

**AB 617 Community Air Protection Program
Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting
December 11, 2019
5:30 PM
Calexico Neighborhood House
Calexico, CA**

Chair of Meeting: Matt Dessert (Alternate: Reyes Romero)

Facilitator: Daniela Flores of Harder Co.

I. Attendance:

Mersedes Martinez, Community Corridor; **René Felix**, Community Corridor; **Kristian Salgado**, Community Corridor; **Blake Plourd** Community Corridor; **Sergio Cabañas**, Community Corridor; **Mary Salazar**, Community Corridor; **John Hernandez**, Community Corridor

Alternates: Christian Torres; Rosa Guerrero, Sandra Mendivil, Chris Gomez Wong, Steven Snow, Michael Moore, Marlene Flores, Juan Villa, Aide Fulton

II. Welcome and Opening Remarks by CSC Members

Daniela Flores pointed out the emergency exits and restrooms. She mentioned they have translating services available and invited everyone to try out the food they have in the meeting. She said they are having a Q&A session from CARB on the Community Emissions Reductions Program (CERP), a discussion on the Community Air Monitor Installation and a presentation from a mobile monitoring platform consultant. She reminded everyone if they vote on something to please use the proper procedures. She mentioned that part of her role as a facilitator is to ensure an inclusive process where they hear from residents and steering committee members because it's very important AB 617 is shaped by the community. She mentioned she wants to make sure everyone gets to share their opinion and that if there's a lot of interest to share that everyone keeps their comments brief. She said that they've reached quorum and will now begin.

Matt Dessert welcomed everyone to the meeting and said they have a short agenda. He said that the presentation about the mobile monitoring platform from the members from Air Science will be very important. He mentioned he took them to a tour of the new river and showed them the new port of entry expansion, the sewer treatment plan in Calexico, the neighborhoods around the new river and also new locations for potential new monitors. he mentioned Nosotros Park and the baseball fields directly west of Nosotros stuck out as new locations. He commented that these experts pointed out an incinerator Matt hasn't noticed that was across the new river. He said that they noticed smells coming out of the Calexico Sewer Treatment Plant, and that they need to make sure that facility is working properly. He said that after they noticed this they probably need to take a look at the plants in El Centro and Heber.

Christian Torres said it was nice to have a meeting in Calexico. He commented that that past week he was in Oakland for the CARB meeting where they approved West Oakland's CERP plan which they titled Owing Our Air, he said it was inspiring to see committee members presenting the plan themselves. He said if anyone was interested in stepping up and presenting the plan when CARB comes down it will be appreciated. He commented he noticed how much everyone has evolved since they started with the questions that are asked, comments that are made and how sometimes they correct him when he's wrong. He mentioned they can get in touch with him or **Belen Leon** with setting up some presentations and talking points.

Blake Plourd said that it was nice to drive through Calexico to get a different perspective. He mentioned that they should start looking for quality alternates given that they almost didn't reach quorum in the first few minutes of the meeting.

Sergio Cabañas echoed **Blake Plourd's** comment. He commented that were supposed to make a vote tonight and they were a few board members and alternates missing for the vote. He said this worries him because that vote is an important decision.

René Félix expressed his gratitude for having the meeting in Calexico as a resident of the area. He added that they should consider adding more board members.

Kristian Salgado said she also appreciates having the meeting in Calexico.

John Hernandez asked **Matt Dessert** who joined him on the tour they had that day.

Matt Dessert said **Mathew Madcow** and **Katherine Colestar** from Air Science joined him on the tour they had earlier that day.

Mary Salazar said she was so happy having a meeting in Calexico. She introduced a member of the public **Sarah Vandiver**, a conservative biologist. **Mary** speaking on behalf of **Sarah** said she was so psyched about the environmental health summit and that she wants to be on the board, she mentioned she didn't know how bad the situation was in the valley. Speaking on her behalf, **Mary** said that she was driving from Heber to Calexico when she noticed she couldn't even breath when passing the geothermal plant because of how bad the air quality is there.

Matt Dessert said that the air quality in Heber after the rains were pretty good. He mentioned he doesn't know what that source was. He commented that on Sunday night a fire started on the west edge at Tom Brundy's Hay Barn and it's still burning and smoldering. He said that he and **Luis Olmedo** will review **Sarah Vandiver's** application and that they are trying to fill all the seats and attending to all those that aren't making it.

III. Public Comment

Daniela Flores said they will now open the floor for public comment.

Ana Vandiver said that she is very concerned about the air quality in the valley. She commented she was a very healthy person for a long time but now she has eye problems and asthma. She mentioned this is a concern especially for the children. She said that her grandkid is taking allergy pills because he already has respiratory problems.

Miguel Hernández from Comité Cívico del Valle made an invitation to two public meetings that will be happening on the 17th and 18th of that month. One will be held in Mecca and the other on Salton City. He said the state will be presenting the suppression projects.

Johnny said that it's important that all the state and federal properties are brought up to compliance before you ask private industry to make any improvements in their industry.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Daniela Flores mentioned Amy Ramos was listed but it was her that was present and asked if they could make that change throughout. Her comment was noted.

Matt Dessert asked for a motion and a second to approve the minutes.

Sergio Cabañas made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11th minute.

Kristian Salgado asked why were they approving the September 11th minute that day.

Belen Leon said there was a technical problem with the audio and that's why it wasn't brought up.

Kristian Salgado seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

V. Discussions Items

CERP Q&A Session

Kristian Salgado, relating to their third question about the lessons learned said that as a steering committee member they learned many lessons and one of them is how they relate the CAMP to the CERP because the CAMP took a long time to be finalized. She said the lesson would be that the committee should be aware of how connected these plans are so they can better inform their decisions on the CERP.

Matt Dessert said that the steering committee has processed a lot of information. He said it's unusual for a community to work on two plans at once. He mentioned that an additional public benefit project that has taken place is the Indoor Air Filtration Project at Grace Elementary school and Nilan, he said that this project has gone over very well and that it's a 5-year commitment were there's an additional set of filters that filter the air even tighter than normal. He mentioned there's kiosks and technical outreach devices to help with the educational part of the plan. He commented that Seeley school has also been awarded the same project. He said that he's confident that this community will get more projects like these. He asked the staff if Seeley school filters have been installed.

A staff member said Seeley will be scheduled for next year in January once the schools' administration looks over the details. He said that they're looking at possibly using future resources and the moneys they get through 617 to do a number of schools with the support of this committee.

Matt Dessert said that these schools aren't used to getting this big of a project. He said that whenever a project like this is new, the school board members are very careful not to make a mistake because they think they'll have to pay for something. He reiterated that these projects are already paid for and have a 5-year commitment to them.

Andrea Juarez said that if anyone doesn't feel comfortable speaking up they can write down their comments in the post-it notes and hand them over to her at the end of the meeting.

Kristian Salgado wanted to reiterate her comment about wishing she got the CERP sooner so she could've connected the dots between that and the CAMP because it could've given her more time for ample feedback.

Blake Plourd said that reading this 150-page document was time consuming and there were a lot of things that bogged it down. He suggested better streamlining the application process so that they can get better feedback from the community and the steering committee members. He said that 150 pages of background material wasn't necessary because the focus of the document was in 10-12 pages.

Kristian Salgado had a question in reference to **Matt Dessert's** comment on current projects being implemented. She asked if there was a way to quantify how the projects are reducing air pollution. She said as an example, when they paved a certain road the PM10 has been reduced by 'X' amount.

Matt Dessert said that they do have those calculations that include cost savings and emissions savings for the parking lot that was an early emissions reduction project and for the ag-burn policy. He said that this backup information has been presented to the committee but they'll bring them out again. He commented that there's always standards and benchmarks needed before they do a project, and that they wouldn't bring a project forwards without having done the proper analysis with help from experts.

Kristian Salgado said that that'd be really cool. She mentioned she stumbled upon an older project that was near the softball field at St. Mary's where the air district help put turf there and it had a really cool calculation that projected particulate matter reduction.

Matt Dessert said that they will definitely bring that information back to the committee. He mentioned that they are trying different projects that aren't specifically asphalt paving projects called PM10 Pilot Projects. He commented that they are looking at one in an elementary school in Imperial and that they just finished one in McCabe School. He said that these projects are much more cost-effective than asphalt paving.

A Committee member mentioned having attended the parking lot inauguration at McCabe School and said you could see the use of different asphalt materials. He added that even though their durability might not be very long, having paved this Surface is still of a great positive impact.

Matt Dessert said that the asphalt parking lot they did in Calexico High School was more expensive than the McCabe parking lot that used recycled material and environmentally friendly "dirt glue". He said that the Calexico High School was \$406,000 and the McCabe school was around \$160,000. He said that if they would've gone the conventional route in the McCabe school, that bill would've been around \$550,000 and they just don't have that kind of resources. He said that this was a huge success and they are now looking to do it in an elementary school and a state run kindergarten school. He said the money used for these projects aren't 617 moneys but domestic resources that the air district has.

John Hernandez said that it was his understanding that the CERP hasn't been approved by CARB. He understands that when CARB approves it they would start implementing it. He mentioned that there has been meeting and negotiations outside of the committee regarding the CERP and the Air Monitoring Plan. He said that committing funds to something that they haven't even weigh in on. He mentioned they need to do a better job of including them with the information going on in these meeting where he feels they don't have the chance to weigh in on and only get the information in a big chunk. He commented that this is a little frustrating how the committee could've been more participative.

Chris Cortez said that she feels the amount spent on paving the parking lot was too big for how little the parking lot is. She asked for transparency in regards to how the money is actually spent. She mentioned that the money shouldn't be spent just in paving roads and parking lots, and that it should also be invested in sensors, greenery, educating families, etc.

Matt Dessert said that parking lots are expensive. He mentioned that that parking lot was a long needed one. He commented that in an effort for transparency it was taken to the board of supervisors and approved being a vote shy of unanimous. Answering **John Hernandez's** comment, he said that they've brought all these policies to the committee many times, they've open up their offices to meet and have dialogues. He commented that many of the people at the table including **John Hernandez** have been to their office to review the documents. He said he felt his comment was disingenuous to say that they are unloading all this information on them and forcing it on them when they've had a hard schedule put on them by the state. He commented that the air district

has made every effort to keep this committee afloat. He said that if anyone wants transparency to go check the records of the minutes, and their notes. He said that it's on all of them to do the best they can so that these questions about lack of transparency don't land on their shoulders because they're in this together.

Andrea Juarez encouraged everyone to participate in the community tours that are going to happen on the 15th and to go to the board meetings and talk with the co-leads of the CSC and see if they can participate in the presentation aspect of the board meeting.

AB 617 Community Air Monitoring Installation.

Christian Torres said that there seems to be an issue with the HDMI port of the computer and the presentation can't be viewed.

Matt Dessert mentioned he would make a motion to table this item and apologize for the technical issue. He said the lack of having a hard copy is a responsibility of both the co-chairs and the agencies. He said there should be discussion about this item but as an action they need to have the presentation available and that if they don't they could be scrutinized that they didn't do their due diligence.

Stacy Mendoza, an economic development manager with the city of El Centro said that that they city would like to voice their concern and objection to the placement of the monitor at the wastewater treatment plant in El Centro. She said there is agricultural areas directly west of the plant and that most of it is dirt. She mentioned that whenever the winds are coming through it tends to bring a lot of that dirt to the plant. She said that the placement of a monitor there may inaccurately attribute those pollutants to the plant when in reality its coming from the ag-areas. She commented the concern is that the wastewater plant is already a target of public scrutiny and adding falsely attributed ag-pollutants to the site would only add fuel to the fire. She added that the city has asked if they can work with the committee to try and find another location but they don't want it in the wastewater plant.

Christian Torres took note of Stacy's comment.

Blake Plourd said that whenever they bring back the presentation it's important to have IVAN monitors on it. He mentioned that the IVAN network is highly important because it has allowed them to be in the AB 617 program. He commented that their community air monitors should complement the existing monitors as opposed to putting one next door. He said that the committee has been talking about putting 3 new monitors within a one-mile radius of an existing monitor in Heber. He mentioned that Heber is a pretty small town and that it would be better quadrant it out and take care of the sources. He suggested that Dogwood elementary is a great spot for a new monitor.

Christian Torres pointed out on the map the proposed, current and the alternate locations for the new monitors. He said that they did want to present the existing monitors so they could see how some areas would be saturated. After the monitor kept failing, he said he would second that motion of tabling this item because it can't be viewed. He said he is still open to comments.

Thomas said that one thing to keep in mind in the discussion about these locations is that there seems to be a sense that there's going to be a particular area of the corridor that's going to be over saturated. He reminded everyone that there's also the alternate locations and invited everyone to keep that in mind. He said that they also have the two regulatory monitors in El Centro and Calexico. He added that one of the items that they will talk about is the development of the mobile monitoring platform.

Matt Dessert said that they will bring this item back so that the Air District and CCV can better design this presentation and also take into consideration comments or concerns voiced in the meeting. He mentioned that they've previously talked about a better scientific grid to cover the corridor.

Christian Torres said that they have partners in **Tracking** California which is a branch from the public health institute that can help them do the scientific analysis. He mentioned that they did the analysis on 20 of the 40 original locations they had.

Michael Moore said that he was one of the persons that responded in a previous meeting regarding the specific industry that might be associated with the monitor location and he wants to give an elaboration on that. He commented that they've mentioned the geothermal plant on dogwood road, the feedlot, the El Centro wastewater plant and he thinks that these industries have some kind of concern for the community. He mentioned that avoiding these locations for monitors would alert the community.

Matt Dessert said that as a committee they want to keep it scientific based and not arbitrary. He said they do want to be arbitrary when it comes to schools because they want to tie the IVAN monitor program to the successful and established Flag program in a bigger more robust way

John Hernandez wanted clarification on how many regulatory monitors are in the city of El Centro and how many IVAN Monitors are within the city limits of El Centro.

Thomas said there was only one regulatory monitor in El Centro.

Christian Torres said there are 2 IVAN Monitors in schools, one in a private residence, and one in the APCD office. He said that there might be one more on the east side but he believes those are it inside the city limits.

Matt Dessert said that there's been some issues with the monitors they've been working out with CARB. He mentioned **John Hernandez** asked a question in a prior meeting about the monitors in Mexicali. He said he needs to have a discussion about this with **Luis Olmedo** before they bring this to the public.

Discussion on how to approach the January 8th meeting.

Daniela Flores said they are having CARB come down on January 15th and they need to discuss whether they can consider that meeting the monthly meeting for the steering committee so that they can reschedule or cancel the January 8th meeting.

Thomas mentioned CARB board will come down on January 15th for a special session to consider the CERP. He mentioned that that the meetings are scheduled by default for the second Wednesday of each month and the January monthly meeting will land on the 8th. He commented that what they are putting forth to the community is whether they should consider the 15th meeting as the committee meeting so they can encourage everyone to attend and be a part of the presentation to CARB. He mentioned there is going to be a public comment period in the January 15th meeting, he encouraged the public to attend so they can give their testimony or opinion of that whole process. He said the meeting will be at 4 pm at the Old Eucalyptus School House in West El Centro, he mentioned that earlier that day they will be having a tour of the corridor with CARB's board, He mentioned that if anyone is available to attend please let APCD or CCV staff know so they can be signed up for the tour.

An attendee made a motion to cancel the January 8th meeting and only have a meeting on January 15th and the community meeting being sometime in February.

Mersedes Martinez seconded the motion.

There was a vote and the motion was passed.

I. **Community Air Monitoring Plan discussion; Dr. Katherine Colestar and Matt Mavcow, Air Science**

Kristian Salgado asked if this discussion relates to a budget they were showed some meetings ago that said what would the mobile sources would be if they contracted or if they built the infrastructure locally. She asked if this discussion meant that they've decided to contract and if so did they make a motion to go this route.

Belen Leon clarified Air Sciences is only making a presentation with what they would bring to the table. She mentioned they haven't chosen what route they're going to. She said she remembers what budget Kristian Salgado is talking about and mentioned that presentation was from Aerodyne. She reiterated they are still looking at options.

Kristian Salgado said that the committee should consider how to utilize the mobile monitors.

Mersedes Martinez mentioned that the whole point of this is to be mobile and grasp as much data as we can, using the same unit. She asked how long does a monitor need to be stationed in one area to be able to grasp a good concept of the area.

Katherine Colestar said that a month is the minimum they like to do. She mentioned that when they get the mobile monitors running they do need to be checked on once in a while. She added that 6 months is a lot better because it covers transitions between the seasons.

John Hernandez asked if Air Science has any current contracts doing that type of work and if the monitors can also monitor methane. He also asked if CARB has the capability to do the type of monitoring.

Katherine Colestar said they aren't currently doing any contracts. She mentioned that they didn't include methane because they were basing this study off of the CAMP but that they could monitor it if it was a priority of the committee.

René Felix thanked **Katherine** and **Matt** for the presentation. He mentioned that the presentation is made at another level since it talks about ozone, nitrogen and H₂S's that are one of the greatest concerns in the New River.

Kristian Salgado asked Air Science if they could speak about their prior projects in Portland. She said that project sounded very community based.

Matt mentioned that a few of the advantages of passive monitoring are that it's very simple, low tech, and it doesn't have any sensitive handling requirements; meaning that the method can get a lot of people involved that aren't specifically trained for this task.

Katherine mentioned they had 4 stations, one being in a school and a couple being in parks. She said the operators were interns from local schools that only needed a couple of hours of training. She commented this was a proof of concept that this kind of network could work.

A co-chair asked what is it that they're actually selling. He asked if are they going to bring their equipment and install in the field or are they designing a mobile monitoring system for the district. He also asked if they are planning to monitor different toxics around the new river

Matt answering the question about the new river, said that part of the plan would be to have air sampling with low volume particulate sampling that are filter based that pull air in and that gets deposited in a filter and then taken to a lab and analyzed. He mentioned that H2S is an air toxic and that's why its included.

Katherine Colestar said that the VOC's with the gas canisters gets out a lot of the air toxics. She mentioned that the use of ozone and NOx are used as indicators of influence from specific sources. She said that even though ammonia isn't an air toxic it shows that there's influence from agriculture.

Thomas said that the presentation Air Sciences did was them showing how the mobile monitoring platform can be built from the ground up. He mentioned that the intent of this project with the approval of the committee is that the air district and ccv would be responsible for managing the air monitoring platform.

II. Agency Updates

Thomas said that the Air District doesn't really have specific items they want to announce. He reiterated the district would like as many committee members as possible to attend the January 15th meeting with CARB. He also reminded the committee about the tour that's going to happen earlier that same day.

Miguel Hernandez reiterated that there will be two public meetings on December 17th and 18th. He said the meeting on the 17th will be in the city of Mecca and the other one will be in Salton City.

A State representative mentioned that on December 12th and 13th the state is having their board meeting. He mentioned on December 13th they will be hearing an item for AB 617 for the 2019 selected communities. He invited everyone to tune in via webcast.

III. Agenda Topics for Next Meeting

Daniela Flores said that since they're having CARB come down on January 15th that will be the primary agenda topic for January.

IV. Closing Remarks / Adjournment

Aide Fulton mentioned that the committee heard **Stacy Mendoza's** question and they will be discussing it. She said to the lady that asked the question about the parking lot that they liked people asking these stuff and want everyone to be involved asking those type of questions. She commented that the goal of this project is to improve the quality of life of everyone around them. She said that the questions they asked had already been answered in past meetings and that that's why the public should attend these meetings. She said that she's a nurse and she works with people that are affected by the air quality and she always asks them why they don't attend the meetings. She commented that she understands people complaining on having monitors close to their companies but said this is necessary to understand the air quality in the area so they can implement a project to improve the air quality.

Virginia Mendoza said that they will follow up on those two questions they had.

Blake Plourd made reference to a past meeting where IVAN made an analysis on why there was a spike of unhealthy air quality and how they could attribute it to activities going on around the new year like wood burning. He said that a part of that presentation was about what has already been done and what can they learn from that. He mentioned that it was important to keep learning from the existing monitors and the new ones. He said that when there's a presentation to always bring these analyses.

Mercedes Martinez thanked the co-chairs for bringing the presentations to them and looked forward to have that information so they can make further progress.

A committee member thanked the committee and the public for attending the meeting. She said that whenever she turns on the radio she hates hearing the warnings saying not to go outside because of unhealthy air quality. She commented that she's very grateful for being a part of this committee. She said that the doctors have no idea what to about her mercury poisoning and she's on her own trying to find a cure for this. She mentioned that the committee should make more information available to the public.

John Hernandez wished everyone happy holidays and a happy new year. He said that they're getting somewhere even though at times its hard and the technical information is difficult to understand.

Kristian Salgado seconded John Hernandez's comment.

René Felix thanked the co-chairs, the Neighborhood House facilities for providing them with a place for the meeting. I mention that it is encouraging to finish another meeting as they move forward, although it seems very slow. He told everyone to have a happy holiday.

A representant of the Air District said sometimes they can't attend meetings because they have a busy schedule. He invited everyone to go to the Air District. And said that they're more than welcome to have tours. He said if anyone can't attend these meetings they are more than welcome to reach out to them so that they can get them connected on the work they're doing in the air district.

Belen Leon said that their website has all the minutes and the recordings of these as well so if they want to go back and listen to the minutes that is possible.

Maritza Hurtado, a former mayor of Calexico, thanked to everyone that has come to the city. She said that in her time being mayor she learned a lot about their environment and the people in the group. She thanked everyone being involved because Calexico is impacted given its proximity to Mexicali. She said she works for the Calexico wellness center that's working with Comite Civico to create a new program. She mentioned the city should have an elected official being involved in these meetings because they're really important issues. She said that no one has realized that the city has a responsibility to combat the problem in the new river.

A committee member thanked CARB for scheduling the board meeting in Imperial County.

A representative of the Air District said that not only the minutes and the recordings of them are available on the air district website but also the previous agenda packets, presentations and analysis they've given the committee are in that website and invited everyone to see this material.

Meeting Adjourned.