

PRINCE GEORGE AIR IMPROVEMENT ROUNDTABLE
MINUTES OF MEETING
Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 5:30 – 8:30pm
City Hall Annex

In attendance: M. Winfield-Lesk, M. Bilawchuk, K. Johnson, G. Thibault (proxy for B. Oke), D. Adamson, J. White, K. Lattimer, G. Waddell, G. Calpas, M. Meyer, G. Stedeford, W. Rommerdahl, K. Wilkening, S. MacIntyre, M. Hay (NMA and proxy for PACHA), T. Robert, A. Snih, D. Jewesson (Monitoring Working Group Chair), D. Fisher (Air Quality Management Coordinator)

Guests: Peter Jackson (UNBC & Research Working Group), Barb Oke, Ben Van Nostrand (Ministry of Environment)

1) **PRESENTATION**

- ∞ Peter Jackson (Professor, UNBC & Member, PG AIR Research Working Group) provided a presentation on the impact of industrial facilities on ambient particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) levels in Prince George, based on research conducted by Dr. Jackson and on research carried out by students in Dr. Jackson's atmospheric science class (ENSC 612/412)
- ∞ Summary:
 - Based on winds from the east (generally representative of industrial sources), there was not a statistically significant difference in SO₂ ambient levels during the shut-down periods analysed, but there were statistically significant differences in TRS, PM10 and PM2.5 during such periods. (Note: it is not known if precipitation, which may also impact ambient levels, was analysed or considered by the student research group.)
 - PG AIR should consider focusing management efforts on long-term, rather than short-term (episode), reductions in ambient PM levels. Dr. Jackson's analysis suggests short-term reductions (capping episodes at 25 ug/m³) would result in little or no change to the annual mean, but a long-term (40%) reduction in ambient levels (above background levels) would reduce both the number of episode days and the annual mean. It was noted, during the discussion following the presentation, that a similar recommendation was made by leading researchers at the BC Lung Association Air Quality & Health workshop (March 2009).

2) **REVIEW AND ADOPT MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

- ∞ October minutes were reviewed and adopted, with corrections, by consensus.

3) **REPORTS:**

- i. **Executive** (M. Winfield-Lesk) –met this last month re: transition (new executive).
- ii. **Research Working Group** (J. White, Chair) – no update. RWG meeting will be scheduled soon to review dispersion model study report, once received from Stantec.
- iii. **Monitoring Working Group** (D. Jewesson) – Decision was made at last MWG meeting to increase membership (0.1% threshold of permittees and regulated entities) and seek an annual contribution from same to maintain the current air quality monitoring program; currently, one non-paying member (experienced financial difficulty last year)). Maureen will review the proposed list with Dennis to ensure the MWG has current contact information.
- iv. **Education & Awareness Working Group** (G. Thibault) – met last month. Looking at Terms of Reference, information light system, public symposium (March 2010), educating public on AQ risks/actions during episodes (ongoing discussion). PG AIR members discussed public health advice vs. private health advice; key is to provide information to public so that can make informed decisions. It was noted, during the discussion, that leading researchers at the BC Lung Association Air Quality & Health workshop (March 2009) advised that the best way to reduce long-term impact is to reduce susceptibility (activity, nutrition).
Action (D. Fisher): follow up with BCLA re: proceedings from March workshop
- v. **Quarterly Budget Review (D. Fisher)** – will send to group/post on ftp site.

vi. **Member Information Exchange**

- ∞ City (J. White) – Clean Air Ambassador has been hired for 6 month position – if have concerns over burning in City limits, contact Kathryn Graham. Will attend January meeting.
- ∞ City (D. Adamson) – Clean Air Bylaw revisions: legal review almost complete; looking at going to council in early January (current target).
- ∞ CPLP (G. Waddell) – CPLP thanks PG AIR for letter of support for odour project; will be making application to NRCan in January 2010.
- ∞ Northern Health (G. Thibault) – Mobile monitoring project: Jennifer has carried out 4-5 samples; plotting real time data now; using nephelometers (light scatter – surrogate for particulate); objective is to identify hotspots for wood smoke; information can be used to help public education & awareness/promote Wood Stove Exchange in neighbourhoods; project is being funded by BC CLEAR, NHA, MOE; PG AIR is project partner and is providing in-kind contribution.

4) **CURRENT BUSINESS:**

i. **Updates on Phase II Work Plan Action item(s):**

- ∞ R1: Odour study update (M. Winfield-Lesk) – presented at end of meeting. Summary:
 - MOE applied screening assessment on pollutants identified in MOE (VOCs), PG AIR, PACHA monitoring (note: PG AIR, PACHA sampling limited in number so should be viewed as snapshot or areas to identify future research); based on screening, MOE identified 7 contaminants where further investigation is warranted (carbon disulphide, dimethyl sulphide, formaldehyde, methyl ethyl ketone, terpenoids (pinene, camphene, isoprene – note: these may be from natural sources)
 - MOE recommended next steps:
 - MOE carry out monitoring of formaldehyde (as PG AIR samples exceeded short-term provincial levels), pending funding. After discussion, PG AIR also agreed to contribute funding for this.
 - Toxicological research by BCCDC, BCLA, etc. on health effects of co-exposure of contaminants
 - **Action (Melissa):** will contact agencies to recommend same
 - Develop odour reduction strategy for priority contaminants (PG AIR & MOE)
- ∞ R9: Dispersion Remodeling & Revision (D. Fisher) – The contract with Stantec has been signed; expect draft report on January 15 and final report on January 31.
- ∞ R14: Idle-Reduction & Eco-Driving Program (D. Fisher) – An update from the Idle Free Ambassador:
 - *Education – School Presentations:*
 - A presentation for grade 4 to 7 students was developed and advertised to all elementary schools in Prince George
 - 15 presentations were completed throughout October and November at seven different elementary schools (Foothills, Blackburn, CFGTS, Hart Highlands, Malaspina, Glenview, Highglen)
 - The presentations received positive feedback
 - Evaluation sheets distributed to students and teachers had positive responses
 - Teachers and students at several schools indicated interest in ordering Idle Free signs
 - *Idle-free zones/Hotspot surveys*
 - Results from the 2009 baseline surveys (which were completed this summer) have been analyzed and a report was prepared with the findings from 2008 and 2009. The draft report is currently being reviewed. A few highlights of the report:
 - ∞ Surveying took place in June and July of 2008, and July and August of 2009
 - ∞ Locations surveyed were mainly commercial areas thought to be possible idling hotspots, including a few drive-through locations
 - ∞ The overall idling rate in 2008 was 45.9%, while the overall rate in 2009 was 55.5%
 - ∞ Most vehicles that were observed idling did so for 1 to 3 minutes, but a few vehicles were observed idling for up to 12 minutes.

- ∞ Drive-thrus were found to be a major source of idling in comparison to the other locations surveyed; however, idling in parking lots is expected to be much higher in colder winter weather than the rates observed during the summer surveying
- ∞ Vehicles were classified into six main categories (vans, sedans, SUVs, large trucks, small trucks, and sports cars) – of these, SUVs had the highest idling rate and average idling times
- ∞ Women had a slightly higher rate of idling than men. Men and women had the same average idling time of 2.5 minutes
- ∞ Idling was found to increase with age and decrease in the oldest age group (bell curve)
- ∞ Average idling time also increased with age
- ∞ In 2008 there was a much higher rate of idling on weekdays compared to weekends, while in 2009 they were about the same
- Signs with the PG AIR logo on them have been ordered for placement in idling hotspot locations and sensitive receptor locations. Free signs are also available to interested organizations.
 - Action (all members):** contact Katherine if interested in obtaining free sign(s) for your organization
- An interactive idling hotspot map was recently added to PG AIR's website – members of the public can assist in mapping hotspot locations by reporting on incidences of idling observed around the City. Areas identified so far include 4th and Queensway intersection, parking along 3rd Ave, Spruceland parking lot, Superstore parking lot, Canadian Tire carwash, Westwood Tim Hortons, UNBC, various residential areas.
- *Anti-Idling Bylaws* – currently reviewing anti-idling bylaws in other jurisdictions and researching the components of an effective anti-idling bylaw
- *AirCare*
 - Currently researching the feasibility and necessity of establishing of mandatory AirCare in PG, including: review of use and set up of vehicle inspection programs in other jurisdictions; review of data from 2008 and 2009 Prince George vehicle emissions clinics
 - Actions (D. Fisher):** obtain information on website hits and map hotspot hits; ask Katherine re: information on length of time before jurisdictions enact anti-idling bylaws (advise Dan Adamson).
- ∞ The FBC noted that jurisdictions normally enact internal policies first, for year or two. There are normally hot weather and cold weather exemptions, emergency vehicle exemptions, etc. in anti-idling bylaws.
- ∞ R17 – Air Quality Advisory Industrial Emission Reduction Plans (D. Fisher) – PG AIR received from the MOE a copy of letter sent by the MOE to all local industrial permittees sharing ideas – categories as inexpensive, innovative, time sensitive and “as economics allow” – that companies had developed to reduce their impacts on air quality.
- ∞ R25 – Wood Stove Exchange Program (D. Fisher)
 - 2009 WSE program: we have 34 exchanges to date (program ended November 30)
 - 2010 WSE program: we received funding approval from BCLA/MHLS, and made a request for funds to the RDFFG; a request to City Council was made on Nov. 16. There was some discussion on outdoor wood boilers and it was noted that these do not qualify for the exchange program, though rebates may be available through federal government programs.
 - Action (D. Fisher):** include information on outdoor wood boilers on PG AIR website.

ii. **Phase III Development:**

- ∞ Facilitated session follow up – The facilitator will present the results of the facilitated session at the January meeting. At the facilitated session, members present had come to an agreement on a strategy for industrial emission reductions; this will need to be considered by membership and adopted (if agreed). At the facilitated session, members present also tasked Executive with reconsidering meeting schedule and member participation (see discussion below).

iii. **Administrative matters:**

- ∞ Membership – No update.
- ∞ Bylaw revision – No update.
- ∞ EcoAction funding (D. Fisher) – PG AIR received notice that its application for funding (for \$100,000 towards industrial emissions reductions (road dust)) under the EcoAction program was not successful; D. Fisher will follow up with Environment Canada to discuss same; other funding sources will be pursued
- ∞ YWCA Youth Eco-internship Program: Application is almost complete, but some questions remain regarding same; D. Fisher will follow up with YWCA re same ASAP.

iv. **Other matters**

- ∞ Marsulex permit amendment (D. Fisher) – Daniela will send information (final report and other information) to members upon receipt and inquire whether PG AIR members would like to provide comments to MOE.
 - Action (M. Bilawchuk)** – send M. Hay copy of current Marsulex permit.
- ∞ Pacific BioEnergy project (D. Fisher) – PG AIR received letter from PBEC advising that upcoming project (PM emission reductions) will not require public consultation by MOE as is considered minor permit amendment; copy of permit amendment application attached, as PBEC wanted to keep PG AIR informed
- ∞ Land Use, Transportation & Air Quality workshop (D. Fisher) – D. Fisher and B. Oke (NHA) attended this workshop in Vancouver at the end of October. Several issues and recommendations were provided regarding land use and transportation planning as it affects air quality, which PG AIR should consider.
 - ∞ **Action (D. Fisher)**: post materials on ftp site
- ∞ CASA consensus decision-making workshop (D. Fisher)
 - D. Fisher attended this conference and workshop in Edmonton on Dec 2 & 3. CASA is a non-profit organization that has been mandated under Alberta legislation to provide recommendations to the Alberta government on air quality matters (requested by government, members or public); has good reputation (and good information/procedures for PG AIR to consider adopting).
 - Conference focused on importance of establishing strong procedures to effectively achieving goals; consensus-decision making was identified by speakers as most effective process for almost any issue/challenge as long as the proper preconditions were met (including willingness to participate); advantage of consensus-decision making is that participants do not “settle” or compromise on positions but (if done properly, i.e. through identifying interests) identify options for mutual gain.
 - Workshop (Day 2) was smaller group, by invitation only, which focused on answering 2 questions: identifying situations where consensus-based decision-making could/should be used (including preconditions where consensus-based decision making was not appropriate), and identifying strategies and steps for communication by members to their member agency of actions/discussions at the roundtable. Materials will be submitted to participating agencies when completed.
 - Action (D. Fisher)**: post materials on ftp site

5) **NEW BUSINESS:**

i. **Administrative matters**

- ∞ PG AIR participation & meeting schedule (D. Fisher)
 - At facilitated session, members present asked executive to consider revisions to PG AIR meeting schedule, agenda, and member participation in group.
 - Executive has considered same and is proposing changing to quarterly meetings, that are longer in length (4 hrs) and adopting a LID (learning, information, dialogue) model for meetings, and carrying out most of the work at committee level on continuous basis (schedule as determined by committee(s)) in between meetings; CASA uses a similar model.
 - After discussion, members decided that meetings would continue on a monthly basis for now (can be reconsidered if doesn't appear to be working) and that the LID process would be applied for future meetings (including all standing reports and Phase II and administrative updates from prior meeting(s) being provided in writing prior to the next meeting for member review; members would be responsible for asking questions or seeking clarification/discussion at meetings); the group also agreed that, in order to carry out more effective meetings, members need to come to meetings prepared to discuss the agenda items. The group agreed that the January meeting would focus as much time as possible on Phase III development.

ii. **Other business**

- ∞ ftp site (D. Fisher) – ftp site has been established; D. Fisher is working on posting all relevant materials onto site for members, and will send instructions on how to access same once completed. It was noted that the ftp site is an intranet, i.e. for member and director access only, and was designed to facilitate access of materials for members. Much of the information on the intranet (e.g. meeting minutes, final reports) is also found on the website, and some of the other information (e.g. draft reports) will be posted on the website in due course (once approved by membership for posting).
- ∞ Maternity leave (D. Fisher) – D. Fisher is expecting (April 21); PG AIR will be arranging posting to hire replacement Coordinator for duration of maternity leave.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, January 25, 2010, 5:30PM

(NB: meeting time was subsequently changed to 5:00PM)