

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, January 30th, 2025

The Air Pollution Control Board held a public meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2025. The APCB Meeting was held in person at 7801 Essington Avenue as well as virtual platform, Zoom, to facilitate access by the public via computer or other device and toll-free phone number.

**Board Members Present**

Dr Arthur Frank, Dr. Richard Pepino, Dr. Mariel Diane Featherstone, Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis APCB chairman Mr. Joseph Minot was unable to attend the meeting due to conflicting schedules.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Board member Dr. Arthur Frank called the meeting to order at 3:40PM.

2:00 PM the meeting started

Dr. Kassahun Selassie opened the meeting and allowed board members to introduce themselves.

Board Members introduced themselves.

**MINUTES**

**The minutes from Oct 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, was not approved because the APCB failed to achieve quorum.**

Four out of the eight board members attended the meeting: Dr. Arthur Frank, Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis, Dr. Mariel D. Featherstone, and Dr. Richard Peppino

Mr. Joseph Minot informed us that he had medical appointment at the same time, and he will try to attend by phone call instead, but he couldn't make it. Dr. Mariel D. Featherstone left 10 minutes before the meeting concluded. No motion was passed since the quorum was not enough.

Dr. Kassahun Selassie

Presented about previous meeting updates, program updates, and amendments to the Mobile Source Regulation "AMRIX"

Below is the time outline of the APCB presentation

00:00-25:00 minutes	Introduction and Program updates from AMS's Director followed by Q&A
25:00-43:30 minutes	AMRIX draft regulation presentation from AMS's Director
43:30-68:00 minutes	Q&A from board members about AMRIX and Answers from AMS Director

## **EPA UPDATE**

We celebrate \$17 million in Federal investment for clean school buses. In addition, EPA granted \$70 million Federal investment for clean School Buses for Philadelphia.

October 11, 2024, EPA announced \$40 million to fund for the environmental justice project across the mid-Atlantic.

October 17, 2024. Biden Harris Administration announced \$125 million to upgrade older Diesel engine to clean and Zero emission solutions. AMS works with MARAMA to buy new trucks to replace diesel trucks at Port Tioga and Parker. We have replaced a lot of old trucks, more than 100 with Marama. AMS and MARAMA have worked on DERA projects. MARAMA got \$1,396,77 for DERA project to upgrade old diesel trucks to new trucks.

October 30, 2024, Biden Harris Administration announced nearly \$80 million in clean ports Investment for the port of Philadelphia.

October 30, 2024, Biden-Harris celebrate \$34 million in grants to reduce air pollution at school, and highlights efforts in Philadelphia.

December 12, 2024. Biden Harris Administration announced nearly \$1.6 billion in environmental and climate justice, community change grants.

December 17, 2024, EPA Publishes regulation banning PERC and TSC. PERC is for dry cleaners which is toxic. We Banned the use of Perc in Philadelphia, out of 235 Perc Dry Cleaners, we have Zero at co-located residential area. There are a few left, 10 at the commercial area, there is a requirement for those 10 dry cleaners to submit canister samples to our laboratory to see if they comply with the limit for the perc concentration of 50 ppb or below.

## **PA DEP UPDATES**

December 12, 2024, Shapiro Administration Awards \$2.55 Million to Help Local Community Build Cleaner Fuel, transportation Infrastructure and for the Purchasing of New Clean Vehicles.

The award will go to Philadelphia in the amount of \$136,000 and the rest covers sixty-six counties in PA

## **CITY AND OTHER UPDATES**

Philadelphia joins more than 200 cities and communities worldwide to be certified under the LEED for cities and communities rating system. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that was created by the US Green Building Council (USGBC).

December 5, 2024, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Board approved \$12.253 Million Bike and Pedestrian Projects in New Jersey.  
DVRPC (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Committee), is responsible for 5 counties, New Jersey area and the Greater Philadelphia area.  
The DVRPC approved \$153 Million in federal highway capital funds to SEPTA to meet its immediate operational needs.

## **AMS LABORATORY**

Village Green is operating at 6<sup>th</sup> and Independence that uses Solar and Wind energy.

PAAQS will be replaced by clarity sensors. AMS is planning to purchase seventy-five clarity sensors and locate them throughout the city.

AMS LAB is using Criteria Gas Monitoring. Particulate matter monitors, community air monitors and quality assurance, chemical assessment monitoring.

## **Q&A**

Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis

I was curious if any of those new permits that were issued went through the new air toxics regulation that was in place last year?

Dr. Sellassie

Yes. We started evaluating HAPs risk assessment on January 1, 2024.

AMS received applications for risk assessment for major (four) and minor sources (30).

Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis

I will be waiting for the next meeting to see if you keep track of all the permits and we have some kind of analysis or document

De. Sellasie

Yeah, we can. Maryjoy is here, from permitting, and we can prepare an excel sheet of all the permits renewed this year and those which did risk assessment. Still, we are working on that.

Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis

It would be interesting to see what the exemptions are since the program is running. It would be interesting to know.

De. Sellasie

Sure,

Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis

There are not a lot of places that are doing this. I think I want to be able to share that experience with other agencies and interested staff. I will wait for the next meeting.

De. Sellasie

I think Maryjoy has all the spreadsheets we will send you or we will post it.

Dr. Richard Pepino

How have the permittees responded to what you're doing with the new risk assessment process?

Dr. Kassahun Sellasie

Oh, wonderful question! Wonderful question.

I want the public, then the board needs to know.

So now, especially as a few facilities are going to the council members and we have met 4 times with the council.

The industry question were why AMS conducts risk assessments as far as industries comply with MACT? I told them that MACT is different from risk assessment. We go for one in a million or 10 in a million for risk assessment, but the MACT is just to reduce emission from the facility by using any control.

If they reduce that much amount, why do they worry about risk assessment? EPA stated that if MACT will not satisfy the public health and the environment, then required to use risk assessment.

Carol Ann Gross-Davis

You had a lot of community monitoring and some other projects. Is that on the website where we can look to see you know where the monitors are? Are they easily accessible?

Dr. Kassahun Sellasie

Yes.

We had a meeting about that with Aurora, the EJ Coordinator that she and Menelik discussed with the IT to make it available on our webpage.

We sent her a map and the data for her to use for EJ community. Because we did a lot of good analysis with PAQS. We had almost 50 PAQS sites throughout the city, especially in overburdened communities. PAQS is being replaced now with clarity.

We will locate air monitors around SEPTA and Nicetown, and the Tioga area and PES area may be more areas. Now we focus on North Philly and Northeast Philly where the most burden EJ communities are. We are planning to discuss with the communities where to put 50 more (Clarity monitors). So, we have 25 more locations compared to PAQS.

## **MOBILE SOURCES NEW REGULATION**

This is the new regulation by EPA that is driven by clean air acts. States, except California, are doing sources.

We need mobile sources, and an emission reduction control system by enforcing them. EPA lawyers PADEP lawyers, Commissioner and others involved in the mobile sources delegation. After a lot of discussion, they allowed us nine mobile source regulations.

We'll discuss in the future how to reduce the emission from Center City or about Congestion Reduction

One of the options is congestion reduction. When the vehicles enter to center city, they will pay fees in order to reduce VMT and switch to use mass transportation instead of driving private cars.

In New York they implemented the congestion reduction system. We planned to put toll centers in the north, south, west and east.

We will Collaborate with Toll Plaza and PA Toll, and city's agencies in the future. Similar to what New York is doing.

### **Questions and Answer from APCB members about AMR IX**

#### **Dr. Arthur Frank.**

- Current government may put some hurdles on our activities, for example Mr Trump want to stop New York Congestion Pricing but this will be a temporary hurdle
- Because of these regulations (Non-Road diesel vehicles Tier 4 or above Section V on air quality action days, if enacted), how many businesses will be impacted and how will this be enforced? Not enough staff even for enforcement of current regulations like idling.
- SEPTA is in bad shape and some of the money collected from enforcement of the AMRIX be used for subsidizing or incentives for citizens using SEPTA because fare is going up and service is going down. Incentivize people using ZEV lower parking fees etc.
- How many people or how many companies will be affected by the article "Provide service from SEPTA stations to office with 50 or more employees if the distance is greater than a quarter mile"
- Exemptions for fire trucks and ambulances for city plan to buy ZEV for all its fleets
- Show that AMS or the city has a comprehensive approach to make the city cleaner: Increase enforcement of the other regulations of AMS and in tandem with other city department regulations

#### **Kass:**

We discussed how we will use the money, and the details will be determined by the APCB, public inputs and the money will be used for the benefit of the community like subsidizing SEPTA and so on

The city plans to stop buying gas- and diesel-powered vehicles by 2030. Even the trash trucks etc. are switching to ZEV. Of course, there will be exceptions for fire trucks and the likes.

#### **Dr. Carol Ann Gross-Davis**

- It may look like a Money Grab Scheme to some of the residents
- SEPTA and public transportation may not always feel safe for residents and define low-income families
- Diesel and other emissions are causing cancers, and this regulation is good for the residents' health
- Make important connection between this regulation and emission reduction, if there is a modeling study or monitoring data proving this relationship
- Truck delivering in the congestion area should have delivering schedules at certain times (to avoid daytime and rush hour congestion).
- Define center city and the actual boundary of the congestion zone in detail in future documents
- Outline how income from each section will be used and how part of this money goes to the public benefit like SEPTA, EJ air monitoring etc
- Public transportation may not be available at nighttime and people with unconventional work schedules like night shift may not be subjected to this congestion fee
- Make important connection between each section of the regulation and implementation strategies for each section.
- Increase or have a clear communication strategy to the public and inform the public of all the details and progress of this regulation

**Kass:**

To avoid daytime congestion by truck deliveries, we tried to suggest restricting loading and unloading after 8:00 PM but the community also complained about noise problems.

We tried to analyze the noise pollution previously and we reviewed a lot of studies from New York and other large cities how they tried to solve this problem. More specifics can be added to overcome the noise pollution by adding more guidelines. For example, using noise absorbers, using separate smaller delivery carts or vehicles.

The congestion fee applies to only rush hours or regular time schedule like between 6:00AM and 8:00PM depending on traffic volume and flow studies.

We always try to communicate with the public with newspapers and AMS websites

**Dr. Mariel D. Featherstone**

Some of my worries are about the exemptions like disabilities and low-income people.

People living inside the congestion zone

**Kass:**

We have put exemptions in the draft like for people with income lower than a certain income threshold maybe like \$50,000 annual family income. People living in the congestion zone will also be exempted. Similarly, fire trucks, emergency vehicles, people with disabilities etc will be exempted.

**Dr. Richard Peppino**

What is the largest single obstacles that we have to overcome to make this a reality?

**Kass:**

From all sections of the AMRIX, the congestion fee part will have a lot of resistance from the public, lawyers, and the board may be. But we will try to come up with the necessary data, explain New York city experience, and explain the benefits with the help of EPA, PA-DEP etc. With all the regulations we have at our disposals, we will try to address the air quality issues of the city.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting Arthur Frank  
Second, Carol Ann Gross Davis

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:40PM.