



Asheville-Buncombe

Air Quality Agency

Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: April 18, 2024 Meeting

The Advisory Committee for the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency (AB Air Quality) met on April 18, 2024, at 4:00 PM via Microsoft Teams.

Members Present:

Evan Couzo, Chair
Keith Bamberger
Ned Guttman
Jim Neely
Jay Haney

Members Absent:

Ichaya Dhungel
Kevin Tipton

Staff Present: *Ashley Featherstone, Director; Kevin Lance, Field Services Program Manager; James Raiford, Permitting Program Manager; Betsy Brown, Air Quality Coordinator*

Others Present:

1. Review and Approval of Agenda

A copy of the draft Agenda and draft February minutes had been emailed to members. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

2. Review and Approve February Minutes

Ms. Featherstone noted that one of Dr. Couzo's former students and McCullough Fellow, Ava Ingle, made her Sustainable Brewery Project presentation at the February Advisory Committee meeting. Some EPA Advance program staff attended the meeting and expressed interest in having Ms. Ingle present her project at a national EPA Advance partners meeting.

Dr. Guttman made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Neely seconded the motion. All members present voted yes. The motion passed.

3. Review and Discuss One Nomination for Clean Air Excellence Award

One Clean Air Excellence Award application was received from the Green Built Alliance for the Appalachian Offsets Program. The application and awards by-laws were sent by email to committee members. One member pointed out that this is the nature of the entity's business. However, under the by-laws, "The Special Award Category is intended to recognize entities that have made significant contributions to WNC Air Quality regardless of whether the improvements are part of their primary business or stated mission." It was noted that the Green Built Alliance was a non-profit as opposed to a solar panel company. Their projects are local, not

just planting a tree in another country. Staff requested the emissions calculation spreadsheet from the company and Mr. Raiford has also done some calculations. After some discussion around the actual emission reductions and other calculations, general approval was reached.

Dr. Guttman made the motion to offer the Clean Air Excellence Award in the Special Award category to the Green Built Alliance. Mr. Neely seconded the motion.

All members present voted yes.

The motion passed.

4. Asheville Beer Week Function on May 21 (6-8 pm at Wicked Weed Funkatorium)
 - a. Certificate of Appreciation for local breweries that participated last year
Copies of a proposed Buncombe County press release about the sustainable brewery initiative and a couple of proposed Certificates of Appreciation drafts were emailed to the committee for review.

Mica Crouse, with Big Mountain Impact, has done a great job working with the Brewers Alliance for an event around this project. We have a function set up on May 21st. Wicked Weed is going to sponsor this during Beer Week at the Funkatorium and supply one free drink. Three people from Blue Horizons Community Council donated \$500 each. Sugar Hollow Solar and Duke Energy also donated. There are enough funds to provide hors d'oeuvres for 75 people. Dr. Couzo came up with the name of the event – Brewing Some Good for the Environment. There will be a panel discussion with Ms. Ingle, Dr. Couzo, Marshall Goers with Waste Reduction Partners, and representatives from Wicked Weed and from the RAD Brewing Company. The EPA Advance team were invited to attend. At this event we plan to present a certificate of appreciation for participating to the breweries that Ms. Ingle worked with. We hope Joel Storrow, our board chair, will be at the event and able to present the certificates.

The improvements that Ms. Ingle noted would help the breweries reduce their GHG emissions and expenses, but of course there is a financial cost. Duke Energy has some incentive programs which may help the breweries implement some of those changes.

We are working with CAPE, the Buncombe County communications team, to get the word out.

5. UNCA Project Updates
 - a. Purple Air and Raspberry Pi Sensor Project Updates
Dr. Couzo said that he and his students did two rounds of data collection from the Raspberry Pi sensors at Asheville Public Schools. His students are crunching the numbers. Before each deployment they first sited the monitors at the Community Science Shelter next to the agency's PM monitors to ensure that they were getting accurate correction factors. The Raspberry Pi sensors have a pretty low bias whereas the PurpleAirs tend to overestimate the PM2.5. They are looking forward to seeing if there are spatial differences in the PM readings across the city.

They have installed almost 10 PurpleAirs across the city which are all publicly available on the PurpleAir map. There is one stationed at the Community Science Shelter. Lately it has been giving some strange readings over the last couple of weeks. He checked it today and it seems to be back to normal. They are also measuring temperature and humidity over all these sensors, so they will get a sense of a heat map across the city over time.

Ms. Featherstone notes that at the recent Carolina Air Pollution Control Association meeting concern was expressed about the new lower PM2.5 standard and how that would affect future industry air quality permitting for new facilities and expansions. The consultant pulled up a PurpleAir map of Asheville and we could see Dr. Couzo's 10 PurpleAirs. The consultant made the point that these monitors are out there, and the public is becoming aware of this data.

Agency staff met with the State Air Quality Director, Mike Abraczinskas, and the Deputy Director, Taylor Hartfield, at our PM air quality monitoring site at the Board of Education. That is the location of the Community Science Shelter.

6. Agency Updates

a. Air Quality Awareness Week May 6-10

Ms. Featherstone drafted an Air Quality Awareness Proclamation for the Buncombe County Commissioners to consider. The CAPE team reviewed and removed the reference to the importance of air quality to tourism. Historically, as far back as 1916, Asheville had a smoke abatement ordinance and one of the main reasons to have air pollution rules was the importance of air quality to tourism. We will not know until the last week of April if the Commissioners will issue the proclamation. That is when the Commissioners do their review for the May 7th Commissioners meeting. If this happens, Mr. Storrow and Ms. Featherstone would accept the proclamation.

7. Next meeting schedule: June 20, August 15, October 17, December 19

a. In person meetings for one or more?

Currently there are no pressing matters for the Advisory Committee to consider. Many members were traveling in June. Members thought it would be good to have one in-person meeting each year. It was suggested that we skip the June meeting and schedule the August meeting in person, perhaps at the East Asheville Library where we met in person last summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.