

Southwest Clean Air Agency

Board of Directors Minutes

April 4, 2024

The regular meeting of the Southwest Clean Air Agency Board of Directors was held in the Southwest Clean Air Agency office, Vancouver, Washington on April 4, 2024.

Those present were: Dr. Alan Melnick, Chair, Clark County
Ryan Smith, Vice-Chair, Member at Large
Ben Shumaker, Director, City of Stevenson
Lee Tischer, Director, Wahkiakum County
Ruth Kendall, Director, City of Longview
Arne Mortensen, Director, Cowlitz County
Richard Mahar, Director, Skamania County
Kim Harless, Director, City of Vancouver
Andy Oien, Director, City of Centralia
Robert Stowe, Director, Town of Cathlamet

Excused: Sean Swope, Director, Lewis County

Also Present: Staff: Uri Papish, Executive Director
Traci Arnold, Office Administrator

Guests: None

Call to Order

Dr. Melnick called the meeting to order. A quorum was confirmed to exist.

Board of Directors Minutes

Dr. Melnick asked for consideration of the March 7, 2024 minutes. Ms. Kendall moved and Mr. Smith seconded that the minutes for the March 7, 2024 Board meeting be approved. Motion passed.

Consent Agenda

Dr. Melnick asked for approval of the Consent Agenda including voucher numbers 350 through 366 and 368 through 382 in the amount of \$26,162.53 which have been approved for payment by the Executive Director, voucher number 367 in the amount of \$19,888.00, February 2024 Financial Statement and February 2024 Salaries and Benefits in the amount of \$165,629.89.

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Mr. Smith moved and Ms. Kendall seconded that the Consent Agenda be approved. Motion passed.

Changes to Agenda

None

Info Items & Public Comment

None

Public Hearing

None

Unfinished Business/New Business

Dr. Melnick opened discussion on the decision of Cost-of-Living Wage Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 and recognized Mr. Papish. Mr. Paish said a decision on SWCAA’s employee cost of living wage adjustments is one of the early budget decisions that must be made prior to submitting the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget for Board approval. The proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the May Board meeting.

Below is some data regarding inflationary indexes along with a survey of COLAs at other local government agencies in SWCAA’s jurisdiction:

2023 Western States Consumer Price Index	3.5%
2023 Western States Labor Cost Index	4.3%
2023 COLAs at Other Local Governments*	3.6%

Jurisdiction	COLA %
Clark	2
Lewis	3
Skamania	3
Wahkiakum	2
Cowlitz	5
Stevenson	5
Vancouver	5
Cathlamet	3.4
Longview	3.5
Centralia	4
Average	3.6

*Some COLA's vary by bargaining unit or position classification.

Mr. Stowe asked if the agency budget was prepared to handle the labor cost index and/or the consumer price index. Mr. Papish said the budget would be balanced with either index.

Discussion took place regarding using one index consistently year to year, however, the Board agreed they would like to see both indexes each year and have a discussion at that time.

Ms. Kendall asked if the 4.3% COLA keeps salaries in line with market expectations. Mr. Papish said SWCAA salaries are in line with the market, if more information is needed on this topic a discussion about a salary survey could take place at a later date.

Dr. Melnick asked for a motion. Mr. Smith made a motion for a 4.3% COLA effective July 1, 2024. Mr. Mahar seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Dr. Melnick opened the discussion on the performance evaluation for the Executive Director. Dr. Melnick asked for the Board to go into Executive Session for the purpose of performing the Executive Director's performance evaluation. He said the Executive Session will be utilized for discussion related to the performance evaluation in accordance with RCW 42.30.10(1)(g). Any salary adjustment or other decision will be made during the open public meeting following the Executive Session. He requested Mr. Papish and the general public to leave during the Executive Session which he estimated would begin at 3:20 and last for 5 minutes.

Dr. Melnick reconvened the general meeting at 3:25.

Dr. Melnick said the board agrees Mr. Papish is doing great work at the agency and is in fact doing a fantastic job in his role as Executive Director.

Mr. Smith moved to approve the Executive Director evaluation and goals for the upcoming year as well as a 4.3% COLA increase for the Executive Director to be effective July 1, 2024. Ms. Kendall seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Papish expressed his appreciation to the Board.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Papish summarized the information provided in the Executive Director's Report and offered to answer any questions.

EPA Announces Final Rule to Reduce Multiple Pollutants From Light - and Medium-Duty Vehicles (March 20, 2024) - EPA announced its final Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles (LMDVs), "The strongest vehicle pollution standards ever finalized in U.S. history," according to EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan, who formally announced the rule at an April 4, 2024

event held in Washington, DC, along with President Biden's National Climate Adviser, Ali Zaidi, who said the rule will "cut tailpipe pollution in half in the next 10 years." The final rule includes more stringent standards for light-duty vehicle (LDV) and medium-duty vehicle (MDV) emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), nonmethane organic gases+nitrogen oxide (NMOG+NOx) and particulate matter (PM). For GHG emission standards, as under EPA's May 5, 2023, proposed LMDV rule, the final rule phases in progressively more protective performance-based (carbon dioxide) CO2 standards for MY 2027 through 2032 LDVs and MDVs. Also like the proposal, the final standards do not mandate the use of any specific technology, nor do they mandate that any percentage of vehicle production be battery-electric (zero-emission) vehicles (BEVs). The final rule differs from the proposal in that it provides more lead time for manufacturers to eventually meet the MY 2032 performance-based standards. EPA projects a savings of \$62 billion a year in reduced annual fuel costs (once fully phased in the average driver should expect to save \$6,000 in fuel costs over the life of the vehicle); drivers will also save on vehicle maintenance and repair. For further information:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/420f24016.pdf>

EPA Issues Rule to Phase-Out Ongoing Use of Asbestos (March 18, 2024) - EPA has issued a final rule under the Toxic Substances Control Act that would prohibit the ongoing use of chrysotile asbestos, which is currently the only known form of asbestos used in or imported to the U.S. The rule will ban: (1) the manufacture (including import), processing, distribution in commerce and commercial use of chrysotile asbestos for chrysotile asbestos diaphragms in the chlor-alkali industry; chrysotile asbestos-containing sheet gaskets in chemical production; chrysotile asbestos-containing brake blocks in the oil industry; aftermarket automotive chrysotile asbestos-containing brakes/linings; other chrysotile asbestos-containing vehicle friction products; other chrysotile asbestos-containing gaskets; and (2) the manufacture (including import), processing and distribution in commerce for consumer use of aftermarket automotive chrysotile asbestos-containing brakes/linings; and other chrysotile asbestos-containing gaskets. While the rule bans the import of asbestos for chlor-alkali use immediately, it allows the use of the substances to be phased out within different time periods, depending on the situation (allowing as much as five, eight or 12 years in some cases). The regulation also issues disposal and recordkeeping requirements for affected sources. According to EPA, asbestos exposure causes lung cancer, mesothelioma, ovarian cancer, and laryngeal cancer, and it is linked to over 40,000 deaths each year in the United States. For further information:

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-finalizes-ban-ongoing-uses-asbestos-protect-people-cancer>

White House Announces Strategy to Accelerate Build Out of Charging Infrastructure to Achieve 100 Percent Zero-Emission Freight Sales by 2040 (March 12, 2024) – The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation announced the National Zero-Emission Freight (ZEF) Corridor Strategy to guide deployment of the ZE medium- and heavy-duty vehicle (MHDV) charging and hydrogen refueling infrastructure necessary to achieve the nation's goals of promoting at least 30 percent ZE MHDV sales by 2030 and 100 percent ZE MHDV sales by 2040. The Administration says, "The Strategy is designed to meet growing market demands by targeting public investment to amplify private sector momentum, focus utility and regulatory energy planning, align industry activity, and improve air quality in local communities heavily April 4, 2024

impacted by diesel emissions.” The Strategy includes four phases for prioritizing, sequencing and accelerating infrastructure along the National Freight Network (NHFN): 1) from 2024 to 2027, establishing priority hubs based on freight volumes; 2) from 2027 to 2030, connecting hubs along critical freight corridors; 3) from 2030 to 2035, expanding corridor connections to initiate network development; and 4) from 2035 to 2040, achieving a national network by linking regional corridors for “ubiquitous” access. For further information <https://driveelectric.gov/files/zef-corridor-strategy.pdf>

Mr. Papish confirmed the board received an email from James Lester, Washington State Auditor. SWCAA is currently being audited for FY 2021/2022 and FY 2022/2023. The entrance conference is set for 2:00pm on April 10, 2024 and board members are welcome to attend. There will be an exit conference at the conclusion of the audit which will also be distributed and discussed with the board.

Ms. Kendall asked Mr. Papish for an update on the Drax facility. Mr. Papish said SWCAA discovered Drax had started construction related to emission units, by pouring foundations before a permit was issued. It also appears Drax is building foundations for equipment not listed on the draft permit. SWCAA’s investigation resulted in the issuance of a Notice of Violation. Drax has stopped construction as a result. SWCAA has also requested more information on the equipment they are planning to install. Their permit was pulled and the public hearing was cancelled. Drax is currently working on submitting an updated permit application and another public notice will be issued along with another public hearing scheduled. Mr. Papish said this facility is receiving a lot of public and media attention. He said he was interviewed by a journalist from the UK. The board asked to be kept informed about the facility and to forward any relevant media articles as appropriate.

Board Policy Discussion Issues

None.

Issues for Next Meeting

- A. Public Hearing.
 - 1. As Necessary.
- B. New Business/Unfinished Business.
 - 1. SWCAA Budget (May)
- C. Meeting Date and Location.
 - 1. May 2, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. Southwest Clean Air Agency, 11815 NE 99th Street, Vancouver, Washington.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held virtually on May 2, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

Board Meeting Attendance:
April 4, 2024


JURISDICTION	J 2024	F 2024	M 2024	A 2024	M 2023	J 2023	J 2023	A 2023	S 2023	O 2023	N 2023	D 2023
Clark County	+	+	+	+	0	+	C	0	+	+	+	C
Cowlitz County	+	+	A	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	A	C
Lewis County	0	+	+	0	+	0	C	+	0	+	+	C
Skamania County	+	+	+	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C
Wahkiakum County	A	+	+	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C
Cathlamet	+	0	A	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C
Centralia	+	0	0	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C
Longview	+	+	+	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C
Stevenson	A	+	+	+	+	+	C	+	+	0	+	C
Vancouver	+	+	+	+	+	0	C	0	+	+	+	C
Member-At-Large	+	+	+	+	+	+	C	+	+	+	+	C

+ = regular member present; 0 = unrepresented; A = alternate present; C = cancelled meeting

Dr. Melnick adjourned the meeting without objection at 3:40 p.m.

DocuSigned by:

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 Chair

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 Executive Director