

## Minutes

Valley AIRNow Air Quality Outreach Program, Winchester-Frederick County  
May 18, 2005  
Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission Air Quality Task Force

9:30-10:30 AM  
Training and Development Room  
Winchester-Frederick County Chamber of Commerce, 2 North Cameron St.,  
Winchester, VA 22601

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### PRESENT:

Valley AIRNow Air Quality Outreach Program:	Lynn Radocha, CJ Brodrick, Chelsea Jenkins, and Todd Hedinger
Task Force Members:	Patrick Barker, Jim Giraytys, Jim Lawrence, Jeff Rezin, Barbara Van Osten, Bob Claytor
DEQ:	Tom Ballou and Daniel Salkovitz
VA Lung Association:	Donna Reynolds (phone)
VDOT:	Daniel Jamison (phone)
Eastern Panhandle EAC:	Kristin Harris

Meeting formally began at 9:33 AM

### 1. Introductions.

CJ led by introducing Lynn Radocha, design and layout, and Jeremy Knibbs (not present), assisting with research, contact, and coordination.

### 2. Update from Steering Committee.

#### a. Clarifying Steering Committee and Task Force roles and practices.

AIRNow noted there was apparent confusion among Task Force members regarding activities and meeting times of the Steering Committee and Task Force. To alleviate confusion, the different purposes of each group were clarified, and standard meeting practices were set.

#### Steering Committee Purposes and Practices

The Steering Committee was set up on an ad hoc basis to help guide and assist AIRNow in start-up activities, present campaign plans to the Task Force, and help assure adequate Task Force support (“buy-in”). Initially, AIRNow asked for regular Steering Committee meeting times, but by the Committee’s consensus, will meet on an as-needed basis. **Next Steering Committee meeting: Wed., June 15, 9:30-10:30 AM, Chamber Training Room.**

#### Task Force Purposes and Practices

The Task Force is to oversee and assist with EAP program development and implementation. As the initial point-of-contact into the larger community, the Task

Force's assistance is vital to program success: without Task Force buy-in, AIRNow lacks credibility.

Therefore, it is essential the Task Force be kept informed on AIRNow planning and implementation, be given opportunities to guide and redirect activities as appropriate, and be willing and able to provide assistance as needed. To facilitate communication and help build Task Force buy-in, and ultimately community support, AIRNow also requested regular meetings with the Task Force. The requested meeting times were every 6 weeks; however, in keeping with a schedule followed prior to AIRNow's contract, **the Task Force has requested meetings on the first Wednesday of each month. Next Task Force meeting will be held Wed., July 6, 9:30-10:30 AM, Chamber Training Room.**

A question was entertained during this discussion: Tom Ballou asked about plans for developing the June EPA report. Consensually decided to a phone conference among DEQ, AIRNow, EDC, and any other interested Task Force members, followed by agenda action at the June 15 Steering Committee. Additionally, Chelsea announced plans were underway to convene a meeting with EPA personnel. Request was made by DEQ and Panhandle to be part of that meeting as well.

#### **b. Steering Committee Minutes.**

Todd summarized purpose of Steering Committee's first meeting, April 20: (a) confirm priorities of EAP Milestones (as posted on website), (b) translate AIRNow's goals and objectives into milestones, and (c) begin collecting networking (and other) data, assistance and guidance.

##### Priorities

The Task Force signaled their understanding that the EAP Milestones reflect estimates for emissions reductions, and in that sense, represent priorities. The Steering Committee reached consensus that simply implementing the program message and networks will create logical steps, as will separating out those elements which AIRNow can and cannot do (e.g., AIRNow cannot pass or enforce regulations; thus, our priorities should be on voluntary measures first, including assisting with getting out the word about regulations). The Task Force agreed with that assessment, and concurred that the emissions prioritization could also help guide, especially in terms of how we respond to biannual EPA reports.

Agreed that minutes from Steering Committee and Task Force meetings are to be posted to the website (Patrick will assist until JMU assumes the site), and emailed to members.

##### Networking Assistance

Steering Committee members were provided with a Network Partner Sheet (to identify potential businesses to approach) and Community Inventory (to identify different groups, centers, venues, etc., such as day care centers, Rotary groups, and health care providers, within the larger community). The Steering Committee noted that the EDC and the Chamber have extensive databases, and asked that those databases be combined and used to guide the network development process. Accordingly, Patrick reported that he is working on merging the databases. But the Partner Sheet and

Community Inventory were distributed to the Task Force today nevertheless; because the EDC's database has nearly 1,000 entries, we need Task Force and Steering Committee to complete the forms to allow AIRNow to cross check and prioritize the list.

The request was made that AIRNow email copies of the Partner Sheet and Community Inventory to Task Force members.

Finally, noted that Steering Committee had (a) raised concerns about electronic security of network, and (b) asked they be given adequate turnaround time on requests to fill out forms, review documents, etc.

--AIRNow is seeking network support from JMU to guarantee network security.

--AIRNow promised 72 hours turnaround time minimum with work/review requests.

### **3. Events, Upcoming and Past**

#### **a. Calendar.**

June 15<sup>th</sup> (Wed) – Steering Committee meeting: 9:30-10:30 AM at Chamber Training Development Room

July 6<sup>th</sup> (Wed) – Task Force meeting: 9:30-10:30 AM at Chamber Training Development Room. AIRNow will always allow up to 30 minutes after end of meeting for further discussion.

#### **b. Past: Clean Commute Day.**

Chelsea reported the Clean Commute Day, May 6, was viewed by all participants as a success. The NetTech Center, in particular, was very grateful for the publicity in the Winchester Star. (Article included in agenda packet, along with the Star article about the April 6 Task Force meeting.)

#### **c. Past: Earth Day.**

Jim Giraytys reported low turnout for annual event. Suggested turnout was likely affected by fact the event is held in a closed building, away from incidental traffic, and that future events might be better attended if they are held where traffic already exists (e.g., Apple Blossom Mall).

#### **d. Past: Apple Blossom Festival.**

Chelsea reported Steering Committee support for action that AIRNow NOT try and participate in this year's Apple Blossom Festival, because of cost and outreach effectiveness issues. Participating costs \$2,000 (over half of AIRNow's publicity budget), and at best only provides name recognition opportunities—time is not adequate to educate festival-goers, and festival-goers are there to attend festival, not to be educated. Chelsea noted that in place of Apple Blossom, we discussed sponsoring a 5K or 10K run or such, possibly in conjunction with next year's Blossom Festival.

Jim Lawrence spoke up about a Fall Fitness Fair, with 5K run, kids' events, family walks, etc., slated for October 8 (Saturday), in the morning.

Bob mentioned a 10K race he's involved in, as well.

#### **e. Past: Air Quality Action Days Conference.**

Chelsea reported about her participation at DC AQAD Conference. Met with EAC Coordinators from around region, picked up dozens of resources, tips and references. Shared, for example, day care AQAD participation outlines, including how day care providers phone area hotlines to check air quality, then limit kids' outdoor times on AQAD days to one hour morning and one hour afternoon, staying indoors altogether from 12:00-2:00 (hottest period, which also happens to be nap time).

--Dan noted that the DEQ offers an 800 number for all forecast areas.

--Jeff cautioned that we need to be careful about the messages we put across; indoor air quality is often worse than outdoor air quality, and people already spend 90% of their time indoors, so if we make the message too strong that the ambient air is dangerous, we might actually be encouraging even more exposure to poor quality indoor air.

Also, Chelsea reported that we have received a first batch of free materials from EPA. Kristin and Dan both spoke up about other kinds of resources, including interactive CDs such as "Planet Polluto," "Smog City," coloring books, and people such as Laura McGuire from Michigan.

--In discussing resources, Task Force mentioned their concerns that Winchester does not have the same air quality problems the DC area experiences. As a result, we agreed (a) we should limit and pre-sort the kinds of materials we plan on distributing locally, to make sure they are truly applicable to us and our needs, and (b) we should be careful NOT to present an alarmist agenda about air quality here (duty to educate and inform, focus on reducing emissions, but we do not want to frighten people); in short, tailor our message to reflect what is good here, focusing on prevention.

--Kristin noted she is gearing her school outreach mostly to after school programs, because schools have to maintain focus on instructional time and don't always see the connections to SOLs.

Chelsea also reported that DC area EAC Coordinators report their regret at creating simply "ozone outreach programs" from startup; they are now having to include particulate matter and other pollutant criteria in their programs, fostering a good deal of confusion within their networks and requiring a good deal of reeducation.

Tom mentioned the Lung Association is developing an email network, and invited Donna to describe their activities. Donna noted they have materials for asthma, etc., which we can use here, and are developing an automated email network, to be operated Tuesdays-Fridays, for Winchester area. Network will automatically send out alerts on yellow and above days. Lung Association can add a "footer" to their generic message for Winchester.

#### **f. Upcoming: Pre-Test Survey.**

Todd reported on the pre-test survey, to be implemented by Lord Fairfax Community College students by June 15, with post-test set for early October. Final draft due to LFCC by May 23. LFCC will be paid \$4,000 for pre- and post-surveying, data collection, and report.

--Other upcoming events include June 8<sup>th</sup> (Wed) – Chamber Business Showcase: 11-4 PM at Winchester SportsPlex, July 4<sup>th</sup> (Mon) – Winchester fireworks, September 17-18<sup>th</sup> (Sat/Sun) – Winchester Apple Harvest Festival 10-5PM, and Late August – Teacher workshops.

#### **4. Public Input**

##### **a. Hotline and emails.**

Hotline is up (540.450-2207), compliments of the Net Tech Center and with Patrick's help, and three emails have come to us through the website.

##### **b. Email removals.**

A couple local media have requested to be removed from email updates in AQAD network. DEQ cannot change their daily message procedures, so Task Force agreed Chelsea should contact those media representatives and see if they are amenable to receiving Code Orange forecasts from us.

##### **c. Public feedback.**

Attention was drawn to April 6 article (included in Agenda packet), and to note that we've had one follow up contact as a result.

#### **5. Outreach Output**

##### **a. Website ([www.valleyairnow.com](http://www.valleyairnow.com))**

Learned recently that the website is paid for, via a 2004 VDOT grant, through September. JMU will take over the site at that time; JMU's electronic security will ensure the website, and we believe will help with the AQAD network.

##### **b. Media List.**

Noted media calls have been made and the initial media list is complete; first AQAD network is up and running (although see notes above about some media contacts wishing to be removed). Noted we learned recently of VDOT-grant-funded AQAD action day alerts, including a media alert template, but had to redesign the media template to make it comport with DEQ message and with Eastern Panhandle media overlap. Overlapping media releases contain Eastern Panhandle and Valley AIRNow logos and contacts; non-overlapping releases contain only Valley AIRNow contact info/logo.

##### **c. Final Media Packet/Kit.**

Noted that we recently learned the VDOT-funded initiatives from 2004 included creation of a media list then, as well. In phoning those 2004 contacts, learned that none of them remembered AQAD, AQI, or Valley AIRNow. So developed Media kits, including packets of information and eye-catching materials, to inform our media partners about the network they're joining or already part of, and to help them understand its public health importance. Examples of the Media Kits were available for Task Force members to view.

#### **6. Task Force Input**

##### **a. Contact List.**

Repeated request for Task Force assistance in culling through network contacts (nearly 1,000 in the database).

##### **b. Valley AIRCorps Plan.**

To save time, tabled discussion of AIRCorps plan (business network and promotion/reinforcement plan) until end of meeting.

**c. Slogan: 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = ... and “Do your share, improve our air.”**

Asked Task Force to approve of verbal “do your share” slogan. Consensus was reached. At issue, 1 + 1 ... is good visually, but hard to repeat and hard to concretize. Agreed it would work well on t-shirts and such, but agreed that “Do your share” is very good starting point, for instance, for Valley AIRCorps—that is, a means of showcasing positive business initiative.

**d. Mascot: WinFred, the Smog Dog.**

Asked Task Force to approve reallocating computer funds to purchase mascot suit instead (over \$700). Rationale: JMU can provide computers and such for program, and mascot can be very helpful, particularly in any child-related outreach. Task Force said if we thought mascot was necessary, they would approve, although they did not much care for color selections (brown or yellow); instead, would prefer a green or blue dog (reflecting AQI or clean air). AIRNow promised to check into possibility of special ordering color.

**e. Chamber of Commerce.**

Asked Task Force for permission to reallocate money from original LFCC budget to pay for joining the Chamber of Commerce and participating in June 8 Business day. Permission granted (“a good investment”).

**7. Recap**

Upcoming important dates:

June 8—Business showcase

June 15—Next Steering Committee meeting

July 6—Next Task Force meeting

Meeting formally concluded at 10:30 AM.

FROM 10:30-10:47, following miscellany was discussed.

1. Tom—Tom distributed copies of Federal Registry, in which EPA formally announced acceptance of our EAP. Tom suggests we send formal comment letter, updating the EPA on current activities (prior to the status report due in June).
2. Tom will send previous status reports to Chelsea. He noted we need to make sure to mention all 6 categories in our Milestones.
3. Some mention was made about NOx emitters, but there was cross-discussion and I couldn't catch what was said.
4. Chelsea reported seeing an AQ forecast included on 5:00 o'clock news on Harrisonburg TV-3 recently.
5. It was reiterated that Chelsea is planning a meeting with EPA. Kristin and DEQ would like to be involved.
6. Tom noted EPA contacts have changed again recently. Mentioned Ellen Wentworth and Dave Campbell, but said Chelsea should contact directly and see how EPA wants to proceed.

7. Kristin announced a Transportation and Air Quality summit in August, in South Carolina. She would like suggestions, possible collaborations in determining a voluntary idling program for Eastern Panhandle.
  - Tom responded, saying Richard Rasmussen has grant program monies for auxiliary power units. Said he would send additional grant options as well.
  - Jim G. noted that public perception of Flying J Truck Stop is that idling is a problem there. It was noted the truck stop is upwind of the monitor; perhaps instituting an idling demonstration project at the Flying J could indeed help with our exceedences.
  - CJ suggested we take a look at the number of spaces at Flying J and see what a demonstration project might cost.
  - Kristin wondered what kinds of idling options might be available for rest stops?
  - CJ capped the conversation by saying there could be many strategies for dealing with rest stop idling: we should investigate.
8. Noted that from Patrick, AIRNow needs background on local industry's that have "done their share, improve our air."
9. Concluded, 10:47, with Kristin noting her Eastern Panhandle Task Force meetings were first Tuesday of every month; next meeting is Tues., June 14, 2:00 PM, phone conferencing is available.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Todd Hedinger