

Action Summary Minutes
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 7, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

The Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting was held via video teleconference (VTC): Central Region Office, Governing Board Room, 1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue, Fresno, the Southern Region Office, VTC Room, 34946 Flyover Court, Bakersfield and teleconference in the Northern Region Office, VTC Room, 4800 Enterprise Way, Modesto. Members of the public were allowed to participate in-person at any of the referenced locations or remotely via Zoom webinar. The CAC Meeting was also webcast.

1. CALL TO ORDER – The Chair, Manuel Cunha, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. ROLL CALL – was taken and a quorum was present to hold the meeting.

County	Member Name	Interest Group	Location
Fresno	Manuel Cunha	IAIG (P)	Fresno
	Kacey Auston-Tibbetts ¹	EIG (P)	Fresno
	Mary Fast ²	CIG (P)	Fresno
Kern	Les Clark ³	IAIG (P)	Bakersfield
	John Sanders ⁴	EIG (P)	Bakersfield
	Orchel Krier	CIG (P)	Bakersfield
Kings	Laura Brown ⁵	IAIG (P)	Fresno
	Kalish Morrow ⁶	CIG (P)	Fresno
Madera	Donald Horal	IAIG (P)	Fresno
	Brittany Dyer	EIG (P)	Fresno
Merced	Amy Lopes	IAIG (A)	Modesto
	Paul Ward	CIG (P)	Fresno
San Joaquin	Ned Leiba	EIG (P)	Modesto
	Roger Hoffdahl	IAG (P)	Modesto
Stanislaus	Chris Savage	IAIG (P)	Modesto
	Jami Aggers	EIG (P)	Modesto
	Richard O'Brien	CIG (P)	Modesto
Tulare	Derek Williams	IAIG (P)	Fresno
	Dennis Mederos	CIG (P)	Fresno

(P) = Primary, (A) = Alternate, IAIG = Industry/Ag Interest Group, EIG = Environmental Interest Group, CIG = City Interest Group

¹ Left meeting at 12:12 p.m.

² Left meeting at 12:12 p.m.

³ Arrived at 10:06 a.m.; left meeting at 11:54 a.m.

⁴ Left meeting at 12:19 p.m.

⁵ Arrived at 10:08 a.m.

⁶ Arrived at 10:10 a.m.

3. APPROVE MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 7, 2023 – Mr. Cunha asked for member comments on the minutes from the previous CAC meeting. Hearing no comments or changes, he declared the minutes approved.

Public Comment: none

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – none

5. CHAIR COMMENTS – Mr. Cunha welcomed the committee members and staff, and thanked everyone for their attendance.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/APCO COMMENTS – Samir Sheikh, Executive Director/APCO, presented an update on implementation of the District’s agricultural open burning phase-out strategy, including the Ag Burn Alternatives Grant Program. In 2022, the reductions in agricultural open burning and use of alternatives reached record levels for the Valley since the institution of agricultural burning restrictions, highlighting the recent success of the ongoing phase-out strategy. These efforts have significantly reduced air pollution from various agricultural operations through applicant cost-shared grant programs, with enhanced incentive funding for smaller farming operations which face the greatest difficulties in the transition process. In February 2023, the Governing Board also approved enhancements aimed at increasing accessibility to the District’s programs by small farmers, including an increased grant amount of up to \$400 per acre of additional funding for growers farming 100 acres or less in the Valley.

Mr. Savage inquired if the District has mapped out any specific areas of funding to target with the Inflation Reduction Act. Mr. Sheikh responded that there are some early opportunities that are being looked at, such as; port related funding, the Climate Pollution Reduction planning grants, programs to modernize locomotives, electric vehicle infrastructure funding, and sustainable agriculture funding.

Mr. Sanders requested information on the EPA funding, and if there was paperwork available with the details. Mr. Sheikh responded that the District would forward the EPA announcement that was issued prior to the meeting for more detail.

Ms. Dyer echoed Mr. Savage’s request for updates on the Inflation Reduction Act. Ms. Dyer also congratulated the District on its success with the agricultural open burning phase-out and the Ag Burn Alternatives Grant Program. Additionally, Ms. Dyer inquired how the District is communicating these successes to the public. Mr. Sheikh responded the District has been issuing press releases sharing the success of the programs, which also helps get the word out that this funding is available.

Public Comment: none

7. UPDATE ON ATTAINMENT PLANS AND RULES – Jon Klassen, Director of Air Quality Science and Planning, and Emily Kneeland, Program Manager, provided an update on the status and next steps regarding attainment plans in light of recent EPA actions. In addition, potential contingency measures strategies for PM2.5 were presented and discussed. The committee also discussed federal Clean Air Act challenges and opportunities and the need to advocate for timely action of federal emission sources and guidance from EPA regarding emerging implementation issues such as Title VI and contingency measures.

Mr. Cunha commended the District's progress that was presented in today's update.

Mr. Leiba also commended the District for the decrease in criteria pollutant emissions.

Mr. Savage echoed the appreciation for the presentation given, and pointed out that the federal standards will not be achieved by District actions alone.

Mr. O'Brien stated that he would like to look for ways to start expediting the use of biofuels that are coming in the near future.

Mr. Sanders also spoke on concerns for those suffering financially from having to upgrade their equipment and vehicles to meet regulatory guidelines.

Mr. Clark remarked that contingency plans are a big task and that the District has a lot of support behind them as they work through this process.

Mr. Sheikh appreciated all of the comments on this very complex topic. Mr. Sheikh also expressed the importance of developing an approvable contingency plan because if the District does not submit, or the EPA does not approve, the contingency plan, there will be sanctions implemented which would affect permitting of stationary sources and highway transportation funds.

Ms. Dyer encouraged other CAC members to utilize other boards they may sit on to provide communication on this ongoing effort of the District. Ms. Dyer inquired about any potential plans to utilize the Inflation Reduction Act funding to remove dead trees and plant new trees in forested areas to address wildfire risks. Mr. Sheikh confirmed that it is part of the Board's legislative platform.

Public Comment: none

8. VERBAL REPORT FROM CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD (CARB) – Laura Carr, CARB representative, gave a brief update on recent and upcoming actions by CARB.

Ms. Brown requested clarification on applicability of the Heavy-Duty Engine and Vehicle Omnibus Regulation. Ms. Carr was asked to send out information on the Omnibus Regulation to the members after the meeting through the clerk.

Public Comment: none

9. AIR QUALITY FUNDING IN PROPOSED STATE BUDGET– Samir Sheikh provided an update the Governor’s proposed budget including cuts to programs key to the Valley’s ongoing clean air efforts such as the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER) program. Mr. Sheikh also discussed the District’s advocacy efforts and extensive engagement with the state Legislature and Administration to ensure strong clean air resource allocation in the state budget.

Mr. O’Brien inquired about the possibility of losing any state funds that have not yet been spent. Mr. Sheikh explained that the District collaborated with State agencies to make sure any allocated, but not yet encumbered funding was quickly encumbered into contracts to avoid losing those funds.

Mr. Williams stated his support for the FARMER program and suggested putting the primary amounts of funding into that program, instead of the AB 617 programs since it yields the most emission reductions.

Ms. Brown asked if the District is optimistic regarding their request to increase FARMER funding from \$0 to \$160 million. Mr. Sheikh responded that there is a strong advocacy campaign underway to bring attention to the importance of FARMER funding. Mr. Sheikh clarified that the \$160 million is the amount being requested by the agricultural coalition across the state.

Mr. Cunha expressed the importance of these state funds to the small farmers and rural communities.

Public Comment: none

Moved: Savage

Seconded: Auston-Tibbetts

Ayes: Cunha, Brown, Horal, Lopes, Hoffhdahl, Savage, Williams, Auston-Tibbetts, Sanders, Dyer, Leiba, Aggers, Fast, Krier, Morrow, Ward, O’Brien, Mederos

Nays: None

Motion unanimously carried forward a letter from the CAC to advocate on air quality priorities in the Budget including: FARMER funding restoration (increase from \$0 to \$160 million); Community Air Protection funding restoration (increase from \$250 million to \$300 million); and funding for additional sustainable agricultural opportunities (e.g., alternatives to open burning, offsetting costs associated with implementing practices to address drought/SGMA/air impacts, etc.)

10. UPDATE ON DISTRICT NRC AND ERC BANKING RULE AMMENDMENTS – Brian Clements, Director of Permits Services, provided an update on the District’s efforts to amend District Rule 2201 (New and Modified Stationary Source Review) and Rule 2301 (Emission Reduction Credit Banking) to satisfy federal offset equivalency remedies contained within Rule 2201 and to enhance the rules to ensure that federal requirements can continue to be met in light of EPA’s July 2022 limited approval, limited disapproval of the District’s 2019 version of Rule 2201. The District held a public workshop on February 15, 2023, and rule amendments are scheduled for consideration by the Governing Board in April of 2023.

Public Comment: none

12. AB617 IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES – Jessica Olsen, Director of Community Strategies and Resources, provided an update along with Brian Moore, CARB representative, on the ongoing implementation of AB 617.

Public Comment: none

13. OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS – Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, provided an update on District outreach activities, including in-person events Earth Day events, health fairs and conferences. Ms. Holt also shared the extensive outreach within AB617 communities educating people on the many grant opportunities.

Mr. Cunha commended the District for all of the work that is being done within schools and all of the communities.

14. CAC MEMBER COMMENTS -
Mr. Williams shared that the Environmental Justice Advisory Group moved forward with the 2023 Annual Goals and Objectives recommendations and the Incentive Spending Plan Recommendations for the 2023-24 Budget.

Mr. Cunha commended the changes the District implemented for small farmer programs and he said that he has heard from many small farmers who are very grateful for these programs to help them get into cleaner tractors.

15. VOLUNTEER TO PRESENT REPORT DURING GOVERNING BOARD MEETING -
Mr. Cunha volunteered to present the CAC report to the Governing Board at their next meeting on March 16, 2023.

Meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.