**AB 617 Community Air Protection Program**

**Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting**

**ECRMC Community Education Center**

**El Centro, California**

**January 30th, 2019**

**Co-chairs: Luis Olmedo; Matt Dessert**

**Facilitator: Scott Weaver of Ramboll**

1. **Attendance**

**Luis Olmedo,** Comite Civico del Valle; **Matt Dessert,** Imperial Valley Air Pollution Control District; **Michael More,** Community Corridor; **Kristian Salgado,** Community Corridor; **Jose Celaya,** Community Corridor; **Bob Fischer,** alternate for **Diahna Garcia; Scott Weaver,** Ramboll; **Aide Munguia Fulton,** Community Corridor; **Mireya Diaz,** Community Corridor; **Blake Plourd,** Community Corridor; **John Hernandez,** Community Corridor; **Sergio Cabañas,** Community Corridor; **Reyes Romero,** Air Pollution Control District and alternate for **Matt Dessert; Mersedes Martinez,** Community Corridor; **Tony Sandoval**, Community Corridor; **Mary Salazar,** Community Corridor

**Alternates:** Humberto Lugo, Rosa Guerrero, Sandra Mendivil, and Diego Gamboa.

1. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Luis Olmedo** welcomed everyone to the venue and asked for the members of the committee to join them at the meeting table.

**Matt Dessert** also welcomed everyone and asked for the members or their alternates to sit at the table. He also informed that **Mr. Sandoval** would be sitting at the table as the alternate for **Juan Cruz** at this meeting, and that neither one of them would be able to attend the meeting to be held on February 13th. He also informed that **Reyes Romero** would be taking his place shortly during this meeting because he would be leaving to attend another community meeting at 6 o’clock in Heber. He announced that the Air District is interested in working on a new logo, and that they were also looking for a cartoon character for educational outreach and that they were considering utilizing the services from the local cartoonist for the IV Press for this purpose.

1. **Public Comment Period**

**John Sample** made a comment about the lack of wheelchair accommodations.

**Luis Olmedo** said his point would be noted for further meetings. He also mentioned that it had already been heard and noted by this facility’s personnel.

1. **Approval of Minutes from Prior Meeting**

**Luis Olmedo** asked if there were any comments or suggestions regarding the minutes from the prior meeting. He also informed they could make a copy available for those who did not already have one.

**Sergio Cabañas** made a motion to approve the minutes as they stand.

**Bob Fischer** seconded that motion.

**Luis Olmedo** stated the approval of the minutes after a unanimous vote by the steering committee.

1. **Informational Items**

**Bylaw/Charter Update**

**Luis Olmedo** said this has been the result of a couple months of work in collaboration with the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District and Comite Civico del Valle. He mentioned that everyone had been given a copy of this document in order for them to review it and that they are going take action on it at the following meeting. He also mentioned there are very specific targets, deliverables and expectations included in this document. He also mentioned they have the opportunity to become an example for other communities to follow. He added that this document also gives the steering committee members the power to both weigh in and to have a voting right. He also said it is a document that provides guidance in order for members and alternates to be able to participate and represent their communities.

**John Hernandez** asked if this draft document is now the final recommendation from the Air Pollution Control District and Comite Civico del Valle after having reviewed what the AB 617 guidelines are, if it had been reviewed by the Imperial County Council, and if it will also need to be ratified by the Imperial County Board of Supervisors.

**Reyes Romero** said that the purpose of this document was for everyone to review it. After doing so, he said they would all review it together in order to see where it goes.

**Luis Olmedo** added this document does not take away any authority from the Air Pollution Control District or the Air Resources Board, and it is intended to govern the manner on which this committee will operate. He also mentioned that it puts them in a great position to maintain and reflect the partnership that holds this project together. He also mentioned that it will go to the board, but that they were hoping to get their feedback before that happens.

**Kristian Salgado** suggested having an organization chart that would help them better understand where the county, the Air District and Comite Civico fit into this project as well as what the limitations and power of this committee are.

**Luis Olmedo** said they would look into it.

**Reyes Romero** said they would present it to the committee at the following meeting.

1. **Presentations / Questions and Answers**

**Introduction of First 5 Elements of Community Monitoring Plan; Luis Olmedo, Comite Civico del Valle**

**Luis Olmedo** explained that they were going to have different presentations with the purpose of preparing an air monitoring plan with the Community Steering Committee and to bring all the parties to a common understanding of what air monitoring will achieve as well as the potential limitations of it, what tools would be utilized in order to collect, review and interpret data and how this data will be used. He added that the approach for community involvement should be documented in order to verify that the community has and will continue to contribute to decision making processes. He also stated that the community engagement process will also be a crucial component during the development of California Air Resources Board community air monitoring data portal. He said the Community Steering Committee will provide essential recommendations to help determine data display and special needs for each unique community.

1. **Roundtable Discussion on First 5 Elements of Community Monitoring Plan; Christian, Comite Civico del Valle**

 **Kristian** explained the roundtable discussion process

**Luis Olmedo** asked how the general public would engage in this activity.

**Christian Torres** explained there was a fact sheet that would be handed to them for that purpose, and that after this activity is finished, they would be able to participate on a follow-up discussion about this activity during a public comment period.

**Scott Weaver** informed that they would not be taking minutes during the breakouts. However, he informed translation services would continue to be available as usual.

**Follow Up Discussion / Questions and Answers**

**Element 5 - Establishing Roles and Responsibilities**

**An Attendee** mentioned that this element dictates for the committee to have an organizational structure along with an organizational chart explaining what the governing structure might be in the committee as well as defining responsibilities for each group. He mentioned that they already have the community represented at the table as well as environmental justice along with the Air Pollution Control District. He also said that a big advantage they have is the fact that they have 2 different types of technical staff at the table, which include community monitoring as well as regulatory monitoring so there are multiple approaches that can be taken when it comes to decide on the monitoring plan they want to develop.

**Element 2 - Stating the Community – Specific Purposes for Air Monitoring**

**Christian Torres** said the results from the poll that took pace for this element will be put together on a document that will be made available for everyone at the following meeting along with the minutes.

**Element 3 – Scopes of Action**

**Belen Leon** said that they agreed on the need for better refined data, more air quality index education, area specific measurements, analysis of air quality index, and comparison between the weather and air quality index data. In essence, having better interpretation and simplification of air quality data, as well as obtaining the data in a timely manner. She also mentioned that monitoring data at peak times came up as a suggestion.

**Element 4 – Defining Air Monitoring Objectives**

**Emily Weissinger** said she felt that a lot of the discussion overlapped with the other 2 elements. She also mentioned there are some questions concerning the monitors that are currently in place as far as the function they serve. She added that some of the key concerns were also traffic at the port of entry and within the corridor as well as agricultural burning as a source of emissions. She said there are also concerns as far as what facilities are contributing more to the burden, and they suggested using the air monitoring systems for this purpose. She mentioned there was an interest on utilizing more monitoring in order to provide more neighborhood scale air quality information as well as identifying areas on which sensitive receptors are more heavily burdened.

**John Hernandez** said that in this exercise he concurs with a lot of the input and the observations, but he gets a sense as he sits next to someone in the geothermal industry as well as next to someone in the feedlot industry that it has a chilling effect on some of them to really understand how to get to the point where they are going to bridge what they are trying to do through this committee. He said that just as their community is not aware about the impacts of air quality across this valley, he hears that their co-chair is currently at a meeting where they are talking about expanding a feedlot twice the size of what they are trying to address.

**Mireya Diaz** said she believes that as part of this committee, they are coming here to address these issues that are concerning **Mr. Hernandez.**  She also said that she believes there are great people on board looking to do something different and that their willingness to be there shows that. She added she does not believe that pointing fingers is going to lead them to where they really need to go. She also stated she believed the breakout sessions were a great start and that wonderful conversations and ideas for solutions came from this practice. She said the focus of this committee should be determining the next steps to take, because they are already aware of what the issues are. She mentioned she believes their community is aware of the bad air quality, but they do not necessarily understand what this means. Therefore, this is another objective that this committee has the opportunity to address.

**An Attendee** mentioned that some of them represent not only themselves and their families, but also work in the industry and that in his opinion the industries represented in this community steering committee are an important part in the community. He said that he was there for the community and that if there is something that he could weigh in on that does reflect his expertise in the industry, he is happy to help.

**Reyes Romero** commented that he does not think it is of any benefit to start pointing fingers or getting defensive. He said he thinks the goal of this committee is trying to find solutions. He added that they are not in the business of trying to shut businesses; they are in the business of trying to get people to do the right thing for the community, and that they all have to work together in order to achieve that goal.

**Luis Olmedo** said he appreciates the honesty and the dialogue that was taking place. He said it was their intention to bring in people from the community with experience in the different industries, but he mentioned they also had said from the beginning that they would have to take their hats off as representatives and exchange them for those which represent the community, but that they all bring a very unique expertise and background. He also said this is a very nontraditional situation as AB 617 is a piece of legislation that had not happened before, and it is bringing different parties and different interests together, which will bring certain discomfort to the table. He added that it is not always going to be a comfortable conversation when having to bring up issues, but they have a goal to achieve, which is to put this community in the strongest position in order to direct resources in a targeted way to help reduce emissions and to take advantage to those incentive dollars out there.

**Jose Celaya** suggested that when they are on a specific subject, they stay on the subject.

**Erick Reyes** said he wanted to agree with what everyone had said. He said he thinks all sectors need to be represented at this committed and added that this is something their community had needed for a very long time and that he is very happy to see it happening now.

**John Sample** said he wanted to thank each one of the participants in this group for being there. He said there are many things that can be done to find solutions to the issues at hand.

**Edie Harmon** said that the Imperial County has for many years had serious problems with zoning and planning, and she said she hoped that when they are dealing with air quality issues you will not forget the very important role that zoning and planning plays on this matter.

**Ray Kellner** suggested for the APCD to set up some type of government for all of the members of this committee, or perhaps just one e-mail that all members can access for the specific purpose of receiving public comments. He also suggested a different venue for further meetings because the screens are difficult to see and the ventilation system is too loud at the venue this meeting was held.

**An Attendee** suggested stablishing some ground rules as to how to proceed at these meetings and having them posted up at every meeting.

**Luis Olmedo** stated that they were taking minutes and that all comments are being documented to be considered and reviewed.

1. **Agenda Topics for next Meeting / Time and Location of Meeting**

**Thomas Brinkerhoff** said that based on discussions and meetings that they have had and the input from the community steering committee, they recommend going over the draft of the first 5 elements taking all of the input from the breakout discussions so that they can finalize that in two weeks at their following meeting to be held on February 13th. He also mentioned that they would review the charter or bylaw and possibly take action so he asked everyone to take their time to go over it before their next meeting. Also, he said they would probably have a spot on their agenda to discuss control strategies.

**An Attendee** suggested not overloading the agenda so they have enough time to discuss each item as well as a period for comments from both the steering committee and the public. He also suggested having a field visit to the top places or areas of concern as far as sources of emissions once they have been identified.

**Mary Salazar** suggested assigning time prior or after the meeting to have the chance to meet each other one on one.

**Blake Plourd** suggested making the charter draft available to the public to give people the chance to review it prior to the following meeting in order for them to be able to weigh in and participate during the public comment period.

**Jose Celaya** suggested having 2 meetings a month.

**Michael Moore** suggested inviting local agencies or entities such as the Farming Bureau that might be an asset for this committee.

**Luis Olmedo** stated once more that their comments were being noted. He said as far as inviting entities to participate at these meetings, he would encourage them to specifically name some of the ones they would like to be a part of these meetings in order for them to consider them.

**Reyes Romero** stated that presenting their bylaws to the board was a requirement because they are working under the umbrella of the county, but they are very confident that whatever they present once reviewed and approved by the Air Pollution Control District, Comite Civico, and this community steering committee, will also be approved. He reminded them to take the opportunity to go over this document so that they could provide them with their comments at their next meeting.

**Luis Olmedo** stated that their next meeting is scheduled for February 13th, tentatively in Heber. He also mentioned that at that meeting they could decide if they want to have another meeting at the biweekly mark.

**Blake Plourd** made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Sergio Cabañas** seconded the motion and the committee voted to approve.

**Meeting adjourned.**