

Air Quality Council Meeting: May 14, 2015

Notes from the meeting held on Wednesday, May 14th, 2015 at 2:00 pm in the
ACRD Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

Present:	Judy Carlson Larry Cross (Catalyst Paper) Patty Edwards (MLA's Office) John McNabb (ACRD) Sharie Minions (City of Port Alberni) Tim Pley (Fire Department) Gary Swann Sarah Thomas (Chair)
Regrets:	Earle Plain (MOE) Dave Jarrett

1. Chair – Updates (Sarah)

Vital Signs Report (AV Community Foundation)

Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada. Each *Vital Signs* report measures the vitality of its community in key areas, providing the community with critical information that can help set priorities and identify opportunities for action. Air Quality is one of their key indicators for environment. Maggie Hodge-Kwan is undertaking this project in Port Alberni.

I met with Maggie last week to discuss Air Quality and the AQC.

A survey is available on the Port Alberni Community Foundation website (<http://www.albernifoundation.ca/>). They are seeking input from as many community members as possible.

Survey Queries

I received a call from a resident in West point place indicating that people had been going around their neighbourhood asking about impression of air quality in Port Alberni at present and change over time...3 yrs, 5 yrs etc and collecting contact information. I let him know that the AQC is not conducting a survey at this time and we do not know anything about this. A similar message was posted by the fire department on the Fire Department Facebook page as well as the City Facebook page.

Port Alberni Port Authority Charcoal Plant

PAPA small activated charcoal plant
A small activated charcoal plant has been approved for construction by the PAPA. It will use waste wood (initially logging slash) to produce high quality activated carbon. May be able to divert back-yard branches at some point as well??

Canada/US Joint Agreement on Air Quality

We don't know much about this at this point. Sharie will meet with them next week then we will know more.

This is a trans-boundary Air Quality agreement was signed in 1991 to address air pollution. A 2014 Progress Report is available for comment.

The deadline to comment on the 2014 Progress Report or any aspect of work under the Air Quality Agreement is **July 31, 2015**. Comments may be submitted [online](#), email or by regular mail. More info is available at: http://ijc.org/en/_air_quality_2014

2. Transparency

Post Meeting Minutes on the website

It was discussed that it would be good to make our meeting minutes publically available so that people can refer to them should they wish. It was also discussed that it would be good to send the minutes to the ACRD so they are on file in the system.

It was decided that we would submit minutes in as correspondence for the agenda following each meeting.

In addition, minutes will be put on the AQC web database (on the ACRD site).

3. Wood Stove Exchange

Media Blitz

Tim, Randy, and Sarah coordinated an interview with Shaw, AV Times, and AV News in early April to do a last push to promote the Woodstove Exchange. This went well. Sarah from Dolan's also participated.

How did it finish up?

John reported that 22 woodstoves have been issued now. This leaves 18 remaining for the fall.

Next Steps - Fall

It was suggested that the Fall Fair would be a good opportunity to bring this up and do some promotion around this. Could try to tag onto the Regional District booth or else see if Dolan's is intending to have a booth.

Sarah to talk to Brenda at the ACRD to coordinate pieces for this.

4. Solid Waste Management

Updates?

The ACRD is currently rolling out a cardboard ban. The bylaw is being prepared that would disallow cardboard from the landfill. The City

Organics Strategy?	<p>should follow. Garden waste, gypsum, metal, wood etc down the road.</p> <p>More complicated. Figure 680 tonnes organic waste. Need to find the right process to treat it and ensure it is a product that can be used. Don't want a rodent problem etc >> ensure proper ratios of Carbon: Nitrogen and this shouldn't be a problem. Need somewhere to take the compost. It was suggested that the regional district could put a call for proposals out for organizations/businesses to compost the material. Compost as 'black gold'</p>
Possible locations for compost	<p>Devil's den, Leda Farm, area at the landfill,...Gary did 60-80 tonnes of compost last year mostly with grass clippings and woodchips.</p> <p>It was suggested that it would probably be good to start with a pilot project.</p>
Timeline on organics from the ACRD perspective	<p>Probably a year away. Once an environmental manager has been hired it can be more seriously considered. The fall is the earliest that this will realistically be considered.</p> <p>Expect the manager of environmental services to be hired for in the next month or so.</p>
Public education strategy being used in other jurisdictions	<p>'Love Food. Hate Waste.' Campaign Waste reduction opportunities.</p>

5. Delegation to City

Integrated Organics/Backyard burning Proposal	<p>An integrated Public Engagement Proposal was put together with a view of connecting some key, inter-related topics of importance to the city (Organics, burning, illegal dumping, district energy facility, etc) and streamlining resources required to execute a comprehensive community engagement strategy as well as highlighting alternatives for residents.</p> <p>The above approach was discussed. Other possibilities including focusing exclusively on backyard burning were discussed.</p>
Approach	<p>It was decided to focus on backyard burning at this time and to suggest some of the integration approaches in the recommendations. Should council wish, they could ask us to elaborate more or work with them on a more integrated, comprehensive outreach campaign.</p>

Timing

Encourage a burn ban all year.

Earle and Sarah will give the presentation. Due to unforeseen circumstances Earle is unavailable until mid-late June. Given this it was decided to post-pone the delegation until Earle is available. Still want to go as soon as possible.

It was also discussed that from a PR perspective it could be good to do some outreach right before the Oct 15 bylaw date to let the public know concerns about burning/alternatives etc...

Outreach How important is burning to the farming situation today?

Gary says, to be honest, he can't remember the last time he had an open fire on the farm. They burn wood for maple syrup in a stove in the winter but that's it.

It's almost never needed.

Other outreach possibilities?

The Bulldogs worked with the ACRD to promote recycling this year. Tim will talk to Russell to see if the Bulldogs might be able to do some combined education on burning next year.

6. Fire Department Update

Venting signage at Echo

Work is ongoing to try to get better signage to let the public know when there are bad air quality days and particularly when venting is bad in order to get people to pause burning and wait for times when venting is good (and will be good for a couple days after).

Due to foggy days and low visibility in the winter it would be better to have this on a digital sign rather than just a sandwich board.

The fire hall is working to see if we can potentially use existing signs in town to do this (e.g. Echo and Multiplex). Echo is fairly guarded about what goes on the sign. Tim will pursue this again though as it is a health concern for all citizens.

7. Funding

MOE

\$5000 confirmed for this fiscal year. Thanks Earle for working on this.

ACRD

\$5000 grant in aid was received. Thanks to Patty, Judy, and John for making this happen.

Other projects to consider for future:

Slash burning >> strengthen the bylaw to anticipate poor venting days etc.
Use of woodstoves >> helping people use them more effectively.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in September or as needed before then.

9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:24 pm.