

Action Summary Minutes  
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY GROUP (EJAG)**

**Thursday, June 22, 2023**

*The Environmental Justice Advisory Group meeting was held via video teleconference (VTC): Central Region Office, Governing Board Room, 1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue, Fresno, the Southern Region Office, VTC Room, 34946 Flyover Court, Bakersfield and teleconference in the Northern Region Office, VTC Room, 4800 Enterprise Way, Modesto. Members of the public were allowed to participate in-person at any of the referenced locations or remotely via Zoom webinar. The CAC Meeting was also webcast.*

1. CALL TO ORDER – The Chair, Nayamin Martinez, called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL – Roll was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Present:

Nayamin Martinez, <b>Chair</b>	Fresno County At Large Representative
Laura Gutile	Madera County At Large Representative
Dennis Brazil	Merced County At Large Representative
Thomas Helme <sup>1</sup>	Stanislaus County At Large Representative
Derek Williams	Tulare County At-Large Representative
Richard O'Brien	CAC City Interest Group (Primary)

3. APPROVE MINUTES FOR APRIL 2023– Ms. Martinez asked if there were any comments regarding the minutes for April 27, 2023. Hearing none, Ms. Martinez deemed the minutes approved.

Public Comment: None

5. CHAIR COMMENTS – Ms. Martinez welcomed everyone, and thanked them for their participation. Ms. Martinez asked Mr. Williams to share an announcement with the members. Mr. Williams shared the news of the recent passing of Ms. Rechima Dean, who served on EJAG in the Ethnic, Small Business Owner seat. Mr. Williams spoke of her work in the Kern County community and offered condolences to her family at this time. Ms. Martinez shared her condolences on behalf of the District as well as the Environmental Justice Advisory Group.
6. DISTRICT COMMENTS – Jessica Olsen, Director of Community Strategies & Resources, shared the same sentiments of Mr. Williams and Ms. Martinez and offered condolences to the Dean family. Ms. Olsen provided an update on recent activities at the Governing Board meeting on June 15, 2023 :

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<sup>1</sup> Arrived at 5:41 p.m.

- The 2023-24 Budget was adopted
- An ozone maintenance plan and oil and gas leak detection and repair rules were adopted
- The Valleywide Clean Air Rooms program received an additional one million dollars
- Mr. Keith Freitas was reappointed as the Kings County At-Large member

Additionally, Ms. Olsen spoke about the three current vacancies on EJAG: Kern County At-Large seat and two Ethnic, Small Business Owner seats. Ms. Olsen shared that there would be continued efforts to fill the vacancies. Ms. Olsen also shared about the newly launched Zero Emissions Landscape Equipment (ZELE) program that offers incentives to commercial landscaping operators for electric lawn and garden equipment.

Mr. Brazil inquired about the areas of eligibility for the EJAG Ethnic, Small Business vacancies. Ms. Olsen responded that these two vacancies can be filled from anywhere within the District's jurisdiction.

Mr. O'Brien asked if the ZELE program would allow the exchange of an older electric piece of equipment. Ms. Olsen explained that it would have to be the exchange of gas-powered equipment for electric.

Ms. Martinez shared her appreciation for the additional funds that were allocated to the Valleywide Clean Air Room program and asked how the additional funds were obtained. Ms. Olsen explained that these were internal District funds that are meant to be used for community projects that were reallocated.

7. UPDATE ON ATTAINMENT PLANS AND RULES – Jon Klassen, Director of Air Quality Science and Planning, provided an update on the District's attainment plan and rule making efforts.

Ms. Martinez inquired about the rules related to oil and gas leaks and shared her concern regarding 22 leaks found in Arvin/Lamont area (performed as part of a AB 617 Community Emissions Reduction Program commitment and statewide initiative focused on inspecting these types of sources). Mr. Klassen explained that this rule amendments focused on reducing emissions of criteria pollutants, such as volatile organic compounds from leaking components. Mr. Klassen further explained that the compliance department performs inspections of subject equipment using equipment able to detect emissions from leaking components, and works with facilities to take necessary action eliminate the leaks as quickly as possible.

Ms. Olsen also added that since the aforementioned leaks were discovered in Arvin/Lamont area that all but one of the leaks had been repaired.

Ms. Martinez asked if a time had been set for the next PM 2.5 workshop will be held and requested that it be held later in the day so that more people who have to work can attend. Mr. Klassen responded that it has yet to be scheduled and that a later meeting start time would be considered.

Public Comment: Matt Holmes

8. UPDATE ON DISTRICT WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE EFFORTS AND CLEAN AIR ROOMS PROGRAM– Robert Gilles, Program Manager in the Science and Planning Department and Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer presented an update on the District’s wildfire prevention and response efforts. Felix Castro, meteorologist with the National Weather Service shared a presentation on this year’s precipitation data as well as the anticipated hot temperatures and how they will affect the air quality.

Mr. Williams shared concerns about energy sources if there are rolling blackouts or power lines down from fires and suggested alternate energy sources, like a generator, to ensure community clean air rooms are able to continue to operate during power outages. Mr. Williams also asked about the hourly impacts and the importance of charting 12 or 24-hour events to stay in compliance. Mr. Gilles responded that the importance of hourly data is more about protecting public health during those instances and using resources to communicate that information to the public.

Mr. O’Brien inquired about the power draw for the larger air filtration systems for community clean air rooms. Ms. Holt did not have specifics on power draw for the units, but stated that there are multiple options that can be chosen to meet the individual needs.

Mr. Brazil asked about the state has done since 2020 for forest management. Mr. Gilles responded that he knows there have been many initiatives from the Governor’s office and that our teams work closely and are in direct communication with land management agencies such as Cal Fire, Forest Services and others to coordinate wildfire fuel load reduction efforts.

Mr. Helme shared another resource for checking air quality online called SJVair.com which is a network of low-cost sensor data. Additionally, Mr. Helme asked about what approach was being taken for the San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties air filter program, since they had a lower response in the pilot program. Mr. Helme also inquired about how the additional funding for the residential air filtration was decided. Ms. Olsen answered that the initial outreach was done working closely with community partners who work in the Valley’s low-income and disadvantaged communities and are working on additional outreach that includes media to continue to spread the information in these communities. Ms. Olsen also explained that the additional funding that recently approved by the

Governing Board was from the same funding source that was used in the initial launch of the program.

Mr. Helme asked Mr. Gilles about wildfires classified as exceptional events for attainment purposes, his concern being that due to global warming these become more common occurrences, how will it be addressed and is there a plan for it? Mr. Gilles responded he is not aware of any changes or plans from EPA currently to change the Clean Air Act and their criteria for what constitutes an exceptional event.

Ms. Martinez commended the use of text alerts for AB617 program, as it is the preferred method of communication. Ms. Martinez inquired if the District is working with health officials to notify the public of the dangers of prolonged exercise outside, such as half marathons or long bike rides when AQI is unhealthy. Ms. Holt responded that we continue to work with the Public Health consortium committee that we are part to address these concerns.

Mr. O'Brien asked Mr. Felix if a recent discovery of a super-cooling thermal sphere that caused rapid cooling would affect the modeling. Mr. Felix responded that since it is in the upper atmosphere and the modeling is based on surface of the air it would not affect the modeling

Mr. Helme asked Mr. Felix to explain the relationship between the El Nino and climate change. Mr. Felix replied that climate change impacts every weather event, and could change El Nino to be stronger or weaker over the years.

Mr. Williams commended the presentation that Mr. Felix shared.

Ms. Gutile thanked Mr. Felix for the informative presentation.

9. UPDATE ON DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF DRIVE CLEAN IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VEHICLE REPAIR AND REPLACE PROGRAMS – Brian Dodds, Program Manager in the District's Grants and Incentives Department provided an update on the Drive Clean in the San Joaquin program. Mr. Dodds shared that this incentive program is part of the District's strategy to meet federal air quality standards by assisting low-income and priority communities to be able to repair and replace their vehicles that are contributing to higher emissions.

Mr. Williams suggested keeping an annual watch for the need to extend the option to include hybrid vehicles in this program as an option since electricity costs might not be affordable. Mr. Dodds responded that these guidelines are set by CARB's grant agreements and that the District will be advocating for flexibility in what will best meet the needs of the Valley's communities. Ms. Olsen also shared that only non-plug-in hybrids are being removed from eligibility while plug-in hybrid vehicles will still be eligible for this program.

Ms. Martinez shared the opinion of Mr. Williams, and would like to state that it is the recommendation of the EJAG to continue to have flexibility based on costs and availability of charging stations in rural areas. Ms. Martinez also inquired about this program and the availability since it had stopped accepting applications due to demand and had a waiting list. Mr. Dodds shared that when the applications begin to be accepted this summer, the previous backlog of applications should be taken care of and the program will be able to support new applications.

Mr. Brazil inquired about the star smog shops and if there are audits available to ensure they are operating correctly. Mr. Dodds responded that part of the certification process for these shops is to submit invoices to Valley Can, who help the District run the program for the Valley, to review prior to releasing payment.

10. AB617 UPDATE – Jessica Olsen, Director of Community Strategies & Resources, provided an update on the Board’s continued commitment to community engagement as well as a summary of the four selected communities the valley. Ms. Olsen shared updates on recent in-person community meetings along with the subcommittee progress in each of the four AB 617 communities.

Mr. Williams and Ms. Martinez both thanked Ms. Olsen for her presentation of the updates.

11. POTENTIAL FUTURE EJAG MEETING AGENDA ITEMS –

Ms. Martinez suggested future items on forest management and the enforcement of the methane rules.

Mr. Helme asked for an update on pesticide subcommittee.

Mr. Williams suggested having a representative from DPR come or county Ag Commissioners to present.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS (2<sup>ND</sup> Opportunity) – None

13. EJAG MEMBER COMMENTS – None

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.