

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
AIR QUALITY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
 Final Minutes 8/17/2023

Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (AQTAC or Committee) Members Present (via Teams or in-person)

Rob Altenburg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joseph Guzek	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marianne Payne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Tissue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scott Brown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Christine Heath	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Richard Shaffer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shaun Vozar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kimberly Coy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charles McPhedran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Shimshock	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Walliser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joseph Duckett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mohamed Mellaouch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Slade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edward Wiener	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Josephine Gaskey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Nines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kevin Stewart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

CALL TO ORDER & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Chair John Tissue convened the meeting at 9:15 am.

Approval of Minutes

John Tissue requested a motion to approve the 05/04/23 meeting minutes “As Presented”

Joe Duckett made a motion to approve. Kevin Stewart seconded. John Tissue, hearing no opposition, so moved to approve the minutes “As Presented.”

PRESENTATION

Sean Wenrich, BAQ Environmental Engineer Manager, presented on Draft Plan Approval Application Form Update.

Discussion

Charles McPhedran asked for clarification regarding possible changes to DEP’s permit evaluation of emission levels should operational parameters be represented as ranges in lieu of specific numbers (noted in Slide 6 of the presentation). Sean responded that this may change how emission limit conditions are written. At times a maximum or minimum limit may be important. In some instances, a range is appropriate. Implementation, however, will not offer additional operational flexibility, nor will it alter the process DEP uses for setting permit emission limits. Mark Hammond noted the goal is to update permit forms so that pertinent information is collected.

Kevin Stewart commented that he supports DEP’s effort to update the permit forms to reflect collection of only pertinent information. He cautioned DEP that if the forms become too lean, rework may result.

Christine Heath asked about the format that will be used for permit forms, i.e., Word, PDF, or perhaps an on-line system. Viren Trivedi responded that permittees should use a format allowed by OnBase. DEP currently does not have plans to build an on-line system, but this is being considered as part of DEP’s long-term planning. Mark Hammond commented that the Document Processing team and others would need to be involved in these planning discussions.

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Joe Duckett suggested that AQTAC be offered an additional opportunity to re-review the forms once the form revisions are complete.

Kimberly Coy asked if oil & gas would remain separate. Viren Trivedi indicated that the oil & gas source category is covered by GP-5 and GP-5A. The “Other” form can be used for smaller source categories.

Joe Guzek asked if DEP was planning to continue to use the current GP system, specifically for modifications to plan approval applications. Mark Hammond mentioned GP-21, Coal-Mine Methane Enclosed Flare, as an example of the Secretary’s 10-Point Permit Plan. Mark noted that this is a good source category for a GP as it is a fairly consistent and a non-complicated process. The public comment period for this permit just closed.

PRESENTATION

Ellen Davies presented on the Proposed 2023 Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network Plan.

Discussion

John Tissue asked if DEP examines the influence of the local source emission inventory prior to discontinuing a monitor. John also referenced the influence and variability of air pollution transport. Ellen responded that DEP always considers activities occurring in the area prior to making any recommendations to modify the monitoring network.

Kevin Stewart asked if recommendations to discontinue the PM_{2.5} monitors would become moot should EPA strengthen the PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Ellen responded that DEP is considering the lower PM_{2.5} standards in all monitoring network recommendations to ensure any monitors discontinued remain below 80% of the NAAQS.

Joe Duckett mentioned the presentation on natural gas wells and health effects. Joe asked if there was consideration to establish a monitoring site near one or two wells that have a strong correlation to health effects. Mark Hammond responded that DEP performed two monitoring efforts downwind of wells. Mark noted the results did not indicate elevated levels of VOCs or PM downwind of the wells. In many cases, downwind concentrations were lower than state averages. The reports should be posted soon.

Joe Duckett asked if the monitoring locations were within one mile of the wells. Mark did not reference the exact distances, but noted that in addition to distance, topography and weather conditions influence VOC and PM concentrations measured at the monitoring sites. He noted the monitoring locations were sited to capture the ambient concentrations associated with the wells.

Michael Nines asked about the performance of the monitoring network during the Canadian wildfire smoke event that occurred in June. Mark Hammond responded that during the smoke event, DEP measured the highest levels of PM_{2.5} ever recorded in the Commonwealth. He referenced two programs: (1) Forecasting and (2) Ambient Air Quality monitoring. The forecasts were very accurate, aligning very well with elevated ambient air quality PM_{2.5} concentrations

monitored throughout the Commonwealth during the event. Mark mentioned that the Secretary's Office is working with the Bureau of Air Quality to evaluate opportunities for future forecasting and monitoring enhancements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No requests for public comment were received for this meeting.

PRESENTATION

Kirit Dalal, Division Chief, DEP, gave a presentation on Rulemakings/State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions.

Discussion

Mark offered additional remarks on the "Bump-Up SIP". The Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City (PA-NJ-MD-DE) Ozone Nonattainment Area was reclassified on November 7, 2022, from marginal to moderate non-attainment for the 2015 ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). Each of the four states is required to prepare and submit to EPA a SIP to demonstrate attainment of the 2015 ozone NAAQS. The statutory submittal deadline was January 1, 2023. Mark commented that EPA issued draft guidance on how to complete the SIP in March/April 2023. Mark noted that DEP started the SIP in December. Through use of project management practices, and working closely with EPA, NJ, DE, and MD, DEP was able to publish the SIP in the *Pa. Bulletin* in record time.

Shaun Vozar asked if the Homer City Generating Station was shut down. Viren Trivedi confirmed the facility was shut down. The Northwest Regional Office is following up on this.

John Tissue remarked that the update did not have any proposed or final rulemakings. Mark Hammond commented that this reflects significant reduction in Air Quality's regulation backlog with the program recently having completed several rulemakings, including Air Quality Fees, RACT III, and the VOC regulations for the Oil & Gas sector). Mark mentioned that approval from DEP's chain-of-command as well as the Governor's Office is required prior to publicly discussing proposed regulations. Lena Smith commented that the next regulatory agenda will be published in February 2024.

John Tissue offered AQTAC's services to review existing polices as needed. Mark Hammond mentioned that the review cadence for policies and permits is being considered in long-term planning discussions.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS / OPEN DISCUSSION

John Tissue opened the meeting for other AQTAC business/open discussion.

Old Business:

Joe Duckett referenced the August 15 PA Department of Health and University of Pittsburgh oil and gas health-effects study presentation. Joe requested and received a copy of the report. He offered to review the report and suggested that AQTAC members discuss the results of the study

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with focus on air quality and relevant air emission regulations at the next meeting. Joe will obtain clarification regarding public accessibility of the report and will distribute the report to AQTAC members as appropriate.

New Business:

No new business was presented.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

With no further business before AQTAC, John Tissue requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joseph Guzek made a motion to adjourn. Joseph Duckett seconded. John Tissue, hearing no opposition, so moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.

The next AQTAC meeting is October 12, 2023.

Minutes prepared by Joseph Martini, Air Quality Program Specialist (AQPS). For additional information about AQTAC, please contact the AQTAC Liaison (RA-EPAQTAC@pa.gov) or by visiting the AQTAC Web page at:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Air/BAQ/AdvisoryGroups/Air-Quality-Technical-Advisory-Committee/Pages/default.aspx>