

MEMORANDUM

TO: Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board of Directors

FROM: Ashley Featherstone, Director

RE: Minutes for January 11, 2022

DATE: March 1, 2022

Enclosed, please find the Minutes for the **Tuesday, January 2022 Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency (WNCRAQA) board meeting**. The next meeting of the AB Air Quality Board is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 4:00 pm**. Due to recommendations to limit public gatherings and Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), this meeting will be conducted remotely as authorized by Session Law 2020-3 and GS §166A-19.24. The meeting will be hosted via Zoom Webinar. The public may listen to the meeting as it occurs at the following link: <https://bit.ly/abair0322>. Meetings will continue to be virtual until further notice. If anyone needs an accommodation to be able to listen to the meeting, please call the agency's office at 828-250-6777.

****Public comment on agenda items will be taken via electronic means only. The following criteria for comment will apply: (1) any public comment must be received by 5:00pm Sunday before the Board Meeting by sending an email to airquality@buncombecounty.org or by leaving a voice message at 828-250-6790; and (2) must be no more than 350 words. Comments should be limited to air quality or specific topics relevant to the Board.****

Comments will be read into the record, but the Board reserves the right to limit this practice to one hour. All comments received will be retained by the Agency as permanent record.

The attendance of the Board members was conducted by roll call and was as follows:

Members Present:

*Karl Koon
Vonna Cloninger
Joel Storrow
Evan Couzo
Garry Whisnant*

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present: *Ashley Featherstone, Director; Kevin Lance, Field Services Program Manager; James Raiford, Permitting Program Manager; Mike Matthews, Senior Air Quality Specialist; Betsy Brown, Air Quality Coordinator; Alex Latta, Senior Air Quality Specialist*

Others Present: *Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Michael Frue, County Attorney*

Mr. Storrow called the meeting of the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board of Directors to order on January 11, 2022, at 4:00 pm.

The order of business was as follows:

I. Public Comment Protocol Announcement

Mr. Storrow read the announcement:

Due to recommendations to limit public gatherings and Corona Virus disease 2019 (COVID-19), this meeting will be conducted remotely as authorized by Session Law 2020-3 and GS §166A-19.24.

Public comment on agenda items is taken via electronic means only and must have been received by 5:00pm Sunday before the Board Meeting by email or voice message. Comments should be limited to air quality or specific topics relevant to the Board. Comments will be heard later in the meeting.

II. Adjustment and approval of agenda

Ms. Cloninger made a motion remove IV. B. Unfinished Business, the Mt Carmel Road office, from the agenda until further research has taken place. Mr. Koon seconded the motion.

Ms. Cloninger was not at the last meeting. Mr. Storrow said he has not signed the lease termination. Board members asked about how this would be approached moving forward and what needed to happen. Today's discussion was to go over information to be presented, but no vote was expected. Concern was expressed that the City and the City attorney were not involved in the discussion. Ms. Cloninger was willing to withdraw her motion if no vote would take place. Mr. Koon did not want to withdraw the second because he felt we should have more background information.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Ms. Cloninger-yes
Mr. Koon-yes
Mr. Whisnant-yes
Dr. Couzo-yes
Mr. Storrow-yes
The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Koon made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Ms. Cloninger seconded.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Ms. Cloninger-yes
Mr. Koon-yes
Mr. Whisnant-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes
Mr. Storrow-yes
The motion passed 5-0.

III. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of minutes from November 8, 2021

Mr. Koon made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Whisnant seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Ms. Cloninger-yes
Mr. Koon-yes
Mr. Whisnant-yes
Dr. Couzo-yes
Mr. Storrow-yes
The motion passed 5-0.

IV. Unfinished Business:

A. Rebranding of Agency-Interlocal Agreement Update

Mr. Storrow noted that the Agency has done a lot to get this update in place. Ms. Featherstone noted it was a big team effort. We have notified all our facilities and our state and federal partners. Ms. Brown is working through the process of getting our name changed with Dunn & Bradstreet, the various federal agencies necessary for our grant management, and other financial aspects of the entity name change. Some of these updates are multi step processes and take time. The Agency has the process underway. This week we plan to send a letter to the EMC. There is an announcement on our website.

V. Director's Report:

A. Accela Update

We are still rolling out the ability to do the asbestos, demolition and renovation permits online. The publicity we had hoped to do to promote this has not happened yet. We are working with the County on that. Accela is set up for our complaint module. We are trying to set up the training. We continue to work with IT and are making progress. Moving to Accela is a multi-phase process.

B. Monitoring Update

Mr. Lance said we finished out the year with very good data completeness. The data completeness for ozone was 95.7%. Our fourth highest 8-hour average was at 60 ppb. The data completeness for PM2.5 was 97.4% Our annual average for PM2.5 was 6.7 micrograms/cubic meter.

We also made necessary corrections mentioned in the EPA's technical assistance audit that they conducted on the Agency in 2021. We received our confirmation closeout letter from the EPA, so we have completed that audit.

Tomorrow Mr. Lance is delivering the ozone equipment to the Electronic and Calibrations Branch in Raleigh to get our annual certifications. We need the equipment back in the field the middle of February to be ready for ozone season which opens the first of March.

Ms. Featherstone noted that it is a lot of work for Mr. Lance and Mr. Raiford when EPA does this audit every three years. The Agency appreciates the good job that they do.

C. COVID-19 Update

We are proceeding about the same and are still at reduced staff in the office. Some of the County meetings have been changed from in person to virtual. Case numbers are up. We continue to do the symptom tracker every day and are following the new CDC guidelines. So far, our department has not had staff out and has been doing well. Some County departments have eight to ten people out, more than were absent earlier in the pandemic.

D. Air Quality Workshop

In November, we mentioned that the Clean Air Campaign was doing a workshop instead of a press conference. This presentation used to be called the Ozone Kickoff. Later it was called the Air Quality Update. This is a workshop mainly targeted toward planners and government workers. It will be presented virtually on Tuesday January 25th and Thursday January 27th, from 9:30 am until 12 noon. It is called a Breath of Mountain Air. Tuesday will deal with mobile sources and fleet services, and funding sources for electric vehicles. Jim Renfro with the Great Smokey Mountains National Park will be giving a presentation.

On the second day, January 27th, stationary sources will be discussed. Brendan Davey with NCDAQ and Ms. Featherstone will be doing a presentation of point source pollution in Western North Carolina, what is it and where it comes from. There will also be people who will talk about funding sources to upgrade buildings. The link to register is on our website. Everyone is welcome.

E. Facility Permit Renewals

Dr. Couzo asked if Kearfott had obtained an asbestos removal permit for the removal of the boiler mentioned in the facility inspection report. Mike Matthews said that to date they had not applied for that permit. The boiler has been decommissioned, but the facility has not removed it yet. They would be required to get an asbestos permit to remove the boiler. What is being considered here is the operating permit renewal, not related to the permit for asbestos removal.

In reference to the Duke Energy renewal, Dr. Couzo asked how often the No. 5 and No. 7 units run on fuel oil? Their permit allows the turbines to run on either natural gas or fuel oil. Mr. Raiford noted that the fuel oil is a backup. This flexibility goes back to times when the supply of natural gas shortage was more of a concern. Their permit limits them to 1000 hours of fuel oil usage. Any more than that trips certain regulations. The facility tests both units with oil as well as with natural gas to make sure they are meeting emission limitations. Mr. Whisnant said the facility would only use fuel oil if there is some sort of a natural gas disruption. Previously the area had a limited gas line which was upgraded. This was before the facility switched from burning coal to natural gas. Since the gas line has been upgraded, disruptions are rarely an issue now. It is unusual that the units run on fuel oil except for testing.

Facility Name	Type of Facility	Facility Classification	Location	Changes from Existing Permit
Delkote Machine Finishing, Inc.	Wood & Cement Siding Pre-Finishing Facility	Synthetic Minor	Westside Drive, Asheville	Updated exempted activities list.
Duke Energy Progress, Inc.	Electric Generating Utility	Title V	46 Duke Energy Lane, Arden	Moved equipment from Part II of permit (construction permit) to Part I (operating permit). Removed equipment that is no longer located at the facility.

Kearfott Corporation Motion Systems Division	Navigational Systems Manufacturer	Small	U.S. 70 Black Mountain	Updated equipment list, exempted activities list, and permit conditions.
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Mr. Koon made a motion to renew the permits. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Ms. Cloninger–yes

Mr. Whisnant–yes

Mr. Koon–yes

Dr. Couzo–yes

Mr. Storrow–yes

The motion passed 5-0.

F. New Facilities

Facility Name	Type of Facility	Facility Classification	Location	Changes from Existing Permit
Buncombe County Landfill	Municipal Solid Waste Landfill	Title V	Panther Branch Road, Alexander	Facility will now be back under jurisdiction of AB Air Quality. Updated a condition regarding applicability of a federal rule, 40 CFR Part 60 Subpart WWW “Standards of Performance for Municipal Solid Waste Landfills” has been replaced with 40 CFR Part 62 Subpart OOO which applies to landfills constructed before and not modified since July 17, 2014. This rule includes a lower threshold for when the facility is required to operate a landfill gas collection and control system.

Ms. Featherstone noted that the Buncombe County Landfill II Title V permit has gone through public notice and the EPA 45-day review. This will bring them back under our jurisdiction again. If the Board approves, today will be the issuance date with the effective date of February 1, 2022. They will stay under DAQ this month and on February 1 our permit will go into effect; the state will rescind their permit effective that date. Making the permit effective at the beginning of the month is helpful to the facility in terms of reporting requirements.

One rule has changed since the last time the DAQ issued their permit. The threshold for when the facility is required to operate a landfill gas collection and control system is lower. This is more stringent and has applied to them even though the rule was not previously in the permit. The regulation and requirements have been added to this new permit. Otherwise, the conditions are about the same as they were under the state permit.

The Agency permitted the landfill until 2014 when we turned it over to the state. We have the files and are coordinating with the state to get the paper and electronic files from these last few years.

There is a lot going on at the landfill. They were required to do some testing. Every year they must test the engine. The landfill will be expanding, and this may trigger

a permit action which would put them under another rule. This would mean the permit would have to be opened again in the next few months.

There are two landfills. One is the old Buncombe County Landfill I. This location on Riverside Drive ran an engine for about twenty years. Over time the quality of the gas declines, and the landfill does not produce as much gas. That engine has been shut down. At Landfill II the facility is still burning the gas. It is corrosive, and they must rebuild these engines every few years. There was a year when the landfill gas did not operate 100 or more hours because they had to do a total rebuild of the engine; this is standard for these landfills. The facility has just renewed the contract with Duke. It is not as favorable as before and they are not receiving as much money for the electricity they generate. Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager, is aware. Solid Waste did a presentation to the County Commissioners on this. This contract has been renewed for three more years.

If they are not running the engine, the gas goes to the flare. This is beneficial because methane is a potent greenhouse gas and can be a safety issue because of its flammability.

Ms. Cloninger made a motion to approve the new permit for the Buncombe County Landfill. Mr. Whisnant seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon did not respond -abstain

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 4-0.

VI. New Business:

Potential 2022 Board Retreat

Mr. Storrow noted we had the Board retreat last year. This was the first one in a while. We had a lot going on with the proposed fee increase and name change. He thought we did not need to do one this year since we do not have as much to discuss but wanted to check with the Board to see what the rest of the members thought. Mr. Whisnant suggested we wait until mid-summer to see if any issues arise and perhaps the situation with Covid would allow us to meet in person. The consensus was to wait and see since we do not have any pressing issues. If the Board is able to have a face-to-face meeting at a later date, that would be preferable to a virtual retreat.

VII. Other Business:

A. Legal Counsel Report

Mr. Frue had nothing to report.

B. Advisory Committee Report

1. Committee met December 13, 2021

Dr. Couzo said that the Committee met in December. Keith Bamberger gave an update on the Clean Vehicles Coalition and the parade. He also shared pictures of the parade. They spoke about the membership and the ad which they plan to send out this month. Some language was added to the description of new members which includes environmental education and public outreach. They are hoping for a wide variety of committee members. The committee is also reaching out to high school and college students. They are looking at possible projects. There is a lot of money coming from the Volkswagen

settlement that we may be able to use for school buses. The school buses are owned by the State Department of Public Instruction and not by the County. EPA had a webinar a couple of weeks ago that Ms. Brown attended that discussed a large amount of funds that will be available for school buses. This is very preliminary. There are multiple funding sources. When the Agency received the grant to retrofit school buses, we handled the project, but we did not buy a school bus. Mecklenburg County Air Quality helped Mecklenburg schools get an electric school bus. Ms. Featherstone said she would follow up before the next meeting. The next committee meeting is the beginning of February, and they plan to talk about the ad for new members and possibly applicants.

Ms. Featherstone noted that the committee also worked with the CAPE (Communications and Public Engagement) Communications group to publish a news story on our website about the Clean Air Excellence Award and Eaton. BC Communications did a very nice video which included shots of the site and the new laser.

C. Calendar

1. 2022 WNCRAQA Board Meeting Schedule

There was a conflict with the initial meeting schedule on Mondays at 4:00pm and the second Tuesday of Board months was suggested. November 8 is Election Day. For that meeting, the Board elected to make the meeting on the first Monday of November, November 7, 2022.

Mr. Frue said that the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00pm is always an issue for him. If the Board has a legal issue, we need to check with Mr. Frue ahead of time so that he can make arrangements. Mr. Storrow said that he could call Mr. Frue a week ahead of the Board meetings and they can talk through any items on the Agenda.

The Board room and the Zoom license have been reserved for Tuesdays for whenever we go back to in person meetings. Mr. Raiford will check on that Monday in November.

Ms. Cloninger moved to accept the Board meeting calendar. Dr. Couzo seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Mr. Koon-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 5-0.

2. Next meeting is March 8, 2022

The next meeting will be March 8 at 4:00pm and will probably be virtual.

D. Announcements

Dr. Couzo has installed a Purple Air particulate sensor at the UNCA weather tower. When UNCA did a controlled burn the sensor registered the event, so it is working. Ms. Featherstone said that it is Radon Awareness month in January. If you have not recently, we encourage everyone to get their house tested for radon. The free kits are no longer available but there are kits available at a reduced rate.

Ms. Featherstone thanked Ms. Brown for updating an indoor air presentation that Ms. Featherstone presented at a County Lunch and Learn.

VIII. Public Comment

We did not receive any public comments.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Koon moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48pm.