

## East Whatcom Community Council Clean Air Committee

### Meeting summary

October 9, 2019

**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; Aly Robinson, Whatcom County Health Department; Mark Schofield Opportunity Council (OppCo); Veronica Dearden, Kendall Watch Community Action Group; Viktor Vetkov, Slavic Church; Curtis Metz, Whatcom County Fire Marshal; Julie O'Shaughnessy, Northwest Clean Air Agency

**Present:** Phil Cloward, Aly Robinson, Mark Schofield, Curtis Metz, Julie O'Shaughnessy

#### **Agenda items:**

- 1. Introductions** – Introductions were not necessary. All committee and community members present have previously met.

The following community members were present: Carl Isom-McDaniel and Rebecca Cayen

- 2. Approval of September 11, 2019 meeting summary** – Mark Schofield moved to approve the meeting notes with the removal of the second "Mark" on page 2, item 5. Aly Robinson seconded the motion.
- 3. Open public comment** – None.
- 4. Announcements**

**Julie** – Will be out of town for training during the scheduled March, 2020 meeting.

**Committee members** – Entertained the possibility of not having a March meeting.

**Rebecca** – Asked how the projected spring chipping event will be affected if we do not have a March, 2020 meeting. The spring chipping event occurred in June of this year and people were cleaning up their yard and burning in March because of the inclemently warm weather. If there is enough pre-planning for the chipping event, a March meeting may not be necessary.

**All** – Discussed the best month to hold the chipping/cleanup event. March might be too early; June may be too late and compete with Earth Day activities, so April may be the optimum month.

**Aly** – Added that if advertisement occurs early enough, citizens would know there was an alternative to burning and would wait for the chipping event in April.

**Rebecca** – Suggested advertising 6 weeks in advance of the event, which would get in front of anyone burning. Suggested the week of April 20, 2020 for the chipping event. Prior preparation and advertising would start the beginning of March, so a March meeting would not be necessary.

**All** – Agreed that with the event occurring the week of April 20, 2020 and advertisement commencing 6 weeks prior, a March 2020 meeting is unnecessary.

## **5. Wood stove replacement grant (FY17-19) update**

**Mark** – Appreciates the feedback Carl has provided about community members unsure of where they are at in the change-out program and progress. Mark reiterated the numerous stages of the process including contacting community members, obtaining bids, securing installation dates, etc. Mark will check in with the OC crew to make sure things are progressing and citizens are staying informed.

CEC home energy advisors have 2-3 audits scheduled over the next several weeks. OC staff is working through a list of potential change-out candidates. This grant cycle is starting out strong.

**Julie** – NWCAA and the OC meet regularly to evaluate the program's progress and to make adjustments as necessary.

**Mark** – Next meeting will bring a summary of how many people were served and the number of stove installed.

## **6. Biomass/smoke reduction fall event**

### **Chipping**

**Rebecca** – The event was enormously successful. Fifty people signed up prior to the event as required. People who had remarkably large amounts of material or who registered after the deadline were put on a waiting list. There were only two households who had issues because of the way the material was stacked. Everyone was extremely grateful for the event and impressed with the chipping crew. Only two residents were not served. One made contact an hour before the event. The other made contact the following day. Rebecca went out to every site to talk to people about the process and how to prepare their material. Chipping was done on a Monday and a Thursday. Six people asked for assistance to manage their material. Last event there were 44 people in need of help from volunteers.

**Julie** – It appears that everyone who wanted to participate, made contact and participated.

**Rebecca** – Perhaps with earlier advertisement, the demand would be greater. The final amount of chips produced during this event was 21.5 tons. One cubic yard of chips weighs approximately 600 pounds.

**Carl** – Asked where the chips were dumped as several piles of chips were dumped on Limestone Road.

**Rebecca** – Zender delivered to one household who requested the material. Otherwise, all other chips were placed at a farm known to Zender. Residents who participated were almost exclusively from Paradise North and Peaceful Valley. Only one resident from Paradise South participated. This may be the result that the community newsletters did not go out prior to the event, or that there was not a community "ambassador" for Paradise South to promote the program.

**Aly** – Suggested mailing a flyer 6-8 weeks prior to the event to advertise. In addition, identifying the same time twice a year (April & September) would be helpful to make the event more widely known.

**All** – Graphic developers, mail services, additional distribution options and other funding sources need to be further investigated and discussed by the committee.

**Follow-up for all** – Come back next meeting with tangible ideas on what the spring event might look like and when. Including what types of material will be included in the cleanup, possible funding sources, location of event(s), timeframe and frequency. (Mount Baker Foundation?)

**Biomass committee**

**Phil** – Just made an agreement with Sierra Pacific for 150 cords of dry firewood for the wood bank. The wood will be moved to a temporary site for storage. Also working on a grant with the Department of Commerce to establish a pellet manufacturing facility. The grant provides funding for ten years with no interest and allows the revenue from production to pay for the manufacturing equipment.

Recently learned that DNR has a Rural Community Partnership Initiative that focuses on economic development. Phil will investigate this program further to see if it is a good fit locally. There is also a firewood processor manufacturing facility in Ferndale that may have potential locally.

The biomass committee continues to work with the Port of Bellingham to explore development possibilities, locally.

**7. Outreach activities/ideas**

**Julie** – Nothing to add to spring 2020 cleanup event (see previous comments on Item 6).

Continuing to work with OC staff to complete stack identification project. Hoping to complete it next week. Once completed, mapping of change-outs, woodsheds, etc. will be the next step.

**Phil** – Suggested that we make the woodshed construction plans available to residents so that they can build their own.

**8. Air quality and complaint update**

**Julie** – Since our last meeting, there were no wood stove complaints and no air quality exceedances.