



**Board of Directors Meeting
MWCOG
Rooms 4 & 5
March 9, 2006**

Present:

Olivia Achuko, DC DOE
Gary Allen, Center for Chesapeake Communities
Maurice Keys, DDOT
Bob Maddox, MDE
John McKie, VA DEQ
Randy Mosier, MDE
John Quinn, Constellation Energy
Gus Robey, VDRPT
Lizz Rogers, Northrop Grumman
Dan Salkovitz, VA DEQ
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Didian Tsongwain, Prince George's County
Beverly Warfield, Prince George's County
Hon. Patrice Winters, City of Fairfax

Guests:

Cliff Fox, VCU

Staff:

Jen Desimone, MWCOG
Joan Rohlf, MWCOG
Keri Shoemaker, PRR
Russ Ulrich, BMC
Denise Walz, PRR
Harriet West, Clean Air Partners

Call to Order: Kanti Srikanth called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Managing Director's Report: Harriet West

As of February, 2006, revenues (\$677,569) were ahead of expenditures (\$474,342). The cash balance as of February 28 was \$203,227.

Recent Activities

- Worked with the Marketing Committee, AQAD Team, and Dr. Cliff Fox on conducting two focus groups with AQAD participants. The first focus group was conducted at COG on February 16, 2006 and the second focus group was conducted on February 23, 2006 at BMC. The findings will be used to develop recommendations for modifications to the program.
- Working with the Marketing Committee to draft the FY2007 Marketing Plan.

- Participated in the Printing Industries of Virginia (PIVA) Regional Conference in Northern Virginia on March 7, 2006 to introduce Clean Air Partners to the organization's membership and discuss the voluntary AQAD program for printers. Surveys were distributed to a few PIVA members.
- Began working with Environmental Education Exchange (EEE) to develop the education curriculum.
- Attended the EPA National Air Quality Conference. Presentations from the conference can be found on the EPA AIRNow web site.

Activities Planned for Jan-Mar 2006

- Work with the Marketing Committee and PRR on the FY 2007 Marketing Plan and present to the Board for approval (Mar – May).
- Work with COG staff on the FY 2007 Work Program and Budget and present to the Board for approval (Mar – May).
- Work with PRR on 2006 sponsorships (Mar – June).
- Distribute printer survey and compile results (Mar – Apr).
- Send first membership renewal notice to current members and membership information to potential new members (Mar – May).

Proposed Changes to the Air Quality Action Days Program:

The 8-Hr Ozone Standard and AQAD Survey Results: Joan Rohlf, Jen Desimone, and Randy Mosier Staff provided a summary of the new EPA eight-hour standard for ground level ozone and the results of a nation-wide AQAD survey conducted by COG in August 2005. The purpose of the AQAD survey was to determine when forecasting regions call Air Quality Action Days (AQAD), Code Orange (or higher). This survey showed that 25 of the 29 regions contacted call AQADs at the Code Orange level. The only forecasting areas surveyed that do not report AQAD on code orange or higher are located in San Joaquin, CA, the Pennsylvania/New Jersey region, and Baton Rouge, LA.

Focus Group Results: Dr. Cliff Fox

Dr. Cliff Fox, with the Center for Environmental Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, reported on the results from two focus groups conducted with the AQAD participants. The focus groups were held in February at COG and BMC. The purpose was to get input from AQAD members on their level of participation over the past few years, how the new EPA standard may affect their participation in the future, and the most effective ways of communicating changes about the program. Additionally, input was sought on the following options: 1) calling AQADs at Code Orange; 2) dropping the use of AQAD and strengthening Code Red and Code Orange messaging; or 3) calling AQADs based on multi-day episodes. In both regions, participants strongly favored dropping the use of AQADs and focusing on the messaging and actions related to Code Red and Code Orange.

Dr. Fox's presentation is available on the COG website. Board members may request copies of the final report.

Recommended Changes to the AQAD Program: Harriet West

Harriet West presented the recommended changes for the core components of the AQAD program; forecasting, marketing, administration, and evaluation.

Program recommendations are as follows:

- The AQI color code will be used when issuing forecasts. The higher AQI, either ozone or particles will be reported.
- Increase media awareness of Code Orange and stress the health message.
- Engage the business community to take actions on Code Orange days.

- Communicate the region's success in meeting the prior ozone standard. Explain the connection between air quality and weather, conveying the message of why air quality has not been as strong a factor in the past few years.
- Use the AQAD label internally. When reporting unhealthy air quality use the color code.
- Conduct additional surveys and/or focus groups to gauge awareness of Code Orange and participation level.

Dan Salkovitz stated that Clean Air Partners' shift to using only the color codes would be consistent with Richmond, Roanoke, and Winchester, VA. Currently, Roanoke and Winchester call AQADs at the Code Orange level.

Gary Allen stated that he would like to redefine the actions for businesses. He expressed concern that businesses will not have any new actions for Code Orange. There should be a long-term commitment in order to achieve behavior change.

There was consensus from the Board members present to modify the program by focusing on Code Red and Code Orange, rather than "Air Quality Action Days," which have historically applied to Code Red Days. There may also be a need to develop a "tiered" approach for recommended actions for employers and individuals based on Code Red and Code Orange.

New Business

No new business

Adjournment: 2:00 p.m.