

Golden Triangle Small Business Advisory Committee

Small Business and Local Government Assistance Section
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Tuesday, September 15, 2009 – 11:30am-1:00pm

Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission, Transportation Conference Room

www.sblga.info

Draft Minutes

Attendees

Kent Batman, Hardin Fuels

John Hignett, Bevil Oaks MUD

Candace Broucher, J&R Services

Lori Palmer, TCEQ

Ken Clemmer, Piping Accessories, Inc.

Jeff Rogers, Rogers Lumber

Linda Gernentz, Indeco Environmental

Gary Sitton, Sitton Oil Co.

Kurtis Gernentz, Indeco Environmental

Will Wyman, TCEQ

Open Forum

Lori Palmer addressed the questions that were brought up in the last meeting:

- Someone had asked how to dispute a violation. Lori explained that an exit interview will take place after an investigation, during which any violations found will be discussed, and the facility has the right to meet with the regional office to discuss the findings. She also explained that communicating with the agency in writing is the best way for a facility to protect its legal rights. She suggested the publication “The TCEQ Has Inspected Your Business”. Will Wyman added that a facility needs to be able to support its dispute of a violation with the rules. It is important to let the investigator know how the violation is being resolved. Candace Broucher asked about the Regional Director position that had recently been vacated by Georgie Volz after she retired. Lori told her that the position had recently been posted and was expected to be filled soon; she will let the Small Business Advisory Committee (SBAC) know when the new Regional Director has been selected [ACTION].
- Another question was asked about the new groundwater disinfection rule. Lori said that the rule would become effective December 1st, and the Public Drinking Water section is writing a guidance document about the new requirements. She will let the SBAC know when this guidance document is ready [ACTION].
- Another person had asked about the General Land Office; he was provided information about spills from their website.
- Someone asked for a summary of hydrocarbon spill rules; he was provided with a copy of 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 327 (Spill Prevention and Control) and a brief explanation of reportable quantities.
- Someone else asked about small business and local government grants. Jeff Rogers explained the Texas Emissions Reductions Plan (TERP) grant process, and Lori informed the group about the upcoming rebate grant period and TERP Workshop coming up on September 22 from 1:30 to 4:30. Lori also explained how to sign up for e-mail updates from the TCEQ on a variety of subjects, including TERP.

Will Wyman, Small Business and Local Government Assistance Team Leader

Will informed the committee about the personnel changes in the agency. Brian Shaw replaced Buddy Garcia as the Chairman (Mr. Garcia still serves as a Commissioner.) The newest commissioner is Carlos Rubenstein, who replaced Larry Soward. The new Deputy Executive Director is Zak Covar.

During the legislative special session, the Sunset Review Process was moved up two years ahead of schedule, and is now set to take place in 2010-2011. The Sunset Review Commission is a legislative body that reviews the policies and programs of more than 150 government agencies every 12 years. More information about the Sunset Review Process can be found at: <http://www.sunset.state.tx.us/>.

Will also described the main projects SBLGA will be working on this year (other than direct customer assistance): “Air Ninja” air pollutant reduction assistance, Border Summits in the valley area, outreach for new guidance for petroleum storage tanks, assistance for small troubled drinking water systems, and advocacy for owners of out-of-service underground storage tanks.

Next meeting is planned for Tuesday, December 15, 2009.