

Action Summary Minutes
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY GROUP (EJAG)

Thursday, February 22, 2024

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, Laura Gutile, called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL – Roll was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Present:

Laura Gutile, Chair	Madera County At Large Representative
Nayamin Martinez	Fresno County At Large Representative
Randeep Grewal	Kern County At Large Representative
Keith Freitas ¹	Kings County At Large Representative
Dennis Brazil	Merced County At Large Representative
Esperanza Vielma ²	San Joaquin County At Large Representative
Derek Williams	Tulare County At Large Representative
Richard O'Brien	CAC City Interest Group Representative (Primary)

3. APPROVE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 25, 2024– Hearing no comments or changes from the members, the chair called for a motion to approve.

Public Comment: None

Moved:	Brazil
Seconded:	O'Brien
Ayes:	Martinez, Gutile, Brazil, Vielma, Williams, O'Brien
Nays:	None
Abstain:	Grewal

Motion passed to approve January 25, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS– The following individual commented on under this item:
None

¹ Arrived at 6:04 p.m.

² Left meeting at 6:24 p.m.

5. CHAIR COMMENTS –Ms. Gutile thanked the members for their attendance and participation in today’s meeting. Ms. Gutile introduced Mr. Randeep Grewal as the newest member, representing Kern At-Large.
6. UPDATE ON ATTAINMENT PLANS AND RULES – Emily Kneeland, Program Manager for the District’s Air Quality Science and Planning Department, provided an update on the District’s attainment plan and rule making efforts.

Mr. O’Brien shared his concerns with the environment in the Valley that impact emissions that make it hard to meet attainment.

Ms. Kneeland responded that there are many challenges faced by the Valley due to topography and meteorology along with other factors. Ms. Kneeland additionally shared that there are some considerations for wildfire or other exceptional events.

Mr. Brazil asked if Congressional representatives are in attendance for the meetings with EPA.

Ms. Olsen shared that the conversations with EPA are nationwide at the executive level, additionally Ms. Olsen expressed that the District is constantly in communication with elected officials to share the many challenges we are facing.

Ms. Martinez commented that she attended the workshop and gave examples of areas that should be considered to help in meeting attainment goals such as; indirect source rule, particularly concerning ammonium emissions and PM 2.5. along with exemptions for fireplace use in Non-attainment areas need more proactive measures.

Ms. Kneeland responded that the District is conducting a robust evaluation and will be including more commitments in the new PM2.5 plan to go above and beyond what is currently being done.

7. DISCUSS AND APPROVE EJAG INCENTIVES SPENDING PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024-25 BUDGET – Jessica Olsen, Director of Community Strategy and Resources explained that the Grants Subcommittee met and developed recommendations for EJAG to consider forwarding to the Governing Board.

Mr. Williams asked if there could be specifications added to include the percentage of funds targeted to small owner operator of fleets in the EJ communities.

Ms. Olsen shared that since these are voluntary incentive programs, we can make sure to have targeted outreach to share that this funding is available and to offer assistance in application processing for those who qualify.

Mr. Brazil inquired about the lead time on the District’s truck replacement program after hearing from someone in his community.

Mr. Tarango shared the lead time for electric truck replacement is 1-2 years.

Mr. Grewal asked about the incentive program intended for operators primarily operating within environmental justice areas. How is it addressed if they operate outside those boundaries?

Mr. Tarango responded that maps are used to determine operators' routes and identify environmental justice areas they intersect. This guides funding allocation to support those communities.

Public Comment: None

Moved: Williams
Seconded: Freitas
Ayes: Martinez, Grewal, Freitas, Gutile, Brazil, Vielma, Williams, O'Brien
Nays: None

Motion passed to approve recommendations for 2024-25 Budget.

8. FUNDING AND OUTREACH FOR REDUCING FIREWORKS AIR QUALITY IMPACTS – Robert Gilles, Program Manager in the District's Air Quality Science and Planning Department along with Brian Dodds, Manger in the District's Strategy and Incentives Department shared an update on the District's Clean Alternatives to Fireworks Pilot Incentive Program.

Ms. Gutile inquired about the type of outreach for this funding and specifically asked if high school celebrations would be included in the program.

Mr. Dodds shared that the outreach for this program has included a wide variety of activities and jurisdictions and school celebrations would qualify for this type of program.

Mr. Williams suggested to have reports available after key dates for fireworks to see the reductions that were made by using these alternatives.

Ms. Olsen shared that the goal of this pilot program is to see what the impacts are over time as firework use is reduced, and evaluate and report back on the findings.

Mr. Freitas asked if the application deadline could be extended in order to give EJAG members more time to share the information.

Mr. Dodds explained that the goal is to get applications in now so that they can be processed prior to July 4th, and ensure there is representations throughout the valley.

Ms. Martinez sees this program as a good opportunity for educating the public on the toxics dispersed from fireworks.

Mr. O'Brien commented that the substitution of fireworks with light shows do not curtail the illegal firework activities that still happen.

Mr. Brazil commended the pilot program as it is a great start, he also said he did not think that funds should go to anyone who is still planning on fireworks show in addition to the drone or light show.

Mr. Grewal asked if there were any plans of expansion to the funding for this pilot program.

Mr. Dodds answered that this will be determined by the response and interest for more funding available.

9. UPDATE ON COMMERCIAL LAWN AND GARDEN INCENTIVES PROGRAM – Brian Dodds, Program Manager for the District's Strategy and Incentives Department, provided an update on the zero-emission landscaping program.

Ms. Gutile inquired about similar programs that are available for residents.

Mr. Dodds shared that there are a few options available for residents, that include rebates for trading in gas powered equipment and also rebates available for the purchase of battery powered equipment.

Mr. Grewal appreciated the program and added that it will also assist with curtailing noise pollution.

Mr. Brazil commended the great program.

10. AB617 UPDATE – Jessica Olsen, Director of Community Strategy and Resources, provided the following updates in the AB 617 program and District's broader community engagement efforts:
- Expanded outreach at local events, such as the Tune In, Tune Up event in Madera, engaging with residents and ValleyCAN to promote programs beyond community air protection funds
 - Collaboration with small communities like Terra Bella, working with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide education, resources, and potentially incentive funding
 - Expectation to secure over \$1 million in new funding, including funds from various sources such as SEP funding from CARB and EPA funding, to benefit households outside of AB 617 communities
 - Plans to address concerns regarding waitlisted individuals and ensure their participation in upcoming programs
 - Proposal to host a community engagement summit on June 22nd, aiming to showcase progress, foster learning among grassroots organizations and CBOs, and provide opportunities for residents to explore environmentally friendly technologies through a vendor fair

Ms. Martinez asked when the air purifier program would be going to board for approval.

Ms. Olsen responded that it is planned for March and will update if that changes.

11. DISTRICT COMMENTS – Jessica Olsen shared the following District updates:
 - Welcome to Mr. Randeep Grewal, serving as the Kern County member at large, joining EJAG
 - Reminder of two ethnic small business owner openings, not geographically restricted- ongoing efforts to outreach to chambers of commerce and ethnic chambers of commerce to seek suitable candidates
 - Discussion on onboarding new members and refreshing understanding of environmental justice principles and strategies
 - Plans to coordinate with the chair to organize a session to reacquaint members with environmental justice principles and strategies
 - Emphasis on tracking updates regarding the strength of the annual PM 2.5 standard and its incorporation into ongoing plans
12. POTENTIAL FUTURE EJAG MEETING AGENDA ITEMS– Mr. Brazil requested an update on the no idle zone at schools.
13. PUBLIC COMMENTS (2nd Opportunity) – The following individual commented on under this item:
None
14. EJAG MEMBER COMMENTS – Mr. Grewal thanked everyone for their warm welcome and all of the hard work and dedication involved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.