

VENTURA COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
March 25, 2021
MINUTES

Chair Sara Head convened the meeting at approximately 6:00 p.m.

I. Director's Report

Dr. Laki Tisopulos, Air Pollution Control Officer, shared that VCAPCD has officially moved to the new office located at 4567 Telephone Road. Dr. Tisopulos invited the Advisory Committee to see the new office, when it is safe. Dr. Tisopulos shared that there were two proposed amendments being presented tonight, staff has worked with industry in the rule development process to address concerns and all parties are in agreement with the proposed amendments, and they should be considered non-controversial.

II. Call to Order

Chair Sara Head called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10 p.m.

III. Roll Call

Present

Michael Hughes
Jay Berger
Alice Sterling
Leslie Cornejo
Sara Head
Paul Meehan
Randy Chapman

Joan Burns
Tom Lucas
Donald Bird
Edward Carloni
Stephen Frank
Steve Colome
Hugh McTernan

Excused

Kim Lim

Richard Nick

Staff

Laki Tisopulos
Tyler Harris

Ali Ghasemi
Danny McQuillan

Public

Ben Oakley
Octavio Haro
Christina Payne

Chris Logan
A. Santos

IV. Minutes

Sara Head asked if any members would like to make a motion to approve the minutes. Paul Meehan moved to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2020 Advisory Committee Meeting. Edward Carloni seconded the motion. The Committee voted 12 yes, 0 no, with 2 abstentions due to not being present at the last meeting.

V. Comments from the Committee

Joan Burns brought up how the City of Thousand Oaks, as part of the Climate Action Plan, are looking at natural gas-powered stoves as a source of greenhouse gases and air toxics. Discussion was tabled until after the Rule presentations during new business.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VII. Officer Elections

Sara Head, the current Committee Chair, shared she was willing to serve again as Chair, if the committee decided so. Joan Burns moved to elect Sara Head as Chair and it was seconded by Michael Hugh. The Committee voted unanimously to reelect Sara Head as Chair.

Paul Meehan, current Vice-Chair, shared he was willing to serve again as Vice-Chair, if the committee decided so. Paul Meehan was nominated to serve as Vice-Chair again by Steve Colome which was seconded by Joan Burns. The Committee voted unanimously to reelect Mr. Meehan as Vice-Chair.

VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

IX. New Business

Proposed Amendments to Rule 71, Crude Oil and Reactive Organic Compound Liquids, and Rule 71.3 Transfer of Reactive Organic Compound Liquids (Estimated time 30 minutes)

Danny McQuillan provided an overview of the proposal to amend Rules 71 and 71.3, and a brief PowerPoint presentation. This proposal is to reduce ROC emissions from ROC liquid transfer operations by requiring increased vapor control requirements and reduce the leak threshold for the 71.x series of rules from 10,000 ppm to 1,000 ppm. The proposal creates a new category which will require vapor control on facilities that transfer 4,000 gallons a day or greater.

There was discussion about how frequently equipment leaks – whether it is a significant problem or happenstance. Less than a handful of major gas leaks go unrepaired under the previous rule.

There was a question about cost for new emission control standards. There is no cost increase to meet standards – facilities already use equipment that meet the new standards. Equipment is already in place – carbon adsorption systems – to meet standards as long as the equipment is properly maintained. They might need to fine tune equipment to meet 95% efficiency. These facilities are all permitted with periodic source tests required, so we have confirmed their ability to meet the new standards.

There was a question about quarterly monitoring – usually it is done by 3rd party. District staff conducts annual inspections and has the ability to inspect more frequently if needed.

There was a question whether there were any impediments to comply with the amendments. Staff responded that there were no known impediments to compliance.

There was a question about ongoing large leaks similar to Northridge. Staff responded there were no known large leaks of that sort. Chair Head noted that the Northridge leak was a natural gas storage facility which is a very different operation than the facilities subject to these rules.

There was a question about quantified emission reductions from these rule amendments. Staff responded 0.8 tons ROC per year due to increasing vapor control with loading operations.

There was a question about implementation and any lessons learned from implementation elsewhere. Staff responded that any leaks are fixed by facility – no one wants to have a leak. But equipment has occasional leaks just under normal operation. These rules have not been updated for many years and they were identified by the California Air Resources Board as needing to be updated to meet AB 617 Best Available Retrofit Control Technology (BARCT) requirements. Our rule is based on San Joaquin Valley rule which was considered BARCT. Have not learned of any issues in implementation and enforcement.

There was a question regarding comments from industry and how they were addressed. Did industry agree that staff addressed their concerns? Staff responded that we discussed the response with Aera and California Resources Corporation about the changes and they were satisfied. Ben Oakley of Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) stated they engaged with the air district during the process and appreciate the changes made. He had no additional comments.

There was a question about the other states represented by WSPA, but Mr. Oakley stated he does not have any interaction with the other states so cannot provide an answer.

Steven Frank made a motion to recommend approval of the rules and Hugh McTernan seconded the motion. The motion passed with 13 votes in favor and one against. Tom Lucas opposed the

regulation, and stated he was concerned about the requirement to reduce emissions based on state of California requirements and the District is making a rash decision.

City of Thousand Oaks land use plan being updated. There was discussion of phasing out natural gas appliances in residential development. Two questions – are there incentive programs, or does the District envision incentives similar to Carl Moyer for this issue. Also is there a health issue with gas appliances, such as do they cause asthma.

Staff responded that there is not anything on the near horizon, but there could be a program in the future similar to the wood smoke reduction program. Codes will likely change to prohibit natural gas appliances in new development in the near future. But to remove gas appliances from existing housing and buildings, incentive programs are the likely first step.

Ventura County is already moving forward with codes to prohibit gas appliances in new development. Incentive programs work in the absence of regulations. Not aware of current program. Incentives may move in that direction as they move to address smaller sources.

A committee member noted there has been issues with blackouts and brownouts, and reducing electricity generation from coal. Expect more blackouts and brownouts when the electric car mandate comes into effect in 2035. Cost in lifestyle and cost of living for these restrictions.

A committee member addressed the health impacts of gas appliances in homes. With normal gas cooking the concentrations of oxides of nitrogen exceed the ambient limits for outdoor air pollution. Gas combustion is a clear health and epidemiological link to health impacts. The monograph is available on EPA website.

Ojai just passed a reach code prohibiting the hookup of natural gas in new buildings. The goal is to begin the process of moving away from fossil fuels. Utilities are increasing generation and hardening the transmission to account for this. Cost is not as high as some believe due to increases in efficiency of electric heat pumps, etc.

A committee member expressed concern about the capacity of the grid to bring renewable power to residents. Another noted the perceived cost of charging electric vehicles.

X. Adjournment

Having no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:56 p.m.

Prepared by:

Danny McQuillan and Tyler Harris

Air Pollution Control District Staff