

MINUTES

The 33rd meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Air Quality in the Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Dona Ana County, New Mexico Air Basin

Thursday February 16, 2006

Ardivino's Dessert Crossing, Sunland Park, New Mexico

1. 11:00 Welcome and Introductions

Bill Luthans made welcoming remarks, thanked everyone for attending, as well as Ana Maria Contreras. Mr. Luthans mentioned that JAC's tenth anniversary will be in May; the first JAC meeting was held in November 1996. He apologized for having let six months elapse since the last meeting, due to the events in Louisiana. Fortunately, the quality of air in the basin has had acceptable quality.

Ana Maria Contreras welcomed the attendees. She said it is the first time she attends a meeting, and thanked people for their comments and suggestions. One of the strategic lines is environmental regulations; the Secretariat is working to update the Law of Ecological Balance; all the current programs are being executed with great willingness, but there are no regulations. Standard 086 has just come into force; it is a great accomplishment for Mexico; investments are being made in Pemex to improve fuels. There is work being done regarding standards for new vehicles, etc. They are interested in advancing the concept of basins, establishing a pro-air that involves the Health Department, providing air and health quality indicators, some initiatives in the area of transportation.

2. Presentation and approval of current agenda

Alba Yadira Corral from UACJ, Araceli Salazar from COFEPRIS, Rafael Corral Díaz from UACJ, Archie Clouse, Bob Currey, Mariana Chew, Sierra Club, Bill Luthans, Ana Maria Contreras, Jose Mario Sanchez, Wen, Ives Figueroa from the City of Juarez, Dr. Elaine Barron.

3. Message from the Co-Chairs

Two messages from Bill Luthans, Carlos Rincon moves to another position, now as a Director for EPA. Another member of the private sector in the past was an industrial representative, he is available, announcements will be made in the media.

Ana Maria Contreras talked about the introduction of new members; add to the agenda, possibly suggest a date for the May event.

4. Public Participation – public must register

5. JAC Discussion on Public Comments

Bill Luthans asked if anyone wished to make comments.

The Environmental Health Group is going to have a meeting on March 16-17 in Brownsville

Carlos Rincón announces the regional Three-State group meeting in Juarez for the first week of April; more details to follow at least one month in advance
PAHO released a RFP for the office in El Paso for pollution grant applications.

REGULAR PROGRAM

6. Air Quality Report

Victor Valenzuela made a presentation on the summary of 2005 carbon monoxide concentrations (ask for presentation).

Information related to odor rates in the Juarez treatment plant was presented. There were particularly strong emissions during the time the facility was closed for maintenance. A recommendation was made to facilitate communication between the Junta de Aguas in Juarez and El Paso Water Utilities, to improve these rates.

This committee may help to technically clarify what is causing the odors. At first, it was thought that they were caused by sludge and their presence by the facility. To find a technical solution, look for an investment project, and JAC may help find a funding plan jointly with BECC or other institutions. A request was made for this Committee to present a formal petition. There was also a question as to why standards are not being enforced; this is due to the lack of regulations in Mexico. An ancillary standard is required.

7. Presentations

a) Modification of PM10 standard. What Impact for El Paso??

Ms. Margaret Earnest gave a presentation

Question: Concern about the potential lack of coordination between border cities as this study is being developed, the effects of this information, in the sense of how it is going to impact Mexico. Later on we will have the same problem we have with the treatment plant, due to the lack of synchronization between regulations and standards. Response is working with the proposed standards; if those rates drop as a result of a public survey, the health risks for the city may increase. The monitoring of available information is not sufficiently concise and accurate to allow for decision-making; there is hope that as new operational regulatory rates arrive in El Paso, air quality will improve significantly. There were comments about a project to be implemented in 20 years, what happens with rural communities in the U.S. side of the border, which will be in noncompliance with regulations with these new standards. These are things that have to be taken into consideration for implementation in the future. It was highlighted that this program is considering only El Paso and this is a community that encompasses Juarez, El Paso, Sunland Park, and Las Cruces; it should be a single-community approach. If new monitors are to be installed to implement these new

standards, they should be installed in Sunland Park and Ciudad Juarez as well.

Presentation by Erik Gribbin

- b) Display and demonstration of Remote Vehicle Emissions Sensing Technology. Presentation on Heavy Duty Vehicle Testing in the NE. Presentation attached.
- c) Results of Heavy Duty Vehicle Testing on the US Mexico border, Juan Villa, TTI. Presentation attached.
- d) Initial results for the recently established Public Transit Vehicle Emissions Verification Program in Cd. Juarez- Presentation by Yves Figueroa attached.
- e) Acquisition / Operation of a Mobile Air Quality Monitoring Unit in Cd. Juarez
- f) Upcoming deployment of the 4th Ambient Air Monitoring Station in Juarez

JAC Subcommittee Reports and Discussion

Ways and Means – Jose Mario Sanchez

PM – Alba Corral, PH.D., Chair

We would like to join the PM workgroup. Brick kilns: there are 113, 23 are ecological kilns. Particles have been reduced by 140 tons. I would like to have subcommittees for street paving in Juarez, and workshops with the *maquiladoras* to review emissions.

They would like to contact the United States to implement a similar plan for response to Natural Events.

Encourage research. The University is interested in standardizing measuring criteria, analyzing particles and their characteristics.

Bill Luthans asked if anyone from the United States is participating. Victor Valenzuela, from TCEQ, and there is also participation from the State of New Mexico. He informed that Carlos Rincon and Maria Sisneros from EPA will be participate and timely follow up on the agreements and actions taken by these subcommittees.

Ana Maria Contreras mentioned that there is a lot of information and it should start being reviewed.

Point of Action. Monitoring will start in Anapra. Bob Currey asked that all data be contained in a single website. It cannot be done due to limitations of the different information departments.

A calendar with the dates of subcommittee meetings was requested. Not available, but it is being developed.

Need to review the last minutes, attendees to these meetings, and take into consideration the participants.

Subcommittee reports are very important. A brief and concise document must be available when coming to the meetings.

Most action points have been addressed. The next meeting is on May 11, everyone in agreement. We want to do something special for this meeting and regarding the achievements during this decade of work. It will take place in El Paso. She is of the mind that something special should be done to celebrate, notify the media; this committee is a model and an example of binational cooperation as a single region. Efforts will be made to bring the Secretaries of the Environment of both countries and prepare a great event. An invitation must be made to the three State Governors, environmental officials from both countries. What is being done, and what do we want to accomplish for the next decade?

At this event, a formal petition for more support should be presented to the state and federal governments. Prepare a workshop. Realistically, we only have six weeks to develop the agenda and look into the possibility of achieving all this. Bill Luthans proposed that Carlos Rincon be the leader of this effort. He proposed to have exhibits of the different achievements, a sort of fair to present projects such as the Dedicated Commuter Lane, etc.

A proposal was made to create a subcommittee for this special event. Jose Mario and Ana Maria may provide assistance. Archie Clouse invited everyone to check out the TCEQ website related to this committee.

- Preview of Developing Workplan

Mobile Sources –Ives Figueroa, Chair

Data – Mariana Chew, MPA, Chair

- Preview of Developing Workplan