

AQAC MINUTES
August 4, 2015

Members/alternates present: Beth Berlin, Bill Flanery, John Garberson, Ronni Flannery, Dave Atkins, Tom Roberts, John Ottman, Guy Hanson, Jan Hoem

Members/alternates absent: Garon Smith, Sue Spanke, Kathy Tonnessen, Ryan Leach, Bert Chessin

Staff: Sarah Coefield and Ben Schmidt

Public: None

1. **Jan Hoem called the meeting to order**
2. **Excused absences recognized** – Sue Spanke, Kathy Tonnessen, and Ryan Leach were excused.
3. **Agenda amended to add item # 5.**
4. **June 2 and June 29 minutes approved.**
5. **Tongue River Railroad Draft Environmental Impact Statement public comment wrap-up/debriefing**

Jan Hoem said she wanted to talk more about the Council's Tongue River Railroad (TRR) Draft Environmental Impact (DEIS) response and process. She started by asking what were the good things that happened in the process?

Beth Berlin said Jan pulled everyone together in the subcommittee and everyone was engaged.

Jan said she thought it helped when Sue Spanke came into the first subcommittee meeting with pages of notes and a good understanding of what was in the TRR DEI. She had read it carefully and was really prepared.

Dave Atkins said the people who stepped up in the subcommittee made it easier for the rest of the Council to review the document and make comments – the interchange at the whole Council meeting went really well. People listened and listened to alternative wording proposals.

Jan said we have to give a lot of credit to Sarah Coefield. She took detailed notes at the meetings and got the gist of what the subcommittee was trying to do and then organized it on paper to make it look like how we were thinking.

Jan then asked if there was anything that we could have done better?

John Garberson said he can't imagine doing something like this again. He said the Air Pollution Control Board's reaction to the letter was a little disappointing.

Tom Roberts said he was not at the Board meeting, but he was surprised at the length and intricacy of the Council's letter. He said it may have been intimidating to the Board.

Beth Berlin asked if the Council can let the press know about their letter, since it is now public information.

Ben Schmidt responded that if a reporter comes and asks about the letter, then yes, the Council may respond, but the Council shouldn't go to the press without the Board's blessing.

Beth said that maybe the Council should make a formal request to the Board to announce our comments to the press. With the smoke in the air, air quality is a hot topic right now. She said that if the Council releases this, it may encourage others to submit comments.

Ben said that as a private individual, members can speak to the press, but not as representatives of the Council.

Beth said the whole public doesn't know this is going on. It would be nice if the Surface Transportation Board (STB) got citizen letters.

Jan thanked everyone for what they've done on the letter. She said it was a really good product.

Tom Roberts asked if a short letter from the Board, in addition to the Council's letter would be useful.

Jan said it would be very useful, especially since the Board is a legislative body. She said the Board's letter should make two points: 1) We believe we have standing because it is highly likely additional coal trains will go through Missoula and 2) Missoula's air quality is marginal, so if there is a potential for an additional 16 trains going through town, the question of those trains' impacts on air quality needs to be addressed.

Dave said a one page letter from the Board could boil down the Council's discussion. He said the really critical piece is that the DEIS didn't assess a reasonable range of alternatives. They didn't look at trains going west.

Tom Roberts asked if it's important to have anything in the letter about greenhouse gases and climate change. To him, that trumps everything.

Jan said you can list concerns they would have addressed if they looked at trains going west.

Dave said his feeling is that STB blew off potential effects on global warming, because they put the numbers in a global context and said it's miniscule – they ignored additive effects.

Bill Flanery asked if a private citizen's comments on the TRR DEIS would need to be sent certified mail.

Sarah Coefield replied that she sent the Council's letter certified mail because she wanted to be 100% positive it arrived at its destination. She doesn't think it's necessary for all public comments to be sent that way.

Sarah said she submitted the Council's comments twice: one as a hardcopy in the mail, and the other electronically.

6. Public comment on non-agenda items

None.

7. Article presentation

John Garberson brought EPA's press release about the Clean Power Plan (CPP): "6 Things Every American Should Know About the Clean Power Plan." John read the six headings from the article:

1. It (the CPP) slashes the carbon pollution fueling climate change.
The CPP puts the nation on track to cut carbon pollution from the power sector 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. John said we've already achieved half of that reduction.
2. It protects families' health.
The reduction in pollution in 2030 will mean up to 3,600 fewer premature deaths, 90,000 fewer asthma attacks in children, and 1,700 fewer hospital admissions.
3. It puts states in the driver's seat.
4. It's built on input from millions of Americans.
5. It will save us billions of dollars every year.
6. It puts the U.S. in a position to lead on climate action.

Regarding the last point, John said it's always seemed like the U.S. attends international meetings about climate change, but won't take the lead. Other countries point the finger at us and say, 'you go first.'

Jan Hoem said that when the CPP was being introduced and there were meetings in Montana about the state's plan, the idea at the time was for Montana to build up sustainable energy rather than focus on power plants in order to meet the state's target. However, now that Montana is required to cut emissions more than had initially been proposed, she's heard that Colstrip #4 might go.

Ronni Flannery said that responses to the CPP on the national level were very different from what happened in Montana. She said the final rule is dramatically different than what we saw in the draft. Initially, the draft CPP gave Montana a 21% reduction target, and we had a lot of strategies to meet that goal. But then, in the final rule, that target went up to a 47% reduction. Governor Bullock and Senator Tester were ready to release positive messages when the CPP was announced on Monday, but then we were blindsided by the change.

Ronni said the CPP is a 1,500 page fule with every technical aspect changed dramatically from what we saw in the draft (even the health benefit projections changed). She said it's unfortunate Montana had the reaction that it did before we could take time to look at the technical aspects of the rule and come up with strategies to meet the target.

Ronni said the CPP is intended to decrease disparity between states and open opportunities for regional solutions and increase renewable opportunities between states.

Beth Berlin said the 2030 target is great, but she remembers when the goal used to be a decrease of 20 percent by 2020. She said 2030 seems too late.

Bill Flanery said that maybe we need to stress the collective responsibility our states has along with many others, and recognize that we're part of the U.S. We have a responsibility to do our share to meet the national goal. He said that while it may be more difficult to achieve that goal, at least we have until 2030 to accomplish it.

Jan Hoem will present next month.

8. Discussion: Wood Smoke and Diesel Emission Reductions

The discussion focused on Dave Atkins' proposal to reduce woodsmoke emissions in Missoula. The diesel discussion was tabled until a future meeting due to time constraints.

Dave said the question he was asking himself and posing to the Council is, 'what can we do?' He said he was looking for tangible, meaningful things the Council could pursue that would build on the air quality successes Missoula has already experienced.

Dave handed out a chart from the 2007 University of Montana chemical mass balance study for Missoula, which gets at the core sources of PM2.5 pollution in Missoula. In the pie chart, woodstoves (solid fuel burning devices) are by far the most significant source of PM2.5, and are likely an even larger part of the pie now that the kraft boilers are gone. Dave said ammonium nitrate is also a significant piece of the pie, and half of the ammonium nitrate comes from traffic sources. He said that led him to look at diesel exhaust. Dave said he thought these are some things we can potentially deal with on a local basis.

Dave said that if you replace old wood-burning technology with newer technologies, you get the double benefit of reduced toxicity and lower PM2.5 emissions. He said his woodstove proposal is to look at giving people the opportunity to change out old technology for new technology. He said Puget Sound has significant PM emission issues, in the form of 100,000 stoves. He said they are holding a competition to look at retrofitting those old stoves. Dave said he talked to a state guy in Washington who helped him find the project, and then he talked to a local guy in Puget Sound. Dave said they're testing four retrofits. The benefit of retrofits is that they're cheaper than a full change out. Dave said he was pretty intrigued by that, and he visited with a company that was selected to be part of the testing. He said we should know more about the

retrofit success this fall. They're looking for a 50% reduction in emissions.

Guy Hanson asked if the testing is being in a real life scenario or in a lab.

Dave said it's real-life testing.

Beth Berlin asked if random people were doing the burning for the test.

Dave said no, it's being done under some controlled conditions, because they're testing the technologies.

Beth asked if that means they're being tested under ideal conditions.

Dave said yes. He said the program is something we could learn from and potentially be able to incorporate the idea of retrofitting into Missoula's air quality program. He said one of the benefits of retrofitting is that, when you change out a device, the effectiveness is dependent on changing the behavior of the resident who needs to learn how to use a new stove. If, however, you modify the existing stove, there will be less of an adjustment.

Dave said the four devices being tested use different methodologies to reduce emissions, including filtration, catalysts, a combination of technologies, etc.

Dave said that as he thought about Missoula, he thought about how the technology for burning wood has improved phenomenally in recent years. He said that if we could allow people to change or retrofit old devices, we could see decreased PM and decreased toxicity from wood burning, both of which would improve air quality in Missoula. He said his understanding is that our current regulations don't allow that, and we'd have to change the rules to allow changing existing woodstoves. He said that he assumes that with the new NSPS for woodstoves, we'd be modifying our rules to be in compliance with the NSPS, and that would be a logical time to modify the rules to allow woodstove changeouts.

Bill Flanery asked about the change in particulate composition between old and new stoves. He said you could indicate that and logically expect a change, but couldn't we contract someone to study emissions and show it would actually happen? He said it would strengthen the argument.

Dave said that would be great.

Guy Hanson asked if it's possible to actually get a baseline on an actual stack's emissions, change the device and get a new reading.

Dave said yes. Clear Stack, a company he's communicated with, has been doing this. Dave said he would want to be able to monitor emissions in the real world, both the amount of PM and the chemical composition. Dave said he's on the Alliance for Green Heat board, and they recently spoke about the new NSPS and the fact we're still living

with old technology. The question is, how can we replace that old technology?

Guy said it would help immeasurably to get real world testing.

Beth Berlin said that 20 years ago, she was part of a program that provided grants to get rid of old stoves. However, she said she's always been troubled by replacing stoves with other stoves, because you don't get rid of operator error. Beth said that, for the health department, there are a couple people in Seeley Lake who have new stoves, but are still a large part of the air quality problem. She said that behavior becomes something you can't control. Beth also asked what's going to stop other people from putting in stoves if Dave's proposal were to be put in action. There will be people wondering why they can't put a new stove in, too. She asked, how do you monitor that?

Second, Beth said, doesn't it make sense to invest in efficiency in the house before investing in a whole new heating system? Common sense says to do that first.

Third, Beth said, if we're providing an incentive for wood, why not also provide an incentive for solar or other systems with no emissions? If you're going to encourage a new system, why just look at replacing one source of energy with what's already in there? She said we should give people options.

Guy said solar is not a good heat source for the whole home – it heats water, but not the house, and solar panels can't generate enough energy to provide a house with electric heat.

Beth said she's not even just focusing on solar. Her question is, why not give people choices?

Guy said they do have choices now, except they do not have a choice of installing a cleaner woodstove. He said that in the Air Stagnation Zone, you can't put in a woodstove, period. You can put in a pellet stove that is on the approved list and has emissions of 1 g/hr or less. He said the debate for woodstoves rolls back to real world performance.

Ben Schmidt said that in the real world, you're seeing a lot of emissions even with newer stoves because of user error.

Dave said that his thought process is, it would be nice if we could access funds to encourage people who wouldn't otherwise replace their stoves to do it.

Guy mentioned the state tax credit that provides \$1,000 to a couple who pays taxes and purchases a woodstove (or other source of renewable energy).

Dave said the devil's in the details. He said we would want to think through everything so we don't give money to people who don't need it.

Dave said he wanted to respond to Ben's real-world observation. Dave acknowledged

that the real world situation includes high emissions from poor use, but he said there are also users who can achieve very low emissions from their stoves. He said that to him, to say 'we shouldn't do this because we aren't going to achieve the emissions stated on the label,' is saying no to the good, because you're not going to get the perfect. Dave said that if we replaced 50% of existing stoves and those stoves reduced emissions by 50%, that's a dramatic benefit for air quality. He said there's also a benefit from the toxicity change. Dave said you won't achieve the EPA label emissions, but if you decrease emissions at all, you do a world of good.

Ben said this is incredibly complex. He said that, as far as woodstoves go, there has to be hundreds left in the Air Stagnation Zone, and who knows how many illegally installed stoves.

John Garberson said his perception is that compliance with the woodstove rules is unknown, and enforcement is nonexistent. He said we don't know how many stoves are actually taken out in real estate transactions.

Ben said the woodstove removal rule went into effect in 1994. From 1994-2000, the program worked really well. He said the department received a lot of complaints from people who had to remove their stoves, and the real estate agencies were filing a lot of paperwork documenting stove removals. Ben said you can look at measurements of particulate concentrations during those years, and the concentrations drop really dramatically. Ben said that shows the program was working. He said if you look 2000-2005, you see some more improvement. However, if the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for PM2.5 had changed before 2006, we would be a PM2.5 non-attainment area. Ben said that you can continue to see the impact of the woodstove removal program, as we're still seeing air quality improvements from 2005-2015. He said you can tell the program is working by the decreased PM2.5 concentrations.

Ben said the compliance tracking system has had some issues – it went through a computer crash, and after the 1990s, we decided that we wouldn't require a certificate of compliance for a house that already had one on file. That decision led to an honor system for filing certificates of compliance, which is much weaker than the system that had previously been in place. Ben said our enforcement is now driven by complaints. Neighbors turn people in because they know folks aren't supposed to have woodstoves. He said there is still continued enforcement and the program is working to achieve the goal of lower PM2.5 emissions.

Ben said the software for the compliance system hasn't worked right for years, so we stopped pestering real estate agents to turn in paperwork. He said the software problems were deemed low priority by the county, but finally, they've decided to fix it this fiscal year. In addition, the realtors and title companies in town are out of practice. Still, people in town turn their neighbors in, and the department does enforcement.

John Garberson said that's not as bad as he thought, but not as good as he hoped it would be.

John Ottman said the rule refers to “sold” houses. What if someone does an extensive remodel?

Guy said that if you take the stove out of the door, you can’t put it back in the house.

John Ottman asked, what if it stays in place?

Guy said it can stay in the house.

Ben said the department almost never addresses remodels.

Guy asked if it’s better to mount vigorous enforcement or give residents the opportunity to put in cleaner stoves.

John Ottman said that, regarding the stoves that are left in town, you’re just dealing with stubbornness.

Beth Berlin said there are a lot of people in Missoula who lived through the changes in air quality, and they have a perception that the air is fixed.

Dave said that if you live relatively close to one of the old stoves, you’d love to see that changed out. Dave said we should be able to encourage people with fireplaces to put in low emission inserts.

Ben said that, while woodstoves are still the largest piece of the pie, the pie is a lot smaller than it used to be.

Guy said it’s still a lethal pie – we could still choke on it.

John Ottman said that when he drives down the Ninemile or the Bitterroot, he sees outdoor wood boilers and they have so much smoke.

Ben said Missoula’s air quality is a whole lot better. He said this thing about not having choices – people have choices. In Missoula, industry and residential users must use Lowest Achievable Emission Rate technology (LAER). He said that on the residential scale, this translates into pellet stoves, which have controlled fuel and combustion. On the industry scale, there are some more options. Ben said we’re not against wood. We’ve adopted rules that are equivalent across the board and allow people to use biomass. Ben said retrofitting has been tried in the past, and he’s never seen it successfully done in any big time way. He said he would need to see what comes out of Puget Sound.

Ben said our rules are part of the federally enforceable State Implementation Plan (SIP). We’d have to prove to the EPA that we’re not backsliding by letting people add woodstoves, when we currently have rules saying they have to be removed.

Ben said fireplaces in Missoula are a problem, but fortunately, most people know they

aren't a good source of heat, and they don't get used as often as stoves do.

Ben asked how can he tell a person on Pine Street, 'you can have a new stove to replace your old stove,' but the person on Spruce Street who doesn't already have a stove can't have one. Ben said there are political problems, tracking problems, certificate of compliance problems and enforcement problems with the idea of letting stoves back in to Missoula.

Ben said the Health Department's stance would be that anything that says we will let people put in inserts or new stoves would be backsliding. He said people do have an option: they can have pellet stoves. We have to acknowledge that we live in a very fragile airshed.

Beth said it sounds like the enforcement/compliance problems come from stoves that remain behind when a house sells. She asked if focusing on that would help the number of illegal stoves dwindle more.

Ben said there are a lot of legal EPA-certified devices (purchased prior to 1994) that are allowed to remain on the property.

Dave asked if someone could replace that older EPA stove with a new one.

Ben said no. Those stoves wear out, and eventually stop being used. Also, he said, comparisons to Seeley Lake are inappropriate. There are different heat source availabilities and a different population. He said that if you allowed people in Missoula to install woodstoves, people would jump all over it, and we would be non-attainment for PM2.5 in nothing flat.

Dave said he's saying allow people to improve existing stoves, which will improve the air quality.

Guy said you can drive through new subdivisions and see illegal stacks, hundreds of them.

Ben said, "Give me the addresses."

Guy said no. He said we (the Axemen) didn't install them, but we service them.

John Ottman said it would be very simple for his neighbors to convert to natural gas. Maybe instead of a new stove, we could incentivize using a different heat source.

John Garberson said his thoughts were in agreement with Dave, but in opposition to this proposal. He said intuitively, he sees immediate benefits, but not any long term benefits, because it perpetuates wood burning in the city. He said he doesn't know how to compute if the long term benefit is better, but he thinks it is. And, he said, this town knows we do not do wood burning. He said he does not want to open it up to some sort of tacit approval of wood burning.

Dave said his sense is that everyone in the room agrees that climate change is a really serious issue, but by favoring natural gas over wood burning, we're looking into a fossil fuel. He asks how you can reconcile that.

Guy said pellets are not as carbon neutral as stick wood, because it goes through a lot of processing.

Ben said yeah, none of these heat sources (gas, pellets) are as carbon neutral as sticks. The other thing to keep in mind, he said, is that everything is a balancing act. In areas with great dispersion, sure, use wood. But Missoula is in a bowl and has a growing population. He said yes, we need to keep striving toward carbon neutrality, but one of those strategies won't be burning wood, because that would lead to an increase in air pollution. Ben said we need to use other tools in our toolbox to work toward carbon neutrality in Missoula. Woodstoves are not the option and won't get Missoula to carbon neutrality.

Dave said he's not advocating for new woodstoves. He said he's advocating for improved air quality and changes in neighborhoods. He said yeah, maybe that stove will go away when the house sells in 20 years, but in the meantime, the neighbors have to live with it.

Ben said, Number 1: the proposal will not pass by EPA. That's not his main reason for opposing the proposal, but it is a fact. Number 2: politically and practically, what Dave's proposing will not work. Ben said Dave talks about education, that residents will understand and respect the rationale behind why they can't have a new stove but their neighbor can. But, Ben said, I've been in public meetings, and so have you, Dave. The vast majority of decision making in those meetings is based on feelings, not rationality.

Ben said you can't open that door. It will not be a little crack for the select few. You will not change my mind.

Beth said that without saying I support it, Dave, I want you to know how much I appreciate the thoughtfulness that went into this. She said the Council learned a few years ago that in Germany (where they allow stoves with strict regulations), they actually measure the dust in people's chimneys. They go home to home to do enforcement. She said they had decreased emissions because of a combination of new technologies and serious enforcement that wouldn't work here.

Guy Hanson said there are new technologies coming out all the time, and maybe there will be something really great down the line.

Ben said that in 2010 we knew there would be a new NSPS for stoves coming out, so we opened up the testing methods for stoves we'd accept outside the Air Stagnation Zone. This will hopefully allow more of those new technologies a chance to prove themselves and be accepted for installation outside of the Air Stagnation Zone.

Guy asked if we will be changing our rules to match the NSPS.

Ben said yes, we will need to update the rules, but we will wait for the dust to settle around them, first.

Guy said that as technology evolves, if it can be demonstrated to improve, we could look at reintroducing it.

Dave said he was just hoping that Missoula, being a fairly progressive place, would be open to going out and talking to the community about how to further improve air quality by replacing old technology with new technology.

Guy said part of the key to this is to identify the population with legal stoves and lock out the potential for illegal installations.

Ben said that when Peter sees Paul get a woodstove, he won't care about the rationale behind why Paul gets the stove. He will just say, "I want one."

Tom Roberts said it sounds like we have a fairly good set of ideas, but enforcement has dropped off somewhat.

Ben said he follows up when we find illegal stoves.

But, Tom Roberts said, we might have 50% of realtors not filing certificate of compliance forms.

Ben said he'd say there's a much higher percentage not filing.

Tom asked if there are houses being sold with stoves still in place.

Ben said yes. He said we go after them when we find them.

Tom said he is concerned that we don't have adequate enforcement. He said that if we want to work toward ending wood burning in Missoula, we need more enforcement.

Guy said there are tools in place to aid enforcement, including the opacity restrictions in the rules.

Tom said those tools aren't used enough.

John Garberson said two people can't cover the entire county, and there's not much that can be done on the weekends. He said he'd love to see more enforcement, but the resources aren't in place.

Tom asked how we can beef this up. He asked if this is enough of a problem that we should be looking at adding personnel or investing in different computer programs.

Beth suggested increased education.

John Ottman asked if the Board of Realtors has a central body that could be approached about the issue.

Ben said we've talked to them in the past, but haven't recently because the certificate of compliance program is nonfunctional.

Jan said she would like to table this discussion for now. She said several good things came out of the discussion, including the importance of efficiency, new building regulations, educating the public on wood burning techniques and smoke health impacts, working with realtors to improve the compliance rate, plugging the inheritance loophole in the regulations, identifying legal and illegal stoves and improving regulations and enforcement.

In the interest of time, Jan said we should put the second topic (diesel emissions) on a later agenda. She also said Dave should get to have the last word in his discussion.

Dave said his last word is that he disagrees with Ben. He said he's worked in the public arena and he knows how difficult it can be to move things forward. He said he believes his proposal could have a real, tangible benefit for the next 10 to 20 years. Dave said he disagrees with Ben's basic premise for why we can't do this.

9. Discussion: Meeting start time

Jan asked if there was anyone who wouldn't be able to make it to AQAC meetings if they started at 4:30 p.m.

Sarah Coefield said she would have difficulty making those meetings during outdoor burning or wildfire seasons because she has a lot of late afternoon tasks during those months.

Ronni asked if it would be feasible to put suggested time periods for agenda items in order to get through the topics in a timely fashion.

Jan said that's a good plan. Further discussion of a start time was tabled for now.

10. Staff Report

Sarah Coefield gave the staff report. She said the CO second 10-year limited maintenance plan emission inventory is done and is being sent out for quality analysis. The limited maintenance plan is written and will be out for initial review once the emission inventory is finalized. The SIP update is ready to go, pending EPA comments on the technical documents. The comments are preliminarily expected on Friday.

There's been some wildfire smoke this week, and wildfire updates are in full swing.

Sarah and Ben completed the annual report that is required as part of MCCHD's contract with DEQ.

Ben has been hard at work on a permit for the landfill - they are installing a new flare and it is classified as an incinerator, which triggers a comprehensive permit.

11. Public comment

None.

12. Select AQAC representative for next Air Board meeting update

Jan Hoem will attend the next Board meeting.

13. Announcements, other business

John Garberson said he had a bad air quality month. In June and July he smelled woodsmoke from a neighbor's stove. He said people in the Potomac burned in the middle of a fire threat if it drizzled outside. He said he's found the response by the volunteer fire department to be reluctance to respond to illegal burns. John also said Highway 200 is being patched without dust control and it's creating a lot of dust.

Ben said we can respond to that kind of complaint.

John said that today he saw a MRL locomotive pulling empty rail cars and putting out smoke like an old steam engine.

14. Adjourn