

MINUTES FOR AQC MEETING
Thursday, Nov. 5th, 2020, 2pm
Via Zoom

Present: Anna Lewis (Chair)
Larry Cross (Catalyst Paper)
Rosemarie Buchanan (SD70)
Jade Yehia (Island Health)
Stephanie Bruvall (Island Health)
Judy Carlson (Community at large; AAQS)
Tarek Ayache (Ministry of Environment)
Gary Swann (Agricultural Community member) left at 2:30
Diane Bodnar (ACRD electoral director) 2:57
Mike Owens (Fire Department) 2:45

Regrets: Karen Larsen (FNHA)
Ashley Popovich (Catalyst Paper)
Helen Poon (City of PA)

Guest: Corinne Schiller (Environment Canada)

Meeting called to order at 2:03

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

-Acknowledgement of the traditional territories of the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nation.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gary Swann moved to adopt agenda as presented. Judy Carlson seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Oct. 1st, 2020

Rosemarie Buchanan moved to adopt minutes as presented. (Spelling of Garry Oak will be corrected). Gary Swann seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.

3. PRESENTATION: CORINNE SCHILLER FROM ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Corinne Schiller from Environment Canada gave a presentation on a project they are working in collaboration with university in Prince George conducting a small pilot in western Canada. Environment Canada is looking for community partners to collaborate on this project which utilizes low cost sensors.

Corinne spoke about utilizing small low-cost sensors to augment air quality and why important.

- Need more data for prediction and services, especially where gaps occur
- Important when we have wildfires and smoke events
- Need information so citizens can make informed decisions when PM_{2.5} levels are high
- Can be useful for emergency management, health agencies, community members
- small sensors can help augment current network
- Traditional air quality monitoring station is costly (\$40-000 vs. \$250)
- Not equivalent data but can be a fit-for-purpose. Not for policy measures!**

Purple Air monitors:

- small sensors for PM_{2.5}
- Over 9000 purple air sensors deployed across North America by many agencies and citizens.
- 90% of data is the same AQHI contribution as FEM equipment when particulate readings are high
- Allows people to see what is occurring in real time across the sensors

Pilot Project

- Environment Canada sends out the sensors.
- Community collaborators provide power and Wi-Fi connection
- Monitors need to be sited away from primary pollutants
- Pilot project is expected to run for another 2.5 years but no firm deadline
- Looking for areas that are underrepresented by sensors. Idea is to put them out to communities/areas that are underserved.
- sensor does not have to be stationed in one spot for the duration of the project. The sensors are systematically named, the site can change but the name would stay the same
- Proof of concept that these can help give added information to all different agencies.

Examples of siting:

- In the Yukon, the health authority has put outside of their offices. Are incorporating the health messaging within their community.
- In Regina: Is putting 6 within schools. Go in give a presentation and show classrooms how to use it.
 - If there was an interest in collocating with BAM monitor on Alberni Elementary access to Alberni Wi-Fi network could potentially be arranged.

Caution:

- emphasizing the messaging of the fine print is as important as the title
- Information can support false conclusions, and messaging should be worked out in advance.
- Not for policy, not for regulations!

-Has poor measurements when levels are low, and the midrange does not perform that well.

Conclusion:

Port Alberni is a valley that deals with inversions on a regular basis and is classified as a red zone community due to its exceedances of PM 2.5. Using this pilot project as an application to hotspots due to woodstoves would be the best value for Port Alberni. Cherry Creek and Beaver Creek electoral areas come to mind.

Environment Canada also has interest in working with First Nations and the First Nation Health Authority. They would like to collaborate with the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nations.

As the AQC had discussed low cost sensors and citizen science could be a great way to incorporate some learning opportunities. Anna will approach the AAQS and see if there is interest in utilizing some funds to purchase additional sensors.

4. UPDATES

- Changing membership at the table
 - Anna to check in with Helen Poon as to status of city representation
 - MLAs office: With Patty's retirement and new MLA Anna has requested representation from office.
 - Dave Jarrett: stepping down and many thanks for his contributions over the past several years.

- Woodstove Exchange
 - 4 woodstove to woodstove exchanges this year.
 - An additional 4 vouchers have been requested (3 are woodstove upgrades and 1 is conversion to alternate home heating system).
 - Having problems with one of our retailers. Not honoring their end of the signed agreement by providing \$150 retailer discount. Anna to follow up with.
 - have heard nothing re. WSE 2021 proposal which was written to utilize the underutilized funds from 2019,2020 exchanges. Anna to follow up on this.

- Legacy for Airway Health
 - provincial survey on wildfire smoke messaging
 - received an email requesting that everyone pushes the survey through their various channels one last time as the survey will be closing Nov. 30th

- Alberni Air Quality Society AGM
 - Thursday, October 29th at 7pm via Zoom
 - No changes to the board of directors.
President: Keith Wyton

Vice President: Arne Elias
Treasurer/Secretary: Judy Carlson

5. ASSIGNED HOMEWORK

Background: The spirit of solid fuel burning bylaw is great but getting people to upgrade to meet current CSA standards is nearly impossible to actually enforce. Trying to conceptualize what might be a manner that it can be enforced and at what juncture people change appliance. The bylaw is due for an update. The bylaw appears dated as the initial grace period for people to swap out old uncertified stoves was until May 31st, 2017.

Summary of people's ideas and then associated conversation.

- Diane: I feel we should be putting more emphasis on the Insurance companies. And perhaps stamping the uncertified wood stoves with the year it was made (like they do with propane bottles).
 - Two challenges that we may encounter. 1) Not everybody has insurance.
 - 2) Might end up impacting local insurance competitiveness with the global availability of insurance options.
 - Insurance is way higher when utilizing a woodstove.
- Anna: Creating a one-time registration system.
 - Registration is a great idea but can create fear. Tie it back to the Wood Stove Exchange (WSE) program if something is out of compliance. Perhaps the WSE could be tiered based on income and everyone has a fair shot at utilizing the WSE. Central Okanagan district. Giving a longer period for their WS and higher incentives. Is it worthwhile to do fewer exchanges per year at a higher rebate.
 - Health equity is such a critically important piece. Is there any way that incentives target those who could utilize the rebates the most. In Comox Valley they are targeting their WSE for neighborhoods where air pollutants seem stagnant and creating hotspots.
- Judy: When property is transferred once have a certified WS. Work with the local real estate agents.
 - ensure certification of woodstove is on the questionnaire you must complete when buying/selling a home.
 - create easy to understand brochures for realtors to distribute to potential home purchasers/sellers.
- Stephanie/Jade:
 - check in with other jurisdictions on Vancouver Island. How are they enforcing their bylaws?

-could change bylaw to become a public health bylaw. Look at the example of Prince George. If health language is built into the bylaw it helps with the rationale.
-also look at Metro Vancouver bylaw.

What is the logical next step considering enforcement?

Have to be cognizant of privilege. Some people would have to be out of compliance as when making a choice between feeding their family vs. being in compliance.

More focus on education!

-Burning it Right Shaw TV segments. Anna can talk to Nancy re. Shaw running some old clips (Tim Pley) or potential filming some new ones. The current fire prevention officer is retiring and whoever the new person is might have some interest.

This will be a reoccurring item for future meetings.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- VICC Resilience Summit
 - Nov. 6th all day
 - Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Resilience Summit
 - The purpose of the Summit is to bring communities – rural, urban, and Indigenous – together to review the state of the island in terms of resilience and current approaches to climate mitigation and adaptation. Anna and Diane will be attending.
 - By the end of the day there will be a list of clear 2030 goals for climate mitigation and adaptation for the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region. There should be a compiled list of the key actions we can take as a region to achieve these goals and what resources are required. Anna and Diane will report back at the next meeting.
- Airshed Roundtable Fall Session (Cowichan Valley)
 - via Zoom Dec. 1st 9-11am
 - Anna and Jade to attend and can report back at the next meeting.

7. NEXT MEETING

- Thursday, Dec. 3rd, 2020 2pm via Zoom
- Larry Cross will give a presentation on Catalyst and 2020 operations.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50