



Advisory Council Minutes
June 26, 2008
Regional Health District
Environmental Health Conference Room

Members Present:

John Livingston Ray Kelleher
Tom Brattebo Mark Roberge
John Hjaltalin Nancy Enz-Lill
Chet Jahns (Acting Vice Chair)

Staff Present:

Bill Dameworth
Brenda Smits
Ron Edgar
Mary McDermott

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

1. Approval of the April 24, 2008 Minutes:

The Council voted Chet Jahns as the Acting Vice Chair. Ray Kelleher moved to approve the April 24, 2008 minutes and John Hjaltalin seconded it. Minutes approved.

2. Yard & Garden Program Update – Brenda:

Brenda gave a brief overview of the Yard and Garden Program. Spokane Clean Air is a local agency which administers state, federal and local laws and regulations regarding air pollution control. Spokane Clean Air's mission is to "Preserve, enhance and protect the quality of Spokane County's air resource for the benefit of current and future generations". We have a yard and garden debris burning program that is eight days only in the spring for areas outside the urban growth areas (UGAs) and the no-burn area. Recreational/camp/cook fires are one of the few fires that are allowed inside UGAs. A recreational fire can be burned as long as it is three feet or smaller using clean, dry firewood. Land clearing burning is a limited program for the clearing of land from a parcel of five acres or larger when clearing debris from one acre or smaller. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issues fire hazard abatement permits. The DNR permit is good for a year and costs \$25.50. Spokane Clean Air's permits are good for 30 days and cost \$25.00. Agricultural burning is for vegetative debris from an agricultural operation.

Residential yard and garden debris is organic material that originated from the improved or maintained area within 30 feet of a residence. This debris may consist of tree clippings, lawn

rakings, dry leaves and needles, etc. Spokane Clean Air has delegated agreements with four Fire Districts in the County; and in those areas, they are not limited to the eight days in the spring for burning this type of debris. During these burn days, people can burn dry natural vegetation from the improved area around their homes. They can burn one pile at a time no larger than three feet in diameter and two feet high between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on the first and second Friday through Mondays of April. Inspectors work the weekends in March and April to insure that people understand what it is that they are suppose to be doing and to respond to complaints received during this time. Spokane Clean Air offers information for safer and healthier alternatives to burning yard and garden debris such as composting, mulching and hauling to the recycling/transfer stations. Also, Spokane Clean Air will be changing some of its outdoor burning regulations so that we will no longer be implementing this yard and garden burn program. What we will be doing is turning it over to the Fire Districts to implement if they choose to because they are close to the communities that would be burning and are the experts on burning and what should be done to keep property safe from wild fires. There was some discussion between the Advisory Council Members and Brenda.

3. Update on Building Purchase – Bill:

Bill gave a brief overview of the building purchase. Spokane Clean Air has approval to move forward with the purchase of the building. The building is 5,000 square feet and it will include a conference room and parking. We will be getting a \$225,000 five year loan from the Treasurer's Office and the down payment will paid out of the penalty money account. Bill stated that the penalty money should be returned to the tax payers at some point; we shouldn't be running the agency on it because that would mean that penalties are necessary for Spokane Clean Air to operate. Penalties are issued for good reasons and Bill would like to go on record as saying, if we never issued another penalty that would be fine with me if we can get people to be in compliance and penalties are really something that's a deterrent and penalties are required by the law so that we don't allow people to profit from polluting so if they make an economic gain, we have to take that back from them; there is a lot that goes into penalty calculations. At some point he thinks it should be used to offset the tax payer's burden for funding the agency. When the loan is paid off, there will be a \$50,000 a year savings that Spokane Clean Air will then take off of the local assessment which is what the tax payers pay. The building was purchased for \$469,000 which is about \$90 a square foot and the original asking price was \$535,000. The building has been inspected and there will be a radon and asbestos survey done. Interior work will be done to retrofit it for our office cubicles, etc. and the estimate from an architectural firm was about \$63,000 to get the work done. We are hoping to be moving in October or maybe in November. At the next board meeting, the contract with the County will be put before the Board and if they approve it, then it will go before the County Commissioners; they would have to guarantee the loan and the interest rate will be what the Treasurer tells us. The cash flow will be neutral until the loan is paid off in five years and then there will be approximately \$50,000 annually in savings. There was some more discussion between the Council and Bill. The Council agreed it was a good move to make and would be a cost saving in the long run. Ron Edgar added some notes on the air monitoring equipment and where and what would be located and relocated on the roof of the new building. He also gave a short overview of the air monitors and other equipment.

4. Other Items of Interest:

Ray asked about the change out program for the low income. Bill replied that this program just started up and the voucher program was still going on. Lisa also received a grant through the state to continue with the wood stove programs next year. There was some more discussion between the Council Members and Bill on the wood stove change out programs.

Tom Brattebo has been working for Spokane Clean Air under AmeriCorp. He has been working on the “No-Idle Zone” program with schools and other businesses. Tom has distributed materials on the “No-Idle Zone” program, 70 signs have been distributed and 875 people have signed pledges not to idle their vehicles anymore if they are stopped for 10 to 30 seconds.

John Livingston moved to adjourn the Advisory Council meeting and Ray Kelleher seconded it. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

WILLIAM DAMEWORTH, DIRECTOR