

# Golden Triangle Small Business Advisory Committee

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

Tuesday, September 21, 2010 – 11:30am-1:00pm

Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission,  
Transportation Conference Room

[www.sblga.info](http://www.sblga.info)

## *Draft Minutes*

### Attendees

Candace Broucher, J & R Services	Lori Palmer, TCEQ - SBLGA
Greg Gabriele, Triangle Waste	Beth Rach, State Representative Mike Hamilton's office
Andrew Gardner, TCEQ-SBLGA	Jason Robinson, TCEQ – SBEA
Eddie Hall, Mabry Castings	Jeff Rogers, Rogers Lumber
Ashley Morgan, TCEQ-Intergovernmental Relations	

### Open Forum

Most of the members in attendance said that business is still slow. Candace said that as a Type V municipal solid waste facility, her business had been recycling grease trap waste. A company had been taking their solids, largely due to a tax credit of \$1 per gallon, which has since expired. Candace wants to know why Congress hasn't renewed the alternative fuel tax credit, because now she has to dispose of this material rather than recycle it. Greg Gabriele said that some new development had begun construction in Port Neches recently. However, someone in a state vehicle came to the site and put a stop to the construction, stating that a hydrology study was needed. He wants to know what agency requires a hydrology study before the owner can proceed with construction.

Jeff stated that the meetings need to have more business representatives. Lori asked what the committee thinks would increase attendance at the meetings. Candace said the committee needs more outreach into the community. Many volunteer organizations are having similar issues due to increased work commitments. Andy said that the next few meetings will bring more issues of importance to small businesses, which should improve attendance. The suggestion was made to move the meetings back to the airport, where they were held a few years ago; Lori will check on the availability [ACTION].

Beth Rach said that the next legislative session would begin in January. She said that the state budget shortfall and redistricting are expected to be big issues during this session. The budget shortfall is estimated at \$21 billion, due to a drop in sales tax revenue.

## **Andy Gardner, Section Manager, Small Business and Local Government Assistance**

Andy introduced Jason Robinson, the new Rural Ombudsman for TCEQ. This position was created in part to help small water and wastewater systems work with the agency and find resources to achieve compliance. He also said the Sunset staff report is due in mid-November. The Sunset staff report will have recommendations to improve agency operations. There will be a hearing on December 15-16 to hear testimony from Sunset staff, the TCEQ, and the public about the agency. The Sunset bill will contain the statutory recommendations adopted at the hearing, and will go through the normal legislative process. The CAP is expected to meet the first week of December, and they may ask for input from the SBACs.

The EPA will announce the new ozone standard near the end of October. Also, recycling is becoming a big issue as it continues to grow. Many electronics recyclers don't realize there are rules. SBLGA has created a recycling compliance checklist, which will be available soon.

Candace asked Andy about the EPA's challenge to Texas air permits. He explained that the EPA's position is that Texas' flexible air permits violate the Clean Air Act. The EPA maintains that each individual emission source at a site needs to be permitted. The EPA also objects to some of the public notice requirements in Texas' state air permits. Although the flexible permits issue doesn't affect many small businesses, there are more federal regulations that are starting to have impacts on small businesses. One way that SBLGA advocates for small businesses is by participating in a national technical subcommittee that informs the EPA of possible impacts on small businesses that would result from proposed rules.

**The next SBAC meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2010.**