

East Whatcom Community Council Clean Air Committee (CAC)

Meeting summary

December 2, 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.

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, David Moe, John Wolpers, Wain Harrison, Mark Schofield, Julie O'Shaughnessy

Agenda items:

1. **Introductions** – No introductions necessary. Only committee members present.

2. **Approval of November 4, 2015, meeting summary**

Motion:

- Wain Harrison moved to approve meeting notes.
- Mark Schofield seconded the motion.

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

4. **Announcements**

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

The NWCAA Board of Directors passed a resolution at the November meeting that provides additional funding to support Columbia Valley air quality improvement program efforts. The net amount available for capital investment (woodstove change-out, furnace repair, and woodsheds) is approximately \$85,000. This year's goal is to change-out thirty additional woodstoves. There are currently 12 change-outs in process.

An unexpected result has been that woodshed application information has identified several furnaces that need repair. For people who burn at least one cord of wood per year, both furnace repair and woodstove replacement are available.

5. **Cord wood vendors and vouchers**

Mark – Shared Opportunity Council's Wood Vendors Request for Qualifications (RFQ), which Lorena Shah (OppCo) sent to Phil to provide to potential cord wood vendors. In addition, the RFQ has been posted at the resource center and other places. OppCo would like to get completed RFQs from potential vendors by December 11. Initially, cord wood vouchers for potential clients will be focused in the local area (Maple Falls, Kendall, Acme, Deming, etc.).

Phil – Will make sure that potential vendors receive the RFP.

Julie – Asked how OppCo will integrate wood shed applications into the voucher and wood stove replacement programs.

Mark – Will share the application with the OppCo energy team that does client intake and will make sure that clients are given a woodshed application and cord wood as a voucher option.

Phil - Asked if the 85 residents who have already received a new woodstove are at the top of the priority list to receive woodsheds.

Julie – Confirmed that residents who have received new woodstoves are the priority. However, while potential clients are being screened for other programs, it is advantageous to add them as a potential woodshed recipient if enough sheds are available. Julie is currently contacting the 85 change-out recipients. Two electronic applications for woodsheds have been received so far.

6. Biomass Committee update to

Phil – Biomass committee members Phil Cloward and Paul Schissler are meeting with Skagit County and possibly Port of Bellingham personnel on Friday to continue discussions regarding the wood chip market and potential feed stocks sources (e.g. reducing fire load via thinning).

7. Residential woodsheds update

Julie – Showed the committee the different woodshed application options (electronic, PDF downloadable, and hard-copy at the resource center).

Also, brought up the logistics of delivery coordination, tracking, and documentation for the purpose of discussion.

Phil – It's important to have a list of approved applicants so that sheds can be delivered once they're built. The sheds may need to be stored at the resource center then delivered. "Curbside" delivery should be standard unless there is a special circumstance. It is not practical to deliver to spots that may be difficult to access or are a great distance from the road. Individuals who want to pick up their own woodshed should be allowed to, and the delivery system should accommodate that.

Julie – The current version of the electronic application asks the applicant if they have a place to put the woodshed, which may imply placement in that location. If we have no intention of doing that, the application may need to be modified. Either way, documentation of delivery must be made either by signature, photo, or perhaps both. How do we do that in a reasonable way considering volunteers are making the deliveries?

Wain – Delivery placement should be on a case-by-case basis.

John – Recommended that wording on application be changed to identify curb-side delivery.

Phil – Thinks that the person receiving the shed should be the one to contact NWCAA to let them know they received it.

Julie - Asked if filling out the bottom portion with the date and signature of the delivery person and woodshed recipient is unreasonable. Optimal situation is that the recipient is home and the delivery is scheduled.

Wain – Stated that we're trying to anticipate the practical application and document delivery of a free woodshed. Some accountability is reasonable.

Mark – Asked where forms will be kept after delivery and how file will be managed if delivery occurs outside of resource center hours.

Phil – Stated that we'll make it work!

8. NWCAA complaint response strategy

Julie – Progression of NWCAA enforcement strategy development continues and is on track for January. Julie will be the responder to complaints through the month of December. Consistent with NWCAA enforcement strategy, inspectors will be up to contact residents with excessive smoke during periods of degrading air quality. This will begin in January.

The final draft of enforcement postcards and posters were presented to committee members for review and comments. The content intentionally references "heavy" and "excessive" smoke and includes the announcement that enforcement will start in January, and that there is still help available to secure a cleaner source of heat.

Enforcement campaign materials will be translated into Russian, "trothed," and printed. Distribution will occur on December 18. Mark said there is an OppCo staff member who speaks Russian who may be available to review the translation.

Success would be demonstrated with the need for no enforcement action. This would mean that everyone is burning cleanly and has obtained all necessary resources. A path to zero penalty is being developed for first-time violations. This path requires residents to take remedial actions that will support emission reduction.

Wain – Asked if NWCAA will work with residents who are cooperative, communicative, and willing to work towards resolution. If so, approach is reasonable considering all the work that has been done and resources that are available.

Julie – Confirmed that NWCAA is definitely willing to work with residents.

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 – Shared with the committee one-hour and 24-hour particulate monitoring reports generated with data collected at NWCAA monitoring sites during our recent period of air stagnation. Several days exceeded the 24-hour, 35 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m3) average standard during this stagnant period.

Two news releases were put out over this stagnant period; November 25: "Choose a different kind of cozy this holiday weekend," and November 29: "Still no burn ban, but please don't burn." Both news releases are available on our website, and were shared with media throughout NWCAA's jurisdiction, NWCAA email subscribers, and social media followers.

Three wood smoke complaints were received within the last several days.

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