

East Whatcom Community Council
Clean Air Committee meeting summary

Nov. 20, 2013

Members present: Rebecca Brown, Phil Cloward, Laura Curley, Veronica Dearden, Jerry DeBruin, David Moe, Wain Harrison, Wade Gardner, Lou Piotrowski, Mark Schofield, Katie Skipper, Viktor Vetkov

- 1. Introductions** – In addition to the committee members present, four community members introduced themselves: Ashley Davis, Nicholas Benske, Kelly Benske and Alexis Benske

- 2. Approval of Oct. 16, 2013 meeting summary** – Wain Harrison moved to approve the Oct. 16, 2013, meeting summary. Phil Cloward seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the meeting summary.

- 3. Open public comment (limited to 3 minutes per person)** – Columbia Valley resident Ashley Davis said she and her family are concerned about the meth problem in the area. She said it gets in the air and makes them sick. Veronica Dearden offered to help Ashley take appropriate follow-up steps. Lou Piotrowski offered to follow-up, too.

Nicholas Benske, who lives in the same home, said people burning garbage in the area is also a problem. David Moe said Nick could call the fire department or flag down the department's white Ford Expedition. Lou said they could also make a call from the phone at the Resource Center.

- 4. Additions to the agenda - none**

- 5. Committee member reports**
B.C. air quality conference - Rebecca Brown reported that she attended an air quality conference in B.C. recently. One of the major topics was particulate pollution from wood smoke, including new information about the effects of wood smoke on indoor air quality. She said studies show improvements when residents change out uncertified stoves for certified stoves. One program focuses on residents with respiratory issues, changing out their stoves and putting in air filters. The air filters sell for less than \$150 and reduce indoor particulate by up to 60 percent. She said there were four presentations from universities and that she would send around a link to their PowerPoint slides. She said there was discussion about a program in Libby, Mont., to change out woodstoves. Despite the equipment upgrades, they're still having problems because people don't use them properly. She said there was so much interest in woodstove issues at the conference that organizers said they would plan a whole-day event in the spring.

Action item: Rebecca will send a link to presentations from the air quality conference she recently attended. She will include information about the filters discussed at the conference.

On Nov. 27, Rebecca provided information completing the above action item:

Pacific Northwest International Section of the Air & Waste Management Association conference presentations

- Woodstove presentation:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lajgar9z0qonpuc/mVUEjwwZ3Y/Session%203B%20Chair%20Tony%20Ward>
- Woodstoves and indoor air quality:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lajgar9z0qonpuc/kesNawFRC6/Session%203B%20Chair%20Tony%20Ward/Ward%20Indoor%20Intervention.pdf>
- Filtrete air purifier by 3M. Estimated cost \$100-170:
http://www.filtrete.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/FiltreteNA/Filtrete/Products/?N=7569913+4315+3294529207&rt=r3

Presentation to the NWCAA Board of Directors – Julie thanked Lou, Phil, Jerry and Wade for coming to the NWCAA Board of Directors meeting. She said it left quite an impression, and that she heard multiple compliments from the agency’s Board and leadership team. She said it’s unusual to have community members come talk to the Board. It was nice to hear the community support for making things happen. Katie added her appreciation, saying that the presentation was the best demonstration that this is a collaborative and community-driven effort.

Phil said the highlight for the delegation was when Board member Ron Wesen asked what the delegation needs from the Board.

Katie wondered if it might be a good time to take a similar presentation to the Whatcom County Council. Wain said he would look into getting on an upcoming agenda, possibly in March.

Action item: Wain will look into getting a Clean Air Committee presentation to an upcoming County Council agenda.

Action item: All Clean Air Committee members will think about what to ask for from the NWCAA Board, and how best to ask for it.

Retrofit devices – Laura said the designers of the smoke-reducing retrofit device are able to install the device on the roof, rather than inside the house, out of consideration for aesthetics. Regardless of where it’s installed, it requires an electrical power supply. Phil said he would work on finding someone to try out the device. Perhaps it could be awarded to someone as a raffle item.

Action item: Phil will work on finding someone to test the woodstove retrofit device.

Recent air quality – Katie provided recent air quality data. Particulate concentrations were up and increasing, with cold, stagnant air conditions in the forecast. She and Rebecca noticed lots of smoky chimneys on the drive from Bellingham to the Resource Center.

Jerry and Dave said they had received a number of calls related to burning on timber lands in the surrounding mountains, prompting a discussion about “land burning.” Katie asked if such practices present a conflict for people in the valley. Phil and others said that didn’t seem to be an issue. But Veronica said it created a conflict when people within the UGA saw people just outside the UGA boundary burning. Jerry said regardless, if the fire department gets a complaint that someone is burning illegally, the fire department responds.

- 6. Winter outreach subcommittee report** – The group reviewed and revised the draft winter outreach plan and discussed plans for the Dec. 11 community event.

Action item: Katie will incorporate changes to the draft plan and event invitation and finalize them. (See attached.)

The meeting closed at 6 p.m. **Presentation to NWCAA Board of Directors on Nov. 14**

1. Presentation – Done. See “committee member reports” above.
2. Response and feedback – Done. See “committee member reports” above.

7. Remaining action item follow-up:

1. Look into presto log company to see if they are willing to part with samples the outreach teams could offer to homeowners – **David**

On Nov. 24, David provided information from an email conversation with Virginia Hermanson from Home Fire Prest Logs in Ferndale, completing the above action item:

Virginia said the company was unable to provide a donation because they were already on backorder. She said she might have some brochures to offer. She also said there was a wait list for “factory seconds.”

2. Draft a letter for the committee to consider and discuss, inviting stakeholders to participate - **Katie**

The following agenda items will be carried forward to the Dec. 18 meeting.

8. Continue review of latest draft of stakeholder committee list

9. Identify potential stakeholders – messaging/invitations/outreach

10. Discuss 2014 meeting schedule