

# East Whatcom Community Council Clean Air Committee (CAC)

## Meeting summary

November 4, 2015

**CAC Charge:** The charge of the East Whatcom Community Council Clean Air Committee is to work jointly with the Northwest Clean Air Agency to develop a comprehensive, community-based, long-range plan designed to improve the air quality in the East Whatcom County Region.

### **Committee Guidelines:**

1. Listen to understand, not to respond; seek clarity.
2. Voice opinions and questions openly in the meeting and not after; speak for yourself; everyone's opinion is valuable and worthy of attention.
3. Conflict over a topic is healthy; take nothing personally; engage in debate.
4. Do not expect consensus or certainty.
5. Explain why you don't agree with a proposal, but when a decision is made, buy in.
6. If people look like they have something to say, encourage them to speak.

**Chair:** Phil Cloward, East Whatcom Community Council

**Members:** Jerry DeBruin & David Moe, WCFPD #14; John Wolpers, Whatcom County Health Department; Mark Schofield OppCo; Veronica Dearden, Kendall Watch Community Action Group; Kurt Thompson, community member; Viktor Vetkov, Slavic Church; Wain Harrison, Whatcom County; Julie O'Shaughnessy, NWCAA

**Present:** Phil Cloward, Jerry DeBruin, John Wolpers, Wain Harrison, Mark Schofield, Julie O'Shaughnessy

### **Agenda items:**

1. **Introductions** – No introductions necessary. Only committee members present.
2. **Approval of October 7, 2015 meeting summary**

Mark Schofield noted incorrect last name at bottom of page 2. Should be Aly Robinson instead of Aly Anderson.

Motion:

- John Wolpers moved to approve meeting notes with above correction.
- Wain Harrison seconded the motion.

3. **Open public comment** – No public comment.
4. **Announcements**

- **NW Clean Air Agency (NWCAA) funding update - Julie**

Julie will make a presentation to NWCAA Advisory Council tomorrow regarding the Columbia Valley air quality improvement program to get input and comments prior to presenting to the NWCAA Board of Directors at the November meeting. The presentation will provide an overview of the project goal, area description, program strategy (monitoring, wood stove change-out, and outreach and community engagement), progress to date, proposed deliverables for this round, and request for about \$100,000 additional funding to augment the \$85,000 received from Ecology for wood smoke reduction.

## 5. Cord wood vendors and vouchers

**Mark** – Lorena has worked to finalize the wood vendor application form. Scheduling a meeting with the vendors has proved difficult, so Phil provided assistance. The Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program has been open for seniors for several weeks and will open up for everyone this Saturday, November 7. Participation has been steady. Opening the program to all residents may help increase cord-wood voucher participation.

**Phil** – Talked to Lorena regarding scheduling difficulties. Approached vendors regarding agreement details and any concerns they may have. Vendors' only concern related to payment logistics. Phil will distribute the application form once Lorena finalizes it, and he will make sure that applications are returned to Opportunity Council. Lorena communicated to Phil that money has been set aside to provide quality control (moisture content). Vendors will delivery cord wood after receiving contact from Opportunity Council that a voucher has been issued.

## 6. Biomass committee update

**Phil** – Evaluating how much material needs to be left on each harvest site. This affects the supply of raw materials (biomass feed) and potential product diversity (kindling, shrink-wrap wood, etc.). The Port of Bellingham continues to express interest in this project.

## 7. Residential wood sheds update

**Julie** – Working with Mark and Lorena to coordinate Opportunity Council's standard intake process with the wood shed program promotion and application process. Finalizing the application to incorporate Clean Air Committee members' feedback. Form includes wood shed delivery information. Asked Jessica at EWRRRC for help with the application submittal process. Jessica more than willing to help where possible.

**Phil** – Asked why the application has a question regarding other forms of heat, specifically a furnace. It's important that the application does not feel overly invasive or ask questions that aren't obviously relevant.

**Julie** – Clarified that the purpose of the question is to identify furnaces that may need repair or replacement as program funding can assist with that as well.

**John, Wain, Mark, and Jerry** – Provided general comments and suggestions about the way in which application questions are asked and how they lead into follow-up questions. Questions will be revised and the intent of the question regarding furnace repair/replacement will be made clear. The final draft of the application will be sent to committee members for review and comment after revisions are made by Julie.

**Julie** – The 85 residents who have received woodstoves through the change-out program will have priority status for receiving a wood shed. These clients will be contacted prior to making the program generally available.

**Phil** – Reminded the committee that construction of wood sheds will be slow, but steady. Complete construction of all 100 wood sheds is estimated to be the end of February. Wood shed delivery expectations need to be realistically managed.

**Mark, Jerry, and Phil** – Pointed out that this project is a great opportunity to highlight and promote a community project and recognize Mt. Baker and Nooksack High Schools for their contribution and effort. A recognition plaque, or something similar, seems appropriate.

## 8. NWCAA outreach strategy

**Julie** – Before last month’s meeting, met with Aly Robinson of Opportunity Council and reviewed all outreach material generated by both NWCAA and Opportunity Council. Realized the benefit of having one publication that consolidates all available resources and identifies how to access them (weatherization, change-outs, wood sheds, vouchers, etc.).

A draft publication that compiles all information was presented to committee members for comment. The publication is intended to be used as a leave-behind outreach tool after talking with residents. Initially, the flyer was to be left behind if residents were not home, but after consideration that it may cause problems for residents by highlighting that they may not be home, it was reconsidered.

**Phil** – Suggested that the flyer would be best used a leave-behind after having a conversation or possibly through a general mailing. The challenge to address is how to best communicate the message.

**Julie** – General mailings are expensive and may not produce the desired outcome. For outreach attempted when no one is home, mailing of the flyer is a possibility. This approach will help document the areas covered during door-to-door outreach.

**Jerry, Phil, and John** – Provided input on message regarding wood smoke enforcement beginning in 2016. All comments were in support of the approach, but suggested revision to the specific language.

**John & Wain** – Requested that Whatcom County Health Department and Whatcom County Fire Marshal’s logo be added to all publications.

**9. Outreach**

**Julie** – Door-to-door outreach will occur as frequently as fire department, Opportunity Council, and NWCAA staff are available.

**10. Strategic plan**

**Phil** – Nothing new to report.

**11. Monitoring & complaint summary**

**Julie** – No air quality exceedances or wood stove complaints since last meeting.

**2015 meetings, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. – Whatcom County Fire District #14, 7528 Kendall Road, Maple Falls, WA (starting October 2015 and until further notice):**

|         |         |         |        |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| Jan. 21 | April 1 | July 1  | Oct. 7 |
| Feb. 4  | May 6   | Aug. 5  | Nov. 4 |
| March 4 | June 3  | Sept. 2 | Dec. 2 |