

**East Whatcom Community Council Clean Air Committee**  
**Meeting summary**  
**June 1, 2016**  
**draft**

**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, Mark Schofield, Wain Harrison, Jerry DeBruin, Julie O'Shaughnessy

**Agenda items:**

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

2. **Approval of May 4, 2016 meeting summary**

Motion:

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

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

4. **Announcements**

**Julie & Phil** – The appreciation plaque was presented at the Mt. Baker School District board meeting and the thank-you letter has been sent to the men's breakfast group. Still coordinating with the Nooksack Valley Principal on how best to present that appreciation award.

5. **Cord wood vendors and vouchers** – tabled until next meeting

6. **Biomass committee update** – tabled until next meeting

7. **Residential woodsheds** – tabled until next meeting

8. **NWCAA burn ban communication strategy** – tabled until next meeting

9. **Strategic Plan – All**

**Julie** – Asked what approach we want to take to work on the strategic plan.

**Mark** – Recommended that since several activities are winding down (change-outs and wood sheds), he'd like to focus on our objective(s) for the next 6-12 months and the actions necessary to achieve them.

**Phil** – Identified several categories (outreach, enforcement, biomass, wood sheds, woodstove change-outs, etc.) that are somewhat historical in nature in that they're already underway. Aside from that, however, there are other areas in which to focus such as helping people get their wood into their wood shed and follow-up in general.

**Wain** – Asked why the woodstove change-out and furnace repair program are winding down. Is it because it's a one-time grant and the money is running out and there are no future funds available? Or, if future funding is available it seems important to keep the program "alive".

**Julie** – This is the third cycle of a biennium grant currently ending June 30, 2017. The amount received this cycle was \$85,000 of which approximately \$50,000 has been spent. However, it is very important to continue to work with the community to identify change-out recipients and build a waiting list which will help leverage future funding needs for the next grant cycle. Julie updated OppCo staff on the amount of remaining funding and the importance of building a waiting list for the next grant cycle.

**Jerry** – Asked if a sliding-scale of sorts was implemented regarding change-out qualifications.

**Julie** – The Community Energy Challenge (CEC) incentive program increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for home-owners who do not qualify as low-income.

**Phil** – Asked if there is a specific qualifying scale for the elderly.

**Mark** – It is not Columbia Valley specific, but the CEC does have a program that uses a sliding scale which will pay between 50-90% of the cost of energy upgrades to the home. The same guidelines apply to the elderly, disabled, or households with young children. These groups received a higher level of prioritization. The federal guidelines for low-income qualification is 200% of federal poverty level which is approximately \$4,000 per month for a family of four.

**Action item:** Mark will provide a copy of income guidelines and general information about other OppCo programs.

**Julie** – Asked Jerry about their carbon monoxide and smoke detector replacement outreach efforts.

**Jerry** – In addition to replacing CO and smoke detectors, staff distributes moisture meters and encourages residents to apply for a wood shed, if needed.

**Julie** –

**Action item:** Provide Jerry a copy of the spreadsheet that tracks receipt and request of moisture meters to help track distribution.

**Wain** – Recalls a meeting in which we worked on a strategic plan and asked if an early version of a strategic plan exists. If so, it would be beneficial to resurrect it and work from that.

**Julie** –

**Action item:** Check with Katie about an existing strategic plan developed approximately three years ago. Also check for a draft outreach and communication strategy from October 2013, a draft of general objectives from June 2014, Areas of Agreement from May 2013 and a stakeholders list. Julie will distribute whatever documents are found to committee members by June 15.

**Mark** - An item that continues to come up is burn cleanly and avoid a ban. Although NWCAA is responsible for developing the message, Mark asked what role the committee will have in disseminating the message.

**Phil** – Thinks it's important that the committee does not get involved in the enforcement aspect of the outreach strategy. In addition, it's also important for NWCAA to follow-up with enforcement if necessary, with the several residents who continue to burn poorly.

**Mark** – Even if the committee is not talking about enforcement, per se, how can the committee support the message knowing that enforcement is ultimately part of the strategic plan?

**Julie** – Appreciates both points. NWCAA needs to have a clear, succinct view of what enforcement will look like before Katie can develop the communications strategy. The enforcement approach will be decided after a realistic consider of NWCAA's resources is complete to make sure we can follow through with whatever plan is developed.

**Jerry** – Asked what enforcement will look like because there have been on-going outdoor burning issues that have not been resolved.

**Action:** Jerry, Wain and NWCAA staff will meet separately to address this issue.

**Julie** – Internal NWCAA discussions are necessary before it is clear what enforcement will look like. Ultimately, a measurement of success would be if no enforcement were necessary.

**Mark** – Recommended the following action items:

- Contact the residents who received any or all "tools" (wood shed, moisture meter, new stove) to see how the tools are working for them, whether or not they're being used, and whether or not they need more assistance or guidance.
- Also, provide an update to the appropriate stakeholders about the committee's work thus far and future strategies reflected in a completed strategic plan.

**Julie** – Recommended the update that Mark suggested be in a letter to the stakeholders.

**Jerry, Phil, Mark and Wain** – Supported the idea of a letter after the strategic plan is finalized.

**Jerry** – Pointed out that posting on community websites are more effective and utilized by residents than coming to our meetings.

**Phil** –

**Action item:** Will check to see if the resource center has a newsletter that can submit an article to that highlights the work being done in the valley to improve air quality.

**All** – Commented on how many positive things have occurred and how important it is to focus and reinforce the positive.

2016 meetings, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. – East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, 8251 Kendall Road (starting March 2016).

**NEW – Starting July 13, 2016 all meeting will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month.**

Jan. 6	April 6	July 13	Oct. 12
Feb. 3	May 4	Aug. 10	Nov. 9
March 2	June 1	Sept. 14	Dec. 14

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