movie program for next year. On the Air Quality Health Alert Banners, Mr. Bella said 392 banners had been distributed to 16 school districts as a result of Councilman's Haass' initiative. With those distributions staff included school ozone tool kits on the affects of air pollution. Also included are posters and door signs for nurses to post when there was an air quality health alert.

b. Alamo Clean Air Partnership-Take Out Air Pollution Campaign

Mr. Bella said staff was adding fresh energy into the concept of the Alamo Clean Air Partnership Program by offering to do the analysis on behalf of the business and industry partners. The ACAP program was also being inclusive of small companies and agencies in their new program design.

c. **Action Item:** Consideration and possible Approval of Environmental Stewardship Award Nominees

Heather Willden explained that the stewardship award program was an initiative designed to bring attention to and reward schools and school districts that actively help to improve air quality with emphasis on keeping the air clean. If the nominations were approved, she suggested

presenting the awards in December during the December AIR Executive Committee Meeting. Mrs. Willden announced that the Air Public Education Committee had selected the following schools and school districts as nominees for the awards.

- **Candlewood Elementary** (Judson Independent School District) for their walking school bus program and commute solutions program participation since 2003
- **Northeast School of the Arts**-International School of the Americas Magnet High School for actively participating in the commute solutions program since 2003-the program is a great opportunity because the school draws students from all over the district.
- **San Antonio Prep Summer City Wide Program** is a pre-freshman engineering program that is held in various university campuses. They have been actively participating in the program since 2004 and draw students from all over the city,
- **Edgewood Independent School District** for starting an idle reduction program which included implementing a no idling policy, they reworked bus routes to reduce the redundancy of routes, received an AACOG anti-idling workshop, and are currently looking for grants to increase their retrofits.
- **Harlandale Independent School District** for making innovative structural changes to reduce driving time for their employees, using more bicycles for their law enforcement personnel, re-arranging schedules to combine shifts so that when people go out to work sites more people can travel in vans vs. traveling at different times and in individual vehicles.

Mrs. Willden explained that the awards program this year did not have an application process and was a platform for air quality public relations. Next year, the intention of the Air Public Education Committee was to have an application selection process in place with several categories. She explained that this year's programs were chosen because they had a track record of supporting air quality efforts through commute solutions, clean cities, and air quality programs within the Natural Resources Department.

Mrs. Green asked if they would consider adding awards for local governments and their air quality efforts. She proceeded to report on a Bexar County initiative, which allows Bexar County employees to ride the bus free to and from work at the cost of \$200,000.

Chairman Millikin encouraged the inclusion of school districts from other county school districts the next year. He asked the committee for a motion to approve the nominations.

Mayor Heath made the motion to approve the nominees for the Environmental Stewardship Awards. Judge Quinney seconded the motion. In light of the many initiatives being modeled by cities and counties, Mr. Notzon asked if inclusion of a government category could be considered as part of the stewardship awards. Mayor Heath amended the motion to include recognizing Bexar County for their exceptional initiative with a second from Judge Quinney. Mr. Notzon also asked if a corporate category might not be in order as well. He mentioned HEB as a great role model for their environmental efforts. Discussion was held on expanding the categories the next year. Chairman Millikin called for the vote. The motion passed. Mayor Heath asked to make some final comments. He suggested that perhaps from January 1 through the beginning of ozone season there could be a flood of activities including as many press conferences with as many people as possible over an extended period of time instead of just one press conference. These conferences could provide occasions to highlight some of our steadfast corporate affiliates and supporters like HEB and others during that period just to raise awareness every other week at the importance of the upcoming season for our future. Chairman Millikin remarked that they needed to get the various Chambers involved. Mr. Notzon

pointed out that the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce had established an air quality task force, which has been meeting regularly.

VI. Clean Air Plan Update

a. Updates from the AIR Technical Committee

i. Comparing Austin and San Antonio

Steve Smeltzer presented a brief power point report with design and ozone exceedance comparisons as requested by the Air Executive Committee during the July meeting. The following are some main points he presented without the graphics.

Exceedaences & Meteorology

1997 – 2001:

San Antonio – 7 exceedance days where Austin did not exceed

Austin – 31 exceedance days where San Antonio did not exceed

Why did Austin exceed on so many days when SA did not?

2002 – Sept. 2006:

San Antonio – 24 exceedance days where Austin did not exceed

Austin – 3 exceedance days where San Antonio did not exceed

Why did SA exceed on so many days when Austin did not?

Meteorological Comparison:

Are differences in meteorological variables a contributing factor?

Urban sprawl pattern and monitor locations

CAMS 23 has recorded declining ozone readings since 2002

CAMS 58 has not recorded similar declines in ozone readings

Factors, which may impact CAMS 58, include:

- Increase in residential and commercial activities
- Roadway constructions and use of heavy-duty equipment.
- Construction of large-scale shopping centers
(including The Rim - Loop 1604 & Interstate 10, Huebner Oaks – I-10 & Huebner, Hill Country Plaza - Loop 1604 & NW Military Hwy, etc.)
- Increase in traffic volume and congestion on Loop 1604 and other roads

Summary

The number of exceedance days in San Antonio has decreased since 2002, however San Antonio is still above the standard

Possible reasons Austin monitors are showing attainment values for recent Design Values compared to San Antonio include:

- Transport: Back trajectories suggest possibly greater transport to San Antonio from other non-attainment and near non-attainment areas compared to Austin during 2002-2006 period
- Urban Sprawl: Intense urban sprawl and construction may have impacted ozone readings at CAMS 58

Conclusion:

- Comparisons between San Antonio and Austin are difficult because the situations in each city is different
- There is not one single reason identifiable that would cause the observed difference in Ozone Readings
- Air Tech committee feels that further investigation is not warranted at this time.

Chairman Millikin asked that Mr. Smeltzer send a copy of the presentation to the Executive Committee.

Mark Langford who signed up through Citizens to be Heard presented comments that can be found in the back of these minutes.

Action Item: Assessment of June 2006 Ozone Exceedences in the San Antonio region
b. Actions by the City of San Antonio: Near Term Activities

Chairman Millikin asked if the letter mentioned by Mr. Langford was action item #6. Mrs. Green said yes. She explained that in the conclusion of the presentation is stated within the letter that the AIR Technical Committee felt needed to move forward to the AIR Executive Committee for their approval. The letter was drafted to Katherine White of TCEQ asking for their support to remove the June days as an exception given the level of transport that had come into San Antonio's region. Mrs. Green said The AIR Technical Committee assessed the background that occurred during those days and it was almost as though "we could have done nothing and maybe still had a non-attainment problem."

Mr. Bella showed several slides showing background levels from TCEQ's website. He pointed to a background level that was between 78 and 83 parts per billion on days that were exceedance days for us. So the idea is that when you look at the chart you can see what the ozone peaks were and the background levels estimated by TCEQ. According to that information little was produced locally. An important point if you look back also on the ozone report, three of the four days as is written in the letter and that we are asking for excuses on are high days. If we didn't have those high days, we wouldn't have the 87 parts per billion as our fourth highest value this summer. Conceptually Mr. Lambeth was being conservative in his estimates but the point remains very valid that there is clear evidence that there was a lot that was out of our control. There's not a legal footing in my mind in this letter to excuse us. These are not classically considered exceptional events but he believed to get it done they had to partner with TCEQ.

Chairman Millikin commented that the analysis probably applies to dozens and dozens and dozens of other cities in the USA and he didn't think they were going to change anything but he didn't object to the letter going forward. He said it makes a point to the state environmental folks who may make a point to the federal environmental folks that a lot of what happens but not all is beyond our control. Chairman Millikin asked if there was a motion to approve the letter. Judge Schraub made a motion to send the letter. Mayor Heath seconded the motion. The Chairman called for the vote. The motion passed.

VII. Other Issues

a. Proposed 2007 Committee Meeting Schedule

For their information Peter provided a 2007 schedule for their review. The schedule would be going before the AACOG board for approval.

Chairman Millikin said he had been Austin two weeks prior for a Senate Natural Resources Committee Hearing on Alternative Fuel. There was substantial debate as to whether bio-diesel puts more NOX into the air or not. He said there continued to be a lack of clarity on the issue.

VIII. Adjourn

With no further business to conduct the meeting was adjourned.

Citizens to be Heard

Mark Langford:

This committee is about to review an important presentation. After viewing this program I hope you all understanding that our clean city is powerless to control our ozone destiny and that we must act now to deal with the EPA labeling us next year or in 2009 or 2008 as non-attainment for pollution problems that are not our own. In my mind there are several choices for our city. One we can continue to tell people that car pooling, riding our bikes, taking a bus, not mowing their lawns, and filling their gas tanks after six will keep us from going over 85 during high ozone days when we know from research that AACOG has done that San Antonio's area's total contribution can be as low as 7 parts per billion on some days and even lower on some days that are maybe not quote high ozone days. There are days when Seguin has ozone almost as high as San Antonio and areas fifty to a hundred miles off shore in the Gulf of Mexico actually have higher levels than San Antonio. As long as pollution from old technology, northeastern coal fire power plants, and forest fires in Canada and Alaska continue to stream to our area from winds blowing from the northeast and east we can completely shut down our city and still be on the brink of going over 85 parts per billion. As you will see in this presentation cars are not the problem. In fact on my website I have a link to an EPA report that shows that new cars are only producing about 1/100 of what they were in the early seventies. So for one car in the seventies it would be equal to about 100 cars now days. That's something you don't normally see discussed in the media. And now with the new low sulfur diesel that hit the stations I believe last week, pollution will be further reduced. As far as our options we can do ridiculous things like erect giant fins or cut down all our wonderful live oak trees although some developers are already working on that. As I've learned in some of this AACOG presentation, natural volatile organic compounds emitted from live oak trees and other vegetation is actually higher than human produced VOCs in San Antonio. We can do nothing and let the EPA step in and pour a multitude of restrictions on businesses and potentially require citizens to pay for expensive emissions testing when we all know when emissions testing is utterly worthless in today's world of cleaner burning vehicles. In fact in 2003 AACOG concluded that emissions only lowered our ozone levels by less than 1/2 of one part per billion. Lastly, we can join together with hundreds of other small and large cities throughout our country that are facing the same problems that we are and sue or whatever it takes to get the EPA to change this. I just want to comment that this letter that I guess is getting ready to be discussed to Kathleen White is the direction that I am referring to. We need to be able to talk to the EPA and convince them that if a city like San Antonio can spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on these wonderful meterological studies if we can prove that we are not part of the problem that they need to excuse us. Thank you very much.