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BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Northwest Clean Air Agency was held at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, August 10, 2023, 1600 South Second Street, Mount Vernon, WA.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Skagit County	Mary Hudson Ron Wesen
Island County	Tara Hizon
Whatcom County	Todd Donovan via ZOOM Eric Johnston
Member-At-Large	Terry Nyman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Melanie Bacon

ALSO PRESENT:

NWCAA staff members	Evan Bing, Mark Buford, Alicia Huschka, Toby Mahar, Agata McIntyre, Seth Preston, and Laurie Caskey- Schreiber
Legal counsel	Svend Brandt-Erichsen

CALL TO ORDER

Board of Directors Chair Ron Wesen called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

On motion by Mary Hudson, seconded by Tara Hizon, the minutes for the June 8, 2023, meeting were approved 6-0.

PRESENTATION

2023 Summer Wildfire Smoke Updates – Evan Bing

NWCAA Atmospheric Measurement Manager Evan Bing gave a presentation about the current state of wildfire smoke for the NWCAA jurisdiction. So far, the area has experienced little to no wildfire smoke. Most of the wildfires in our area have been emitting smoke that has flowed to eastern parts of the State, due to consistent southwesterly winds.

How's the rest of the season looking?

- Last year, our worst smoke impacts were in September and October.
- Predictive Services puts all of Washington and Oregon in the "Above Normal" wildfire risk category for August and September.
- Eastern Washington and Oregon return to normal risk category for October, but Western Washington and Oregon will still be in the "Above Normal" category.
- The potential for significant smoke events remains high through the remainder of summer and into fall.

Upcoming NWCAA Smoke Reporting and forecasting improvements:

- Adding ceilometer to Custer monitoring station – will enable us to detect high-altitude smoke and provide better "now-cast" smoke forecasts.
- Overhaul underway for "Air Quality Center" on NWCAA website. The site will be able to autodetect user's location.
- There is now a Youth Activities Guide for air quality – easy to use guide for school administrator, parents, and students. Developed by Washington Wildfire Smoke Advisory Group. Provides health and activity recommendations for each PM-2.5 AQI Category.
- NWCAA has partnered with Whatcom County and school districts to significantly expand low-cost sensor monitoring network. Schools plan to use corrected data from sensors to inform outdoor activity and after school sporting event cancellations.

PRESENTATION

Discussion about use of NWCAA penalty / settlement funds – Mark Buford

Agency Executive Director Mark Buford solicited Board member's input as to how the Agency should proceed in utilizing the funds that the Agency received in FY 2023 for the Petrogas / Alta Gas settlement agreement. These funds amounted to \$4 million. This penalty settlement was associated with excess emissions (along with other violations) that took place in Whatcom County between 2015-2020.

The Board recently passed Resolution 609, which clarifies how this type of funding can be used for future projects. The Resolution requires future projects to be consistent with the Agency's Strategic Plan and Mission. The Board added a few more preferences for the Advisory Council to consider when selecting funding proposals.

The Board stated their following preferences.

Todd Donovan:

- Prefers GHG/Climate projects,
- Timing not urgent, but soon,
- Within the NWCAA jurisdiction,

- Would prefer to have Advisory Council and staff identify projects and make recommendations to the Board,
- Something people can see -- a visible project.

Mary Hudson

- Climate projects,
- Advisory Council input and recommendations,
- Okay with using funds to hire a third party to help identify and manage process.

Eric Johnston

- Add Climate Resiliency projects (not just emissions reductions),
- Improve public facilities that can support clean air spaces during wildfire smoke events,
- Todd Donovan also agrees with Eric Johnston's recommendations.

Terry Nyman

- Climate-related projects,
- Doesn't matter if in our jurisdiction if result is emission reductions,
- Projects that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions still a priority,
- Would prefer the Advisory Council gather and vet proposals,
- Prioritize projects with a small business component to them.

Tara Hizon

- Interested in staff and Advisory Council recommendations,
- Soon, but not urgent,
- Physical location of project should be close, but not absolutely limited to our jurisdiction.

Ron Wesen

- Prefer those projects that take place in NWCAA's jurisdiction,
- Small business component, like the Opportunity Council had, is interesting,
- Prefers request for proposal process, interested in staff and Advisory Council ideas.

Buford will be meeting with the Advisory Council in August, and they will discuss the next steps for this process at that meeting.

PRESENTATION

Fiscal Year 2023 Year-end financial report – Alicia Huschka

Agency Chief Financial Officer Alicia Huschka presented a summary report for the close of fiscal year 2023.

	Actual as of June 30, 2023	Budget	% of Annual Budget
Revenues	\$9,254,253	\$5,048,296	183%
Expenses	\$5,035,703	\$5,552,741	91%

	Operating Fund	Cumulative Reserve Fund	Capital Replacement Fund	Supplemental Environmental Fund	Personnel Costs Reserve Fund	Legal Reserve Fund	Total
Assets	\$1,718,511	\$4,433,766	\$199,212	\$288,105	\$288,653	\$512,194	\$7,440,441
Liabilities	291,533	0	0	0	0	0	291,533
Fund Balance	1,208,428	621,961	192,690	443,873	279,278	251,038	7,148,908
Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$1,718,511	\$4,433,766	\$199,212	\$288,105	\$288,653	\$512,194	\$7,440,441

Huschka stated that the year closed with anticipated results, and there were no surprises.

Huschka will be bringing a resolution to the next Board meeting which will re-budget the unspent Special Legal Services budget, \$22,664, and incorporate the Woodsmoke Reduction Grant into the FY 2024 budget. A future budget amendment will be presented for the upcoming Solar Panel Project.

ACTION ITEMS

Bills and claims

Board members discussed the bills and claims reports for June and July 2023. Todd Donovan made a motion to approve the June (\$715,456.57) and July (\$306,903.85) 2023 bills and claims. Hizon seconded the motion, and the Board approved the bills and claims 6-0.

STAFF REPORTS

Director's report – Mark Buford

Buford reported to the Board on the following matters:

- Buford reported that the Agency recently underwent two State audits. One was a financial audit covering two fiscal years, beginning July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022, by the Washington State Auditor's Office; the other one was a compliance review by the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems. Both audits went well, with no findings.
- We are very close to securing a new location for the monitoring trailer in Oak Harbor. If all goes according to plan, the trailer will be housed in a church parking lot, not far from the current site.
- The solar panel project and electric vehicle charging station plans are getting finalized. Buford will be presenting details of the project at the September Board meeting.

- Buford will also be bringing information about the options available to have San Juan County re-join the NWCAA jurisdiction. Once the Board approves a plan, Buford would then go to San Juan County for their approval of a plan.
- The Upriver project in Skagit County “Curb It, Don’t Burn It,” has turned out to be a bit more complicated than originally expected. Waste Management staff need to do some legal review of certain project elements, and work through other details. However, they are committed to participating. The project will take place in 2024 rather than 2023.

New source review and air operating permit update – Agata McIntyre

NWCAA Engineering Manager Agata McIntyre reported on the June and July 2023 construction permit (new source review) activity.

During June 2023, the Agency received two applications for construction permits and issued five construction permits.

One of the applications received in June was from Janicki Industries, which is starting up a new paint booth for use in their production of aerospace equipment.

During July 2023, the Agency received two applications for construction permits and issued two permits.

One of the applications received in July was from Olympic Pipeline. They are replacing a roof on an existing tank. The roof serves as an air pollution control device, so they needed a construction permit. A NWCAA inspector noticed that changes had been made and prompted the facility to apply for a construction permit.

Enforcement update – Toby Mahar

NWCAA Compliance Manager Toby Mahar reported that the Agency issued five notices of violation in June. Inspectors are finding non-compliance with permit conditions and regulations at almost every inspection. Most of these issues are related to lack of knowledge; NWCAA inspectors are only able to visit most sources every two to three years and there are many changes in personnel at facilities.

NWCAA issued 17 notices of violation in July. Several were related to gas stations failing to conduct and submit testing for tank equipment and vapor tightness. Four violations were issued for illegal outdoor burning during the burn ban period, the result of referrals from the County Fire Marshals. Phillips 66 refinery was issued NOV 4654 addressing several excess emissions events.

Complaint load has been normal for this period of time, including ongoing complaints of wastewater treatment odors from BP, Daritech neighbors complaining of odors, and a large dust cloud observed near the Port of Bellingham property near downtown.


ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify this is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting of the NWCAA Board of Directors held on August 10, 2023, in Mount Vernon, Washington.

ATTEST:



Terry Nyman, Secretary
NWCAA Board of Directors



Ron Wesen, Chair
NWCAA Board of Directors

DATED: September 14, 2023