

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

The April meeting of the Air Pollution Control Board was held Thursday, April 20, 2006 at the Health Commissioner's Office Training Room, 1101 Market Street, and 8th floor. Eddie R. Battle, Chairman, presided:

ATTENDING: Joseph O. Minott
Dr. Robert M. Patterson
Brenda Shields

STAFF: Morris Fine, Director, Air Management Services (AMS)
Thomas Huynh, Regulatory Services Program Manager, AMS
Thomas Weir, Chief, Program Services, AMS
Roger Fey, Engineering Supervisor, AMS
Irene Malone, Assistant to the Director, AMS
Alison Tracy, Voluntary Programs Coordinator, AMS

GUESTS: John Hadalski, Water Department
Carla Waite, Law Department
Sandy Bauers, Philadelphia Inquirer

1. WELCOME

Mr. Battle called the April meeting of the Air Pollution Control Board (APCB) to order. He introduced and welcomed as new board member Deputy Health Commissioner Brenda Shields.

The minutes of the meeting of July 19, 2005 were reviewed and amended to correct the number of air monitoring stations and the attendees at the meeting. The minutes were approved as amended.

Morris Fine introduced new Air Management staff member Alison Tracy who will be working on voluntary projects such as the Diesel Difference as well as receiving and administering new grants.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Fine provided a written program update.

He said that while a few staff positions are unfilled inspections have been covered adequately; however, the interval between inspection and reinspection could be improved.

Fine commended the Philadelphia Parking Authority for its assistance in the Anti-idling initiative reporting that the authority has issued more than 800 violations since March.

2005 Air Monitoring data matched very closely with projections because the city did not experience unusual weather patterns during the year.

Mr. Fine advised the board that changes at the federal level would have an impact on Air Management's program. The President's budget includes 15% (16?) in cuts in funds earmarked for state and local agencies. He thanked Joe Minott for his assistance in lobbying both the house and the senate. Philadelphia's Health Commissioner has asked both Pennsylvania Senators to help restore the funding.

The Environmental Protection Agency has indicated the funding for the fine particulate air-monitoring network will remain level in fiscal year 2007; however, on the "105 side" there will be a 9.5% cut.

Mr. Battle asked if efforts had been successful in identifying local support in the House of Representatives. Mr. Minott said that the Southeastern Pennsylvania congressional delegation has always been fairly supportive of environmental issues, including both Democrats and Republicans.

Mr. Fine presented the board with proposed new EPA standards for dry cleaners. The revised standard provides for more stringent standards in instance where the dry cleaner is co-located in residential and commercial buildings. The proposed standard is still in the comment period. Air Management Services will conduct a survey to determine how many of Philadelphia's dry cleaning establishments are co-located.

In addition to many successes with many businesses, the Diesel Difference is currently working with both the City of Philadelphia and the School District of Philadelphia to retro-fit public vehicles. In May, several more companies will be publicly recognized for retro-fitting their fleets. Building on Philadelphia's program the EPA is now working with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association to form a Diesel collaborative that will expand the effort regionally with financial incentives for businesses.

The board was presented with a summary of proposed changes in National Ambient Air Quality Standards under the Clean Air Act.

Tom Weir of Air Management Services reported on PM2.5 monitoring at the Eastwick Library. He said the Eastwick community had expressed concern for the air quality impact from the new United States Postal Service Processing and Distribution Center that will soon begin operations in their area. A monitor to measure fine particulate was installed behind the Eastwick Public Library and began operation in April 2005. The monitor will help assess the impact of the Post Office operations on air quality in the area. Weir said, ambient levels are similar to those measured at the monitoring site on Broad and Lombard Streets and are among the highest in the city. Mr. Weir said, all information reviewed, including computer modeling of the air impact, indicate minimal impact.

OLD BUSINESS

As follow up to previous board discussion of emissions from scrapyards, Air Management conducted an assessment of the yards which was presented to the board in a report. The yards receive close scrutiny through an intergovernmental Scrapyard Task Force organized by the Managing Director's Office. Air Management Services worked with the task force to identify seven air quality issues associated with the scrapyards. The practice of taking in gasoline tanks for reuse will be further investigated to explore best practices in the handling of the tanks.

Members of the board asked for clarification on the issue of dust emissions from the scrapyards. Mr. Fine said that these emissions are not a major problem because they are easily controlled with proper housekeeping procedures and can be limited through the inspection process.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Minott requested additional information on new permits issued to Sunoco. Mr. Fine explained that he new permits were tied to recent negotiations of the consent decree in which Sunoco agree to upgrade equipment with the latest technologies. The request for expansion was submitted by Sunoco in May of 2005, was closely reviewed, opened for public comment, and supported by the community.

Mr. Battle proposed that Air Management Services investigate best practices in the control of visible emissions and odors from trash trucks.

Dr. Patterson reported that trains stopped on Schuylkill Trail at Locust Street are sometimes carrying tanks of chlorine gas that pose an enormous potential hazard. He asked which agency or agencies have jurisdiction in a situation of this kind. John Hadalski responded that the Managing Director's Office of Emergency Preparedness has jurisdiction.

Mr. Fine announced that several candidates are currently being considered to fill board vacancies.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 P.M.