

Houston Small Business Advisory Committee Minutes

March 10, 2010

Fiscal Year 2010 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 10:15 AM by Co-Chair J. Kelley Mowry. Each of the 33 participants introduced themselves and the business/organization they represented.

REVIEW ACTIONS ITEMS FROM DECEMBER 16, 2009 MEETING - Matt Boger briefly discussed minutes from the December 16, 2009 meeting and commented that no action items were outstanding.

SPECIAL GUEST - Walt Crow, Senior Project Manager, Houston Regional Monitoring (HRM) Network System. Mr. Crow presented an overview on the air quality in the Houston Area. HRM has been monitoring air quality in Houston since 1981 and shares data along with the City of Houston, Harris County, Galveston County Health District, and Fort Bend County with TCEQ, as a combine monitoring network, to provide air quality data to the public. The monitoring activities in the Houston area are one of the most extensive air monitoring areas in the world. Mr. Crow provided detailed information to illustrate the improvements in air quality in the Houston area. Handouts of the presentation were presented to the all guest and members.

LOCAL PROGRAM UPDATE - Local program partners provided brief comments regarding their current and future initiatives. **Fort Bend County - Troy Scalco:** The County has many focuses including food services, OSSF, waste haulers, and environmental crimes. One main focus for Fort Bend County is to prepare for auto-salvage facilities that will be moving to the area due to a new ordinance passed in Harris County. Fort Bend County is conducting unannounced inspections of the auto-salvage facilities. **Brazoria County- Jeff Mink:** Brazoria County has similar issues to Fort Bend County. Brazoria County is also aware that there may be auto-salvage facilities moving to the County due to recent ordinances in Harris County. Mr. Mink stated that he judges each case on intent, and does not send the bad actors to SBLGA staff. The County also is sending out letters of agreement to the regulated entity requesting that they come into compliance and eliminate criminal action. **Montgomery County-Pat Buzbee:** Montgomery County is also expecting increases in the number of auto-salvage facilities in the county due to recent ordinances in Harris County. A main concern in Montgomery County is the 25-30,000 OSSF in the Woodlands area. Mr. Buzbee also noted that there is a new District Attorney for Montgomery County so there may be some new initiatives in the near future.

AUSTIN UPDATE - *Andrew Gardner* -The EPA has proposed lowering the ozone standard to 0.6 - 0.7 ppm. The TCEQ has provided comments to the EPA on the new ozone standard that explain why the agency disagrees with the proposed standard. The Supreme Court has ruled that the EPA is not required to consider the impacts of the new standard on business, but that does not mean that there is no impact. The proposed greenhouse gas rule affects sources emitting 25,000 metric tons or greater, but that threshold will likely increase. Currently only the reporting rule is in effect for greenhouse gases. EPA has indicated that nobody will be required to get additional permits before 2011, and no small business impacts are expected before 2016. The comment period for the 2010 Texas 303(d) list closed on March 8. This is a list of impaired water bodies in Texas (like a nonattainment list for water). Water bodies and segments may be impaired for different parameters such as dissolved oxygen, bacteria, and mercury. If a body of water is on the list, any permits for discharges to that water body may be more stringent. The Clean Water Act is a current priority for the EPA, so the rules are expected to be more stringent in the future.

The Sunset Review is currently underway for the TCEQ, and there will be an opportunity for public comment in the fall. Sunset review provides an opportunity for the SBAC to let the agency know what it can do to help small business. The committee needs to decide if they would like to comment. On a sad note, Mr. Gardner relayed the news that the Houston Regional Director, Marsha Hill passed away this month.

Compliance Commitment Recognition: J. Kelly Mowry introduced and recognized three businesses that are part of the compliance commitment (C2) program: Mr. Jose Portillo of VVV Recycling, Ms. Maria Moreno of G & A Pallet/ Four Way Pallet, and Ms. Pam Lawhon of Leo Martin Chevrolet.

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 June 09, 2010