

Houston Small Business Advisory Committee Minutes

June 24, 2009

FISCAL YEAR 2009 PRIORITIES

Provide input on TCEQ rules and policies to represent small businesses and strengthen partnerships with local elected officials.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS - The meeting was called to order at 9:45 AM. Each of the participants introduced themselves and the business/organization they represented.

REVIEW ACTION ITEMS FROM March 19, 2008 MEETING - Clarence Gray lead the discussion of the below topics:

Hurricane Ike Survey

The Houston SBLGA staff received and compiled data for the Hurricane Ike Survey. A handout was provided to the SBAC members and guest. Co-Chair Mowry wanted the committee members affected by the storm to provide a brief script on lessons learned (Action Item).

Houston Air Quality Monitoring Network Presentation

Donna Phillips, Houston Regional Director, was unable to attend the meeting however she agreed to facilitate finding a speaker for the September 2009 meeting. (Action Item).

Fiscal year 2010 SBAC Issues

Andrew Gardner, Small Business and Local Government Assistance (SBLGA) Section Manager's request for FY 2010 SBAC input. To assist with this request Houston SBLGA staff developed and distributed a survey document to be discussed during a FY 2010 planning meeting in August.

SPECIAL GUEST - *Nicholas J. Guillen, City of Houston, Fire/Greater Houston Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)*

Accompanied by Fire Captain Price, Mr. Guillen discussed the history and mission of the local LEPC. Mr. Guillen stated that public, private organizations and governmental agencies are represented on the LEPC. His presentation detailed the emergency reporting procedures under SARA Title III. He emphasized that reports must be submitted to the proper place. Electronic reporting is available; however, some software challenges still exist. The Houston Fire Department will make courtesy visits upon request and will conduct random visits to facilities. Captain Price stressed the need for businesses of all sizes to have a good personnel accountability procedure in place in case of an emergency. SBLGA will place a note in the Advocate newsletter that stresses personnel accountability in an emergency (Action Item). Co-chairman Mowry wants the Local LEPC/HFD to be familiar with TCEQ's Compliance Commitment (C2) partnership program. SBLGA will provide copies of current C2 information including compliance checklist to the LEPC (Action Item).

LOCAL PROGRAM UPDATE - Reports from local program partners was tabled until the September 2009 meeting.

AUSTIN UPDATE- *Brian Christian, Division Director, Small Business Environmental Assistance Division* Members and guest were informed of the confirmation of Commissioner Bryan W. Shaw by the Texas Legislature and the August 31, 2009 term expiration of Commissioner Larry R. Sower. Ms. Susana Hildebrand was selected for the position of Chief Engineer/Deputy Director. Donna Phillips was promoted to the position of Area Manager for the Coastal Texas Area. Mr. Christian explained changes to water fees authorized by the Legislature. The new rules affect three fee categories: wastewater, Public Water Supply (PWS) and water rights. Fee increases were approved by the Commissions on July 8, 2009 and will be effective on the next billing cycle (Fall 2009). Several legislative actions were mentioned and discussed. Most notable was the possibility of a Sunset Review of the TCEQ in 2011 (now confirmed). Other actions of note include the passage of a bill requiring emergency power back up for water and wastewater systems.

Financial assistance to assist with emergency equipment purchase may be available through the Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA). The passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1095 moves auto dismantler licensing to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation and require the acquisition of a stormwater permit prior to obtaining a license to operate. There will be continued authorization and enhancements to Texas Emission Reduction Program (TERP). Under Senate Bill 1693, the TCEQ Executive Director is allowed to issue certain agreed order without first going before the Commissioners. Under House Bill 3547, the Commission has the authority to shut down drycleaner facilities who fail to register.

RECAP ACTION ITEMS AND CLOSING REMARKS:

1. Provide C2 program information (including copies of compliance checklists) to Houston LEPC
2. Place article in the Advocate newsletter about personnel accountability in times of emergency.
3. Place water fee increase article in Advocate newsletter.
4. Solicit, collect, and compile Hurricane Ike “lessons learned” stories from members affected by the storm.
5. Plan/conduct an FY 2010 Houston SBAC goal setting and planning meeting in August 2009. Date, time and location TBD.

See www.sblga.info to find a full list of compliance tools or <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/sblga/sbac.html> for membership lists, meeting dates and directions.

Next SBAC Meeting: Wednesday, September 16, 2009