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## **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Northwest Clean Air Agency was held at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, September 8, 2022, 1600 South Second Street, Mount Vernon, WA.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Skagit County	Ron Wesen
Island County	Janet St. Clair
Whatcom County	Todd Donovan Brian Heinrich

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Tara Hizon, Mary Hudson, & Terry Nyman

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

NWCAA staff members	Mark Buford, Alicia Huschka, Toby Mahar, Agata McIntyre, Seth Preston, and Laurie Caskey-Schreiber
Legal counsel	Svend Brandt-Erichsen via ZOOM

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Board of Directors Vice Chair Janet St. Clair called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF PRIOR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

On motion by Todd Donovan, seconded by Brian Heinrich, the minutes for the August 11, 2022, meeting were approved 4-0.

### **PRESENTATION**

#### **Update on ALCOA – Intalco SO<sub>2</sub> Non-attainment area**

NWCAA Engineering Manager Agata McIntyre reviewed the issues surrounding the small non-attainment area in Whatcom County.

- In December 2020 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated a small geographic area surrounding the ALCOA-Intalco aluminum smelter as not meeting the sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). This non-attainment designation was based on monitoring the ambient air around Intalco.
- Petrogas is included in the non-attainment area because of its geographical proximity to Intalco. However, Petrogas has negligible SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, so there will likely be no changes required of them.
- The monitors along the fenceline of the Intalco property detected the high levels of SO<sub>2</sub>. The refineries were found to not be contributing materially to these elevated levels. Therefore, the refineries were excluded from the non-attainment area.
- Washington Department of Ecology drafted a plan to address this problem and to bring this area back into compliance with the NAAQS. The Northwest Clean Air Agency does not have jurisdiction over Intalco. However, Agency staff contributed to the plan.
- The plan focuses on the SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Intalco's potlines, which is where the majority of the SO<sub>2</sub> is emitted. Intalco has 720 pots on site, divided into three potlines (A, B, & C). The SO<sub>2</sub> comes from the petroleum coke anodes used in the pots, which are consumed during manufacturing. The plan calls for a scrubber to be installed on ½ of potline A, for the potline exhaust stacks to be merged, for the height of the stacks to be increased, and for SO<sub>2</sub> emission limits on Intalco. The Washington Department of Ecology performed air dispersion modeling that shows following the plan should result in compliance with the SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS.
- Intalco is currently in curtailment (not operating). The facility must install the scrubber, make the stack modifications, and comply with emission limits by April 30, 2025, if they restart before that date. If they restart later, the scrubber and stack modifications must be made before startup. The plan also requires either continuous emissions monitoring (CEM) for SO<sub>2</sub> or quarterly stack testing for SO<sub>2</sub>. EPA requires the area to meet the NAAQS by April 30, 2026.
- The plan is now out for public comment before it is submitted to EPA for final approval.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Bills and claims**

Board members discussed the bills and claims report for August 2022. Heinrich made a motion to approve the August 2022 bills and claims (\$404,021.16). Wesen seconded the motion, and the Board approved the bills and claims 4-0.

**STAFF REPORTS****Director's report – Mark Buford**

Buford reported to the Board on the following matters:

- NWCAA recently hired Pamela Crooks from the HF Sinclair refinery to fill the vacant engineering position. Ms. Crooks will start with the Agency on October 1, 2022.
- Wildfire smoke is expected to flow over the mountains from Eastern Washington fires this weekend. The winds are expected to change and start flowing from east to west. Agency staff are predicting this to be a short event, however the air quality impacts will be felt throughout our jurisdiction.

Board members suggested including the Health Department managers in the messaging about this upcoming wildfire smoke event.

- Agency staff have been working with Petrogas, and these discussions will be ongoing. Buford will call for an Executive Session at the October Board meeting to fully update Board members regarding this enforcement case.
- Agency staff is in the process of upgrading the Oak Harbor monitoring station. The station will now be housed in a portable trailer versus being inside of a school building, which limited access to the monitors over the weekends.
- Buford met with the Advisory Council on August 25, 2022, and they discussed retaining the second mobile monitoring station for use in communities identified as being impacted by Environmental Justice issues.

During the recent Advisory Council meeting, a guest speaker from the Department of Health, discussed the recent changes involving the switch from using the Washington Air Quality Advisory (WAQA) to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality Index (AQI).

Washington Air Agencies and State Agencies were using different indices to measure particulate air pollution than the one that was used by EPA. This led to confusion amongst the public and stakeholders.

After public outreach, it was determined that it would be beneficial to move to using one index, the AQI. They determined the AQI makes it easier for people to understand when their health is at risk. The Washington State Departments of Health and Ecology also added more health protective messages to the associated hazard categories. NWCAA switched to the AQI in April of 2022.

**New source review and air operating permit update – Agata McIntyre**

NWCAA Engineering Manager Agata McIntyre reported on the August 2022 construction permit (new source review) activity.

The Agency received four applications for construction permits and issued two construction permits.

One of the applications received was from Marcon Metal USA. They operate a metal fabrication shop in Ferndale. This company makes a variety of metal parts, including structural bearings for bridges. They use three different plasma and laser cutting machines. Because of the dust generated, these cutting machines require air permits. The cutting machines will be required to operate filtration systems to control dust.

**Enforcement update – Toby Mahar**

NWCAA Compliance Manager Toby Mahar reported that the Agency issued 13 violations in August for those sources who failed to submit their annual emission or product usage reports. Half of those businesses have since responded. There were five additional violations for other issues, two of these are as follows:

- **Case 4564a** – Post Point Wastewater Treatment Plant – Sewage sludge incinerators exceeded permitted feed rates, on five separate days during October 2021.
- **Case 4568** – FPE Renewables LLC – this violation involved insufficient flare monitoring records to assure all biogas is combusted during 18 days of operation between March and May 2022.

NWCAA also received a high number of complaints regarding odor issues in August. One alleged source is Bornstein Seafood facility in Bellingham, which installed an industrial fryer without obtaining permits or installing emissions control. The other alleged source is the fish processing wastewater treatment activities at Hannegan Properties in Whatcom County.

Next month’s report will reflect an odor incident traced to a tanker ship at the Vendovi Anchorage site north of Samish Island. These vessels deliver crude to the refineries, however they are only able to off-load half the ship at a time, so they anchor offshore waiting to finish their delivery. Depending on the product on board and weather conditions, the tankers may vent gases from the cargo tanks. The vapor clouds created from the off-gassing events impacted many residents of Samish Island on Aug. 30 and 31. NWCAA staff worked with the Marathon Refinery to get the vessel moved to a different location.


NWCAA does not have jurisdictional authority over where these ships are anchored, the U.S. Coast Guard makes that determination, however we are working to build our influence in remedying the situation when it becomes a problem for the citizens in our jurisdiction.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify this is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting of the NWCAA Board of Directors held on September 8, 2022, in Mount Vernon, Washington.

ATTEST:  FOR TN  
Terry Nyman, Secretary  
NWCAA Board of Directors

  
Mary Hudson, Chair  
NWCAA Board of Directors

DATED: October 13, 2022