

Minutes

Bi-State Region Air Quality Task Force

Friday, June 12, 2009, 10:30 A.M
Scott County Administrative Center
Sixth Floor Conference Room 605
600 W. 4th Street
Davenport, Iowa

1. Introductions and Consideration of April 17, 2009 Meeting Minutes. The Air Quality Task Force meeting was called to order by Mr. Mook. Introductions to those in attendance were requested. Task Force members were asked if there were any comments or corrections to the previous meeting's minutes. Hearing none, Mr. Dueysen motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Nitzschke seconded the motion and it carried.
2. Overview and Background of Bi-State Region Attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Ms. Denise Bulat, Bi-State Regional Commission, gave a background of the Air Quality Task Force and discussed the bi-state region's air quality history. Ms. Bulat stated that the Air Quality Task Force is a private-public partnership established in 1998 in response to ozone levels in the Quad Cities. Last year, the Task Force was expanded to include the entire bi-state region and the focus was shifted to controlling fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). In 2006, the NAAQS for PM_{2.5} was reduced from 55 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. Ms. Bulat explained that because of this reduction, the three-year average (2005, 2006, and 2007) for PM_{2.5} levels in the bi-state region, were greater than the standard at two monitors. The monitors in "non-attainment" were located in Scott County and Muscatine (Garfield Elementary School). Ms. Bulat discussed a study performed by the University of Iowa to determine if the non-attainment monitors were accurately portraying the air quality of the area or if the high levels were due to extenuating local/regional events. The study concluded that both regional and local events contributed to the high PM_{2.5} levels. While in the process of determining the scope of non-attainment, the EPA underwent an administration change, halted all publishing of attainment status, and is currently re-reviewing all pending designations. Ms. Bulat further explained that because 2008 PM_{2.5} levels reduced the three year average below the standard, Bi-State, IADNR and EPA Region 7 are petitioning to be designated as in attainment. Iowa DNR is also currently working with the sources closest to the monitors to further reduce emissions.

Ms. Bulat went on to describe the current activities of the Task Force and Bi-State. The bi-state region will be collaborating with Chicago Clean Cities and will be discussing anti-idling and anti-burning ordinances. Currently, the Iowa Quad Cities has burn bans as well as Rock Island, IL. Bi-State will also be hosting a Transportation Alternatives Summit in the fall.

3. Update from Resource Agencies on Current Air Quality Status/Issues. Mr. Jim McGraw, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, discussed the regulatory status of the area. Mr. McGraw informed the Task Force that the EPA designated Davenport and Muscatine in non-attainment in December and this designation would have become official 90 days after publishing in the Federal Register in January/February. Because of the administration change, the designation was never published and all designations are being reviewed at this time. The Iowa DNR and EPA Region 7 will ask that the EPA rescind the designation based on current data. A formal designation should be in place by fall. Mr. McGraw also stated that the Iowa DNR continues to work with Black Hawk Foundry and the Grain processing Corporation (the industries closest to the two non-attainment monitors) to establish voluntary emission reduction plans.

At the request of Ms. Gena McCullough, Mr. McGraw elaborated on the changes at the Muscatine monitor. Mr. McGraw stated that the monitor in place at the time of non-attainment used the Federal Reference Method which uses filter analysis of daily samples (a process that could take up to 8 weeks). Because of this delay, it was difficult to determine when and why non-attainment events were taking place. Mr. McGraw informed the Task Force that, in addition to the Federal Reference monitor, a real-time monitor has been installed. The data gathered from the real-time monitor is not referenced against the standard, but is used to determine when spikes occur throughout the day.

Mr. McGraw also notified the Task Force of the RIDE program currently underway at the DNR. The Iowa DNR is taking funding application until June 29, 2009 for diesel engine retrofit projects. There is no minimum or maximum on awards. The total amount of funding available is \$1.5 million. The applications will be reviewed for 4-6 weeks, and the review will be weighted towards those organizations willing to match funds.

Mr. Mook then introduced Ms. Kim Kuntzman from the Illinois EPA to update the Task Force on issues and programs on the Illinois side. Ms. Kuntzman indicated that there are two major metropolitan areas in non-attainment and that the ILEPA are currently working with these areas. The ILEPA is doing daily forecasts of PM2.5 and ozone and is partnered with EPA-AirNow's EnviroFLASH program, which allows users to sign-up for daily air quality forecasts and updates. Ms. McCullough asked whether the ILEPA would be able to add the Quad Cities to the daily forecasts. Ms. Kuntzman replied that the agency would be able to start working on that.

Ms. Bulat also informed the Task Force of the extraordinary high levels of PM2.5 during the Fourth of July holiday weekend last year. These readings are legitimately considered outlier events due to the heavy firework usage. Ms. Bulat stated that Ms. McCullough has requested that both the IADNR and the ILEPA alert the EPA that an outlier event could occur again this year. This request will be backed by a letter from the local elected officials and will remove the readings from the three year average.

4. Local Status Report on Air Quality Issues. A status report was enclosed in members' packets. Ms. McCullough reported on the status of funding available to implement air quality strategies including the IADNR's RIDE grants and possibly DOE funding. Ms. Kuntzman added that the ILEPA has non-stimulus money that is also available. Ms. McCullough informed the Task Force that a press release was distributed on Ozone Season and reminded the Task Force that the ozone monitor is located in Scott County Park. Ms. McCullough then discussed the status of the USEPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment –CARE grant. The grant application was not fully transmitted to the agency through Grants.gov. Ms. McCullough has contacted the grant's contact person and is waiting to receive an answer on the status of the application. Ms. McCullough then discussed the Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program -ICAAP grant. With ICAAP funding, Bi-State plans to host a Transportation Alternatives Summit in fall 2009. Ms. McCullough then asked all present to email her with any conflicting dates in September or October to determine the most convenient time to hold the Summit.

5. Discussion of Potential Emission Reduction Efforts for Business and Government/Organizations. Ms. McCullough and Ms. Jenna Anderson, of Bi-State, distributed a brainstorming list of possible emission reduction efforts. Ms. McCullough then facilitated discussion of what strategies would be most effective in businesses and governments to improve air quality, and what topics would attendees like to hear about at the Transportation Alternatives Summit. Many Task Force members indicated that air quality reduction should be paired with a chance to reduce costs (such as teleconferencing, telecommuting and videoconferencing). The Mr. Nitzschke also expressed that he would like there to be a pledge amongst local governments, organizations and business to reduce emissions and that this pledge could perhaps be an aspect of the Summit. Ms. Becky Passman also informed the Task Force of the Commuter Tax Credit to help businesses encourage employees to use public transit. Mr. Matthew Johnson, Iowa DNR, then described the Cash-For-Clunkers program and discussed pending federal legislation.

6. Other Business. There was no other business discussed.

7. Scheduling of Next Meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday August 14, 2009.

8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 12:15 p.m.