

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Pollution Prevention Advisory Committee
Conference Call Minutes
June 15, 2006 – 9:30 a.m.**

Location:

12100 Park 35 Circle
Building F
Conference Room 564
Austin, TX 78753

Conference Line:

512-239-4395
Meeting ID: 1112#
Password: 4255#

Sharla Hotchkiss, Luke Metzger, Melanie Barnes, AW Armstrong, Cindy Morphew, Berna Dette Williams, Bee Moorhead, Paula Littles, Debbie Boyle, Robert Gill. Jennifer Allis Ahrens and James Voelker

I. Approval of Agenda

Sharla Hotchkiss motioned to approve. Cindy Morphew seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.

II. Consideration of Minutes

- a. February 27, 2006
- b. April 5, 2006
- c. May 11, 2006

Melanie Barnes asked if anyone had any corrections or comments.

AW Armstrong suggested that there was a common theme throughout the minutes. He noted that there were a lot of questions, suggesting that many times the answers come from earlier meetings. He suggested that a lot of issues have come up, adding that there are also a lot of different expertise among committee members. He believes the general question seems to be what can the committee do together. He pointed to the question from Sharla Hotchkiss about the need for direction on where the PPAC fits in to the agency's goals and SBEA's goals, adding that personal education has been identified as a priority for the agency.

Sharla Hotchkiss said she didn't see any changes that need to be made.

Ms. Barnes believes a word was missing in the May 11 minutes. She said that the word "why" needs to be added in the question of having more people on the phone. She said she supports Mr. Armstrong's comments.

Mr. Armstrong said he is interested in hearing other people's comments.

Mr. Armstrong motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Barnes seconded. The minutes for the February 27, April 5, and May 11 meetings were approved.

III. Selection of new PPAC Co-Chair

Consideration of the nomination of Sharla Hotchkiss to replace Melanie Barnes as PPAC Co-Chair.

Melanie Barnes reported that her grant proposal has been funded. She said that the grant requires significant commitments, and she believes she needs to devote her time to this project and not to other commitments such as co-chair for PPAC. She said she wanted to nominate Sharla Hotchkiss to take over as co-chair.

Ms. Hotchkiss said she believes the committee is at a turning point. She suggested that both TCEQ and PPAC are in the midst of change and she looks forward to helping move both groups through the process.

The nomination was seconded by Cindy Morphew. Ms. Hotchkiss was unanimously approved with no objections.

AW Armstrong said he is especially looking forward to getting Ms. Hotchkiss' guidance on proper procedures and protocols for committees such as this.

Ms. Barnes said that she believes Ms. Hotchkiss will be especially good because education has consistently come up as a priority for the committee, and Ms. Hotchkiss in a good place to help lead the discussion.

IV. Re-Structuring the PPAC

Melanie Barnes suggested that the May meeting was frustrating to not have more people attend and participate. She added that AW Armstrong has mentioned some general frustrations as well. Ms. Barnes said that she believes the discussion at the May meeting was a good one, noting that the committee spent a lot of time on a discussion of the need for education. She added that she believes the issue of personal education could be a good role for the PPAC.

Sharla Hotchkiss found out about Teaching Environmental Science through a newspaper article. She suggested that it would be good to get an idea of what SBEA does.

James Voelker said that staff could send out a summary of the sorts of programs SBEA is already implementing.

AW Armstrong said it would be good for PPAC if SBEA could help identify any deficiencies that may need to be filled.

Ms. Hotchkiss agreed that would be good, adding that the ideas could identify not only where PPAC feels it can help, but also where staff and the TCEQ thinks PPAC can help.

Bee Moorehead asked if the committee had that information, would it be the role of the committee to recommend possible strategies for improving on identified deficiencies, or would it be that the PPAC would have its own committee that it would own.

Cindy Morphew suggested that the TCEQ has program managers already focused on improving operations, adding that the PPAC is an advisory committee. She said she doesn't believe the PPAC should take on projects of its own that the TCEQ is already working on.

Ms. Hotchkiss suggested that the committee has taken on projects of its own and advocated certain issues and programs in the past.

Ms. Morphew agreed, adding that it was always within the role of an advisory committee.

Ms. Barnes said that she believes the committee has a positive history of pointing to potential problems.

Ms. Morphew said that again, that would fall in the advisory role. She suggested that the committee needs to bring together the regulated and the regulator to try to identify opportunities to partner for pollution prevention.

Ms. Moorehead pointed to LIRAP as an area where the agency could improve how it manages the program. She asked if the role of the committee would be to bring together car mechanics, lower-income individuals, and law enforcement to try to determine where it can be improved, or would the committee's role be to just provide a list of possible strategies for improving the program and leave it at that.

Ms. Morphew suggested that the committee could bring in someone from another section that the committee has questions about. She added that if the committee agrees on some areas where members of the committee believe the TCEQ might not be maximizing on its effectiveness, staff from that area could sit down and brief the committee. She suggested that such a dialogue could provide a greater understanding.

Mr. Armstrong said he believes that approach makes sense, especially as the committee identifies new issues. He suggested that one area of concern for the industries he represents is how to incorporate a certified EMS in enforcement issues. He said that it might be good to hear from staff on how that is taking place.

Ms. Barnes suggested, as an answer to everyone's points, that the committee has done all of that in the past. She suggested that a list of priorities from SBEA could be helpful, and the committee could identify the areas they feel there might be issues that staff could help in addressing. She added that the issue Mr. Armstrong brings up sounds a lot like what happened with the SDRS discussion and the SDRS subcommittee. She suggested that it might be helpful to look at the core programs, especially those with few participants, and let the committee look at why participation might be low. She pointed to the issue of mercury switches, where the committee brought the various sides together, they came up with some recommendations, and the various sides moved on. She said that she believes the committee is headed in the right direction, adding that it might be good to just pick two issues and work to get information and potential action items.

James Voelker said that staff has worked with other areas of the agency to bring that sort of information and staff from those areas to address any issues that the committee might be seeking information on. He pointed to EMRS as a good example of that, where staff came in and answered the committee's questions.

Mr. Armstrong said that when the committee looks at goals and focus areas that Matt laid out, he thinks a focus is on addressing the priorities and identifying opportunities for doing more with fewer resources. He suggested that environmental management systems provide that opportunity. He believes the program allows facilities to identify risks and strategies for addressing those risks, while not allowing facilities to get off the hook. He also suggested that this approach helps take some of the stress off of the agency and its resources. He went on to report that industries have been hesitant to sign on, pointing to TxOGA as a good example, where an industry has not had a lot of participation in the CLEAN TEXAS program.

Ms. Morphew suggested that some of the hesitancy was because many industry representatives did not see many benefits.

Mr. Armstrong agreed that industries have seen that, adding that they have also identified other obstacles and problems to participating.

a. Semi-annual face-to-face meetings

James Voelker suggested that the committee should come to some consensus in terms of schedules for future meetings.

Cindy Morphew said she would prefer quarterly meetings. She said she believes they provide a good opportunity to get together and get things done.

Melanie Barnes noted that with travel reimbursed, members have more opportunities to get together in person.

Mr. Voelker added that the travel budget is limited, so there is a limit to the number of face-to-face meetings that can take place.

Ms. Hotchkiss said that she likes the idea of face-to-face meetings semi-annually, with quarterly meetings on teleconference.

Ms. Morphew suggested that the committee could also explore opportunities for meeting in other locations other than Austin. She cited the facility where the 2005 retreat was held.

Ms. Barnes suggested a questionnaire might be helpful to gauge members' preferences.

Berna Dette Williams said that she prefers a limited number of face-to-face meetings, especially given that travel for ex officio representatives is not reimbursed. She agreed that the questionnaire could provide an efficient way to have some initial discussions without taking up too much time during meetings.

Ms. Barnes suggested that staff could develop it and send the questionnaire out.

Ms. Williams said that she believes the committee needs to take action on something. She added that the committee has been discussing the same thing in meeting after meeting, and that a lot of what the committee has been discussing could happen over e-mail as well.

V. Other Business

James Voelker reported that the staff would be initiating the appointment process to fill vacancies.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.