

Action Summary Minutes

San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District

GOVERNING BOARD STUDY SESSION

The Pines Resort
54449 Road 432, Bass Lake, CA 93604

**Wednesday, October 16 and
Thursday, October 17, 2019**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – The Chair, Supervisor Mendes, called the meeting to order at 11:13 a.m.
2. ROLL CALL – was taken and a quorum was not present.

Present:

David Couch, Supervisor**	Kern County
Kuyler Crocker, Supervisor	Tulare County
Bob Elliott, Supervisor	San Joaquin County
Buddy Mendes, Supervisor, Chair	Fresno County
Lloyd Pareira, Supervisor	Merced County
Craig Pedersen, Supervisor, Vice Chair*	Kings County
Alvaro Preciado, Councilmember	City of Avenal
Dr. Alexander Sherriffs***	Appointed by Governor
Tom Wheeler, Supervisor	Madera County

Absent:

Drew M. Bessinger, Mayor	City of Clovis
Christina Fugazi, Councilmember	City of Stockton
Kristin Olsen, Supervisor	Stanislaus County
Monte Reyes, Councilmember	City of Porterville
Chris Vierra, Mayor	City of Ceres

*Arrived at 11:17 a.m.

**Arrived at 12:15 p.m.

***Arrived at 1:18 p.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4. HOUSEKEEPING AND LOGISTICS

This item was taken out of order

6. HEALTHY AIR LIVING SCHOOLS PROGRAM – Samir Sheikh, Executive Director/APCO, said working with Valley schools has been a high priority for the Board and has been a great mechanism for air quality education and sharing of information with students, parents, teachers and administrators. He said the District has been working to grow its presence within schools and continue working with school districts to promote the District’s RAAN (Real-time Air Advisory Network) and READ (Real-time Electronic Air-quality Display) programs. He introduced Heather Heinks, Public Education Administrator, who presented an assessment of recent renewed engagement with schools in the Healthy Air Living Schools Program.

Mr. Sheikh said due to the limitations of the Air Quality Flag Program and the high interest in air quality education from Valley schools, the District received numerous requests to be more engaged with schools and provide more tools for administrators to feel empowered when dealing with athletic and other outdoor activities. He said staff worked very closely with schools and the American Lung Association to develop the initial framework for the program as a means of empowering schools to help them have a much better idea in the course of the day, while increasing flexibility and access to outdoor activities. He added District staff is very open and flexible as to how schools utilize the many tools available to them to be more empowered. He commended staff for their hard work while continuing to set the bar for this program, and said the District is well ahead of any other region when it comes to developing these tools and the level of engagement with schools, as noted by the state. He added during the last legislative session, District staff was called upon to report on the progress of their program which may lead to a statewide program for schools and thanked the Board for their guidance and leadership.

Supervisor Pedersen arrived at 11:17 a.m.

Supervisor Wheeler commended staff for the great job engaging with the Valley schools. He commented that it was amazing that staff had managed to reach 99% of 1483 schools in the Valley. Supervisor Crocker said he appreciated this report on the good work of staff. He noted one of the objectives of the program, as previously directed by the Board, was communicating the Valley’s air quality challenges and progress to students and parents, which was very important. He said in the interest of balanced messaging, he would like to add that we are making progress in achieving cleaner air for residents, while understanding the economic value of our businesses. He added many times, in broader topics of air quality and environmental issues, businesses get demonized and he wanted to make sure it is communicated that the District does not do that. He expressed appreciation for the business community doing their part and working hand in hand with the District to improve air quality for all Valley residents.

Supervisor Pereira suggested moving forward, District staff could reach out to the Board members in each county, who can help connect them with appropriate school contacts.

Public Comment: None

The Governing Board recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

Supervisor Couch arrived at 12:15 p.m.

The Governing Board reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

5. WELCOMING REMARKS – Supervisor Wheeler welcomed everyone to Madera County. He thanked the Choe family, owners of the Pines Resort, and their staff for doing a great job hosting the event at their facilities.

7. UPDATE ON HEAVY DUTY TRUCK EMISSION REDUCTION MEASURES – Mr. Sheikh said this item would address the role that heavy duty trucks play in the Valley with respect to our air quality goals, and the State Implementation Plans that the District is responsible for implementing. He said the deadline for the state Truck and Bus Rule was around the corner and staff was receiving a lot of questions and concerns from fleet owners about how to comply with the rule. In addition, the new PM2.5 Plan adopted by the Board in November 2018 has a CARB commitment to replace 30,000 heavy duty trucks over the next four to five years. He introduced Todd DeYoung, Director of Grants and Incentives, who provided an update on the implementation of state heavy duty truck emission reduction measures and potential actions to ensure that the emissions reductions needed to bring the Valley into attainment can be achieved. Tom Jordan, Senior Policy Advisor, gave Board members an update on policy-level issues associated with heavy duty trucks.

Mr. Sheikh added that a major concern is the need by CARB to develop an effective mechanism to enforce the rules so that Valley and other in-state fleets are not treated differently than out-of-state operators in California. Similarly, the District has advocated for a national truck standard so that fleets within California are not disadvantaged against national fleets. Another issue of concern is with small fleets in the Valley, as they have had a very difficult time complying with this rule. Staff have developed incentive-based programs so help these small fleets comply with the rule.

Supervisor Elliott said it makes sense to take advantage of every improvement that we can that is available right now. He said there is no reason to wait for the perfect solution to come, as we have no idea how long it will take, nor how long it will take for it to become economically viable to do it. He asked why not promote the near-zero solutions that we can do right now, especially since we are already investing in some of these fuel infrastructure projects as well, or at least providing incentives for them. He said the District should invite CARB and EPA to move along this path and promote these logical solutions that are available right now. Mr. Sheikh responded that is right in line with the Board's policy positions on this

issue, while encouraging development of new technologies at the same time. Supervisor Pedersen asked if staff is seeing more demand for incentives. Mr. DeYoung said the District has seen an appreciable bump in incentive applications over the past couple of years. However, he said the incentive opportunities become more limited as a company's compliance date approaches. He added there are not enough surplus reductions for the District to provide an appreciable amount of incentives to get them into a newer truck. Supervisor Pedersen added the most common question he is asked by his constituents as a Governing Board members is where in the queue is their project. He suggested it would be helpful to provide information regarding the status of various incentive applications on the District's website.

Supervisor Wheeler commented on the large number of trucks traveling from out of state and asked how the mandates would be enforced on them. Mr. DeYoung responded that CARB is starting with trucks registered in the state as it is easier to get DMV data. He added they have committed significant resources to ramping up the communication with other states to ensure the provisions are applied equally to out-of-state fleets.

Councilmember Preciado asked how District staff was conducting outreach to owner/operators. Mr. DeYoung said staff have placed a significant focus on reaching out to owner/operators and small fleets for the past 6 to 7 years. He added staff has spent a significant amount of time and effort on outreach through the Proposition 1B truck program along with other programs and had special carve outs where additional resources were provided to small fleets and single owner/operators to prioritize funding.

Public Comment: *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Kevin Abernathy, CA Milk Producers Council and Dairy CARES
- Colby Morrow, So Cal Gas

Dr. Sherriffs arrived at 1:18 p.m.

8. UPDATES FROM CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD AND FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY - Mr. Sheikh introduced Kurt Karperos, Deputy Director at CARB. Mr. Karperos has been a good partner with the District, working with staff to put air quality plans together and trying to understand the Valley's challenges while figuring out how the state can best help the Valley. Mr. Karperos updated members on current programs that the state is focusing on, including PM2.5 and AB 617.

Mr. Karperos said the relationship between CARB and the District is more productive than he has ever seen in the past 20 years, due in measurable part to the leadership by Mr. Sheikh and the quality District staff. Mr. Karperos said next month the CARB Board will consider an amendment to the Valley's State Implementation Program (SIP), which demonstrates that the District and CARB

have implemented measures to get the reductions necessary by 2023 for the Valley to meet the 80 parts per billion (ppb) federal ozone standard. He said that means that the black box included in the plan for attaining this standard has been successfully filled. He added the Valley is also in good shape for the 75 ppb federal ozone standard which has an attainment deadline of 2031.

He said the CARB Board approved the District's 2018 PM2.5 Plan in January 2019, and the plan has been submitted to EPA for their review and action. He said both the District and CARB are focused on implementation of the plan while also working with EPA to ensure approval of the plan. He added conversations with EPA are occurring now and there are a few things that will need to be addressed to get EPA approval. From his perspective, he said he does not see any of those as insurmountable and feels we will be able to get through issues. He said the timeline is short and will take a concerted effort on behalf of all three agencies. He complimented the Governing Board for taking action to strengthen Rule 4901 (Wood Burning Fireplaces and Wood Burning Heaters), and said he knew that was a tough rule to develop and adopt. He said getting that in place before the upcoming wood burning season is very critical and CARB is very anxious to see the effectiveness of the more stringent burn levels that have been put into place.

On CARB's side, over the last couple of years they have been focused on setting up some rules related to trucks to deal with the 0.02 gram per brake horsepower issue that Mr. Sheikh spoke about previously. He said they strengthened the warranty and opacity rules for trucks and that is leading toward CARB Board consideration for a 0.02 gram per brake horsepower or the equivalent 90% cleaner truck during the first part of 2020. It was also important at the same time because of the national fleet, that EPA move forward in that due to the large number of national trucks that cross our borders. One of the issues that all need to focus on in terms of implementation of the PM2.5 Plan is its heavy reliance on incentives, given where we were in terms of technologies and the need to deploy them as quickly as possible.

He acknowledged agricultural community and said one of the highlights of the PM2.5 Plan implementation phase is that we are already over halfway in achieving the NOx reductions from tractors and other farm equipment that was adopted by the District and CARB Boards. Notably, the funding in this year's state budget was not as generous as we need it to be to continue that sort of success on turning over tractor equipment. He said District staff is working closely to advocate for additional funds in that area, along with the agricultural industry. He added the state has made legally binding commitments to achieve reductions from farm equipment and need the incentives to do it. He said the funds flowing before this year were the right amount and we need to get back to that amount. The goal of turnover of 30,000 trucks is also heavily dependent on incentives and that is a CARB commitment to achieve those reductions. CARB is also looking to see if there are other places to get those reductions to reduce the burden on incentive programs.

Mr. Karperos said CARB is very actively looking at three different things to reduce emissions in the Valley. CARB is trying to exploit the authorities that the state has to secure additional reductions from locomotives which is primarily a source regulated by the federal government, but CARB does have opportunity to engage with locomotives to try to bring the cleanest engines in the Valley. Reductions achieved from locomotives would reduce the number of tons that we need to get from trucks and therefore reduce the amount of incentive dollars required. In addition, he said it is time to consider a lower standard for off-road equipment as it has been 15 years since that standard was set. As technologies mature for on-road equipment, they can be transferred to off-road equipment and CARB will begin the process to look for essentially an equivalent 90% reduction for off-road equipment. Third, he said the Governor recently signed an Executive Order to make sure that the state is spending money in the cleanest possible way in terms of greening the state's investment in construction. He added that CARB is committed to continuing to working with District staff, as Mr. Sheikh will be asking more of CARB and CARB will be asking the District to find opportunities to accelerate reductions and look for additional reductions from other places.

Regarding AB 617, the Shafter and South Central Fresno Community Reduction Programs (CERPs), were two of seven programs that were developed over the past year and it was a learning experience for everyone involved as it was a very new type of thinking about developing air quality programs. He complimented District staff for engaging deeply with the communities and although not everyone was happy, he said the District went above and beyond to meet with the communities, understand their needs, and incorporate as much as possible in the CERPs that the Board approved. He said the next step was for the CARB Board to review and approve the CERPs, and CARB would be holding workshops in these areas to get the community members' thoughts about the CERPs. He said the CARB Board would meet in Shafter, in February 2020, to consider action on both Shafter and South Central Fresno CERPs. He stressed it is important to remember that the plan is just the beginning and that implementation will be critical to ensuring the vision of AB 617 is achieved.

On the truck issue, as related to near-zero versus zero technologies, he said the state does have priorities for reduction of climate changing gases and a need to move to a zero-emission economy. At the same time, they need to make sure they are hitting their marks on health-based standards, which require NOx reductions. He said the conversations about what incentives are appropriate for near-zero and zero are ongoing and Mr. Sheikh has been having many discussions with him about where the District is and what they feel is appropriate. He said he has also discussed the District's concerns with Mr. Richard Corey, Executive Director for CARB. He said the concerns that he heard in this discussion are very active in terms of the thinking of what is going on in Sacramento, and CARB staff appreciates the ability to work with District Board members and staff on these issues.

Meredith Kurpius, EPA Air Quality Analysis Chief, said over the years she has been able to appreciate the District's programs and she only sees a little sliver surrounding the SIPs in her normal working with the District. She said attending this meeting, and seeing the much broader range of the District's programs is very inspiring and said hearing from the District's leadership that their programs are cutting-edge, she can confirm that is not an exaggeration at all. She said the District's programs are innovative, tailored, and thoughtful and very impressive. She discussed important successes over the past year, including EPA approval of the Valley's Ozone Plan for the 2008 Standard. In regards to the 2018 PM2.5 Plan, she said she did not want the Board to be surprised with EPA taking separate actions on one standard versus another, because that is how the Clean Air Act is and how the timing works. She said the coincident timing of the SIP review, the rule development, the rule implementation and the attainment dates makes things complicated. However, EPA is working hard to review and take action on our Plan. EPA may be asking for additional support, information, and different things to make this process all work out. She said expediting rule development and implementation wherever the Board can would really be helpful as EPA is reviewing the plan and relevant standards, requirements, and attainment dates.

Chairman Mendes said Ms. Kurpius demonstrated issues related to the Clean Air Act. Supervisor Pedersen said the District is all about cleaning the air and is concerned with the amount of funding required to implement numerous mandates, such as AB 617, and the limited funding currently being provided by the state. He asked Mr. Karperos how committed CARB was to provide funding to help the Valley meet attainment needs. Mr. Karperos said CARB did absolutely appreciate the funding issue. He added that AB 617 is a statutory mandate and CARB has to be looking at all mandates simultaneously and does not have the luxury of saying they will push off AB 617 while focusing solely on regional attainment needs or climate change. He said we all have to be looking at all issues at the same time.

Supervisor Pedersen asked Ms. Kurpius about the approaching deadlines for the PM2.5 standards and the consequences of not meeting the deadlines. Ms. Kurpius said that the deadlines are firm, but failure to meet the deadlines does not trigger any sanctions. She said we would end up in the same place we are at today, where a new plan is required. She assured the Board that sanctions were not on the table at this point.

Mr. Karperos mentioned that the state received a letter from Administrator Wheeler in September arguing that the state of California is not meeting its SIP obligations and threatened the state's transportation funds. He said from their perspective it was an odd letter that was very unfounded and they responded back very strenuously. In this context, he said CARB is all in and it is all hands on deck to ensure this very good plan is approved. He said it is his personal highest priority to make sure EPA is able to approve the plan.

Supervisor Elliott said it sounded like CARB is in agreement with the fuel neutral approach to some degree, in spite of the recent efforts to go to all electrification. Mr. Karperos responded as a state we need to move as aggressively as we can towards zero-emissions in the transportation sector, both for criteria pollutants and climate policies. He said there are not zero technologies available in all of the weight classes, so the 12-liter, natural gas engine is a viable opportunity and an important one from his perspective, but the question is for the funding available how do we distribute among those different priorities. Supervisor Elliott asked if CARB had given any consideration to applications of compressed natural gas in terms of teaming up that fuel effort with sources of methane, such as dairy digester projects there is a net-negative of carbon footprint out of that because you capture the source and convert it to fuel before it gets into the atmosphere. Mr. Karperos responded affirmatively. He said part of the thing we have to think about in terms of within California's energy economy is what would be the best use of renewable natural gas. He said it may not be the transportation sector, but maybe the best use would be homes for residential heating for example.

Supervisor Elliott said it was encouraging to hear that sanctions were not on the table at the moment, and asked where we were in the larger conversation about relief from sanctions when you have exhausted all of the options that you have control over and you are still not able to meet the established standards, in the District's case it would be mobile sources. Ms. Kurpius said the District would be subject to sanctions if they failed to submit a plan to EPA. She said it has never happened that she is aware of that an air district has submitted a plan and said there is nothing more that can be done. She said her hope is that we end up collectively addressing those sources like the heavy duty trucks, before getting to the point where we say ultimately there is nothing more we can do. She added EPA is continuing to work on the heavy duty truck issue, and it is not necessarily fully aligned with the schedule of the state but it is a still an ongoing effort that is being expedited at EPA. In addition, she said there are other aspects of air quality in the Valley that cannot be controlled, such as wildfires, prescribed burn in the context of managing healthy forests to control wildfires, which is covered under the exceptional events construct. Looking ahead she said she is hoping we never get to this paradigm and the agenda we all have as partners is doing our part while the District does its part. She added the cooperation between the state and federal government is not at its height but she is hopeful that over the years we will get where we need to go.

Supervisor Wheeler asked what CARB and EPA thought of the District's cooperative relationships with the U.S. Forest Service and National Parks Service in our area to do more controlled burns in an effort to stop disastrous wildfires that negatively affect our air quality. Ms. Kurpius said EPA is fully supportive of these efforts. She said the Region IX has created a Smoke Team that works with CARB, headquarters and other states on this issue and fully endorses this policy. She said EPA developed a guidance document that talks about exceptional events and prescribed wildfire, and they have experience

doing wildfire exceptional events but have not yet had to do one for prescribed burning although they are open to it for any state that needs to go down that road. She clarified that prescribed fire and wildfires have been fully vetted by EPA as being acceptable for exceptional events. Mr. Karperos responded that CARB is absolutely supportive and working closely with their sister state agencies to increase the use of prescribed fire. He said they are working closely with the Governor's Prescribed Fire Task Force and the air districts on this issue. He said it was important to communicate clearly that prescribed fire is important to preventing larger and more devastating wildfires later.

Mr. Sheikh thanked Ms. Kurpius and Mr. Karperos for their informative presentations and said they have been working very hard on a variety of issues as discussed. On the sanctions issues, he said there is a variety of perspectives on that issue and it depends on what EPA ultimately is able to do with the Valley's SIPs and what actions are produced out of it. He said some sanctions can happen sooner or later, and what he is heartened by is that we are all trying to do the best that we can do under very difficult Clean Air Act circumstances, with very difficult timeframes and standards. He said he is optimistic because of the plan that the Board put together, and which Ms. Kurpius and Mr. Karperos spoke very highly of, we have a great foundation for EPA to act on.

The Governing Board recessed at 2:31 p.m.

The Governing Board reconvened at 2:45 p.m.

9. PROGRESS REPORT ON DISTRICT'S DRIVE CLEAN IN THE SAN JOAQUIN INCENTIVE PROGRAM – *This item was tabled*

This item was taken out of order

11. UPDATE FROM SJVAPCD EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION – Mr. Sheikh introduced Anna Myers, President of the SJVAPCD Employees' Association. He said we value the work culture and working relationship that we have at the District between staff and Management. Ms. Myers gave a brief update to the Board on the Association's very positive and proactive relationship with the District. Ms. Myers also paid tribute to Dave Warner, retiring Deputy APCO, for his dynamic and valuable contributions to the District's STAR work culture throughout his career at the District.

12. THE DISTRICT S.T.A.R (SERVICE, TEAMWORK, ATTITUDE AND RESPECT) WORK CULTURE –Chenecua Dixon, Director of Personnel, reviewed the District's STAR work culture program for the Board. Mr. Sheikh introduced Mr. Warner, and said he asked him to assist in leading this item because in addition to him being such a critical part of many of the District's core programs, including the Permits and Information Technology Services programs, he has been there through so much of the evolution and implementation of what this agency has done since the inception of the District. In addition, he has been there from the beginning of getting the District's STAR work culture put into place and worked really closely with Mr. Sadredin, retired Executive Director/APCO, who was

instrumental in implementing this program agency-wide and as Ms. Myers mentioned earlier, has been a big part of working with our staff to really emphasize the importance of the STAR work culture. He recognized Mr. Warner for being so important for getting the District to where it's been in terms of being customer service driven, technology driven, and being all about having pride and serving the Valley. Mr. Sheikh said he was very happy for Mr. Warner's upcoming retirement in March 2020, but he would be sorely missed. Mr. Warner shared his perspective on the core principles for the District's STAR work culture.

Ms. Dixon introduced several District staff members, including Adrian Ortiz, Xai Vang, Abby Lewis, Kevin Ng, Priscilla De La Cerda, and Michelle Ortiz, who each provided testimony on how the District's STAR work culture has enriched their work experience and positively impacted their lives.

Mr. Sheikh thanked staff for sharing their thoughts and experiences working at this agency and voiced appreciation for their touching words, saying the work culture is central to what we do as an agency. This item provides an opportunity to talk about his priorities in serving the Board in establishing these sets of principles. He reiterated that it takes an unshakeable belief in all areas of leadership that the welfare and wellbeing of our employees is critical to an agency's achievement of excellence, which is continually demonstrated at the District. Mr. Sheikh said while he has been in his new role over a year, he has worked at this agency for 20 years and has seen the STAR culture develop and go Districtwide. He added the management team is always striving to continually improve and it is a huge priority for them to make sure we are still enabling and empowering our staff to deliver exceptional service, innovation, and pride in working for this District and serving our Valley.

Supervisor Pareira shared that he has been involved, through the dairy industry with thousands of businesses, associations, or committees, and he has never run across any organization that exudes this culture like the District. In fact, he said he has asked Merced County's HR staff to engage and get a better understanding of the District's STAR work culture in the hopes that the change they could make in their work culture would help them by the District's example. He said he is so inspired by the STAR work culture that he is in the process of establishing an award in Merced County for Excellence in Governance to recognize staff who are excelling in their positions. He said he was also impressed by hearing testimony previously from numerous staff who have promoted from entry level positions at the District.

Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League; Kevin Abernathy, Dairy CARES and Milk Producers Council; and Chris Savage, E&J Gallo Winery, and Les Clark, Independent Oil Producers Agency, shared their experiences as stakeholders with the District STAR work culture.

10. OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN CLEAN AIR GRANT FUNDING OFFERED BY THE DISTRICT – Mr. DeYoung gave Board members an update on implementation of key District incentive programs and presented potential options for enhancements to optimize participation by all Valley residents, businesses, and public institutions.

Mr. Sheikh said there is always a robust discussion on the District's incentive programs and priorities during the Board's budgeting process, but because these programs are such an important part of the District's work, staff thought it was important to provide an update on core incentive programs, as well as some of the up and coming new opportunities.

Supervisor Wheeler asked when staff develops new incentive programs, such as the Low Dust Nut Harvest Program, do they begin working with CARB and EPA at the same time, or do they develop the program independently and send to them for approval. Mr. DeYoung responded in general, CARB is aware of the programs in the Valley and they are supportive of some of the demonstration projects that go on. He said District staff consistently work with CARB and EPA staff to quantify emission reductions and come up with methodologies that are sound. Mr. Sheikh added there are many examples where programs have begun locally with the Board's leadership, providing the framework, and then they go back out and become statewide programs. The District was the first agency to do the Agricultural Equipment Replacement Program under Moyer, and the first agency to do the Vehicle Repair and Replacement Program. He said staff have had to use local funds to make the homegrown innovation happen through pilot programs and develop the framework that will become future statewide programs.

Supervisor Couch said the Low Dust Nut Harvester program was a huge win and encouraged staff to continue to expand the program. He asked about program participation. Mr. DeYoung responded the pilot program was very limited in scope, as staff wanted to make sure there was participation throughout the Valley. He added participation was limited to one per grower, with equal distribution across the Valley.

Supervisor Couch said he supported all of the incentive programs that were presented and asked about road improvement programs. He said he thought about grade separation, especially over railroad tracks, would help to limit many idling vehicles in the Valley. He said he was not recommending that the District fully fund projects, but said there is just not enough money from the state in those projects and they are very expensive. He added he knew that cities and counties would be willing to also put money in these projects but he did not think they could afford the entire costs. He suggested crafting a policy around those situations. Mr. Sheikh responded there has been some continued interest, and came up during the AB 617 process in Shafter. He said staff committed to looking at similar projects as part of the CERP measures in the area. He said it ultimately comes down to the Board's tolerance for cost effectiveness and how

much we want to recognize not just the criteria benefits but also some of the near-community diesel benefits and other metrics. He added there was an open opportunity for those types of projects under one of the Public Benefits Grants components. He said at that time, staff had a Board-approved methodology set up and after incorporating the vehicle data from transportation agencies and running the calculations, there was definitely an eligible amount of funding but there wasn't enough reduction to get to the required percentage to get matching funds. He said staff may need to go back and reassess the formula to see if there was a way to make the funding adequate.

Dr. Sherriffs said CARB and the California Transportation Commission are now meeting together twice per year, to align work in exactly areas like this. He said this would be a potential opportunity for air districts and local governments with concerns to have them bumped up in terms of prioritization because they do have potentially these co-benefits in terms of climate change and air quality.

Although it is great that staff is innovating and developing new programs, Supervisor Crocker said he is a bit leery of new programs when we are oversubscribed in existing programs. He added it is critical to find additional state and federal funding for new programs and not overextend the funding sources for existing funding programs. As for road improvements, he said grade separations were a great example of projects that could definitely benefit air quality, and added that timeliness would be a huge issue when working with railroads. He said the City of Tulare was able to get dollars from Union Pacific Railroad for their grade separation project, but railroad agencies are tough to deal with.

Public Comment: *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Tom Swenson, Cummins Westport
- Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League

13. DISTRICT RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR 2019-20 – Mr. Sheikh introduced Jessica Olsen, Program Manager of the Air Quality Science and Planning Department, who reviewed the District's scientific research priorities and related projects for FY 2019-20 and asked for the Board's guidance and direction for District staff to partner with researchers, educational institutions and Valley partners in the coming year.

Supervisor Couch said it would be great to have the data regarding the trucks that originate outside of the state of California and travel through the Valley. Mr. Sheikh responded one of the areas of concern is enforcement and understanding the in state, out of state, in Valley, out of Valley, relationships of these different fleets. At the end of the day, he said there may be some major inequity concerns. From the Board's perspective, he said ultimately if the reductions are not generated out of some of these measures, such as the State Truck and Bus Rule, it shifts the burden back onto stationary sources and other areas we are

already heavily working on regulating. He said there is a lot of data out there from a variety of sources and there are projects that can be considered to take advantage of Cal Trans and other truck databases.

Supervisor Elliott agreed that we really need to focus effort on the mobile truck issue, but said there are so many unknowns he is not sure we would be able to find all of the information we need. He added the effects of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), which has been a major effort going across the Valley to come up with these management plans. He said he doesn't think there has been a lot of consideration given to the unintended consequences on air quality of implementing SGMA. Lastly, he asked if we need more research into transboundary transmissions of pollutants into the Valley. He said he was not sure we were taking appropriate account of those transboundary pollutants over which we have no control right now, and being able to capture that and factor it into our ability to meet some of these standards. Mr. Sheikh said one of the research priorities provides a great opportunity for continuing that research in this area. He added EPA has come up with more guidance and structure to how to look at transboundary impacts. He said as we get closer to meeting the various standards, that incremental difference will have an impact. He added staff will continue to look for projects that support this work and make this a priority area. He said it was also important to continue to work to understand the regional transport issues, and said there could be impacts from particulate matter in that area as well. Supervisor Elliott responded affirmatively.

Supervisor Wheeler suggested working with the CARB Board to count the trucks entering from out of state to find out which states are having the greatest impact on our air quality and work to bring them into compliance with California standards.

Dr. Sherriffs said the more we can learn about trucks the better, as they are an important factor and we are dealing with limited resources. He said he liked the focus on health outcomes because he feels that focusing on health outcomes helps build support for programs that we may be interested in pursuing. He recommended to frame things with health outcomes whenever we can because it is very powerful and effective. He commented that many important issues that would be discussed at this meeting, including forest fuels management, wildfire issues, and groundwater management are intimately related to climate change. He said we can be smarter about what we do to understand and take into consideration the impacts of climate change on criteria pollutant attainment strategies the Valley over the next 10 to 30 years.

Supervisor Crocker said he is supportive of research efforts related to the effects of SGMA. He said that the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint, which is a coalition of individuals including farmers, water agencies, agricultural associations and other individuals from across the Valley, is a grassroots effort that is trying to look at economic impacts of SGMA for our region. He suggested partnering with the coalition as they have already identified a professor that

focuses on economic studies from Cal Berkeley and looking into the possibility of incorporating air quality impacts as part of that study would be more cost effective than creating an entirely new study. In addition, he said wildfires have been a priority in the past and he emphasized that we need to continue to keep that in the forefront as we look at partnering and seeing what the impacts are moving forward. Also, he said it is important to understand the carbon sequestration that happens with permanent crops and annual crops in the Valley, and what the benefits of agriculture are on climate change and how that helps us in our process. He said moving forward, from a public policy standpoint, if we can highlight the benefits of agriculture to the climate, it would help us get more incentive dollars to help keep agriculture in the Valley, rather than try to drive it out.

Regarding SGMA, Supervisor Pedersen suggested the District tread lightly. Strategically, he said these growers may lose 20-30% of their land by a law restricting water access and that will have a huge impact on the Valley. Chairman Mendes commented that this situation is a Constitutional vortex, as a cornerstone of our Constitution is the inability to stop interstate commerce. He said we need to be able to count the interstate truck traffic and EPA needs to look at those numbers as an outside source that we have no control over.

Mr. Sheikh responded to make the information gathering most effective, the District would need to partner with CARB to try and get the data. He said he has heard of efforts like working with other states to understand and get their registration information, but at the end of the day he said he doesn't feel other states will adopt measures such as SB 1, which prohibits registrations for certain trucks in California. He said enforcement would be a very difficult issue for the 600,000 trucks that at some point, enter the state.

Public Comment: *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Colby Morrow, So Cal Gas
- Ted Strauss, USDA/NRCS
- Davida Herzl, Aclima
- Evan Shipp

14. INCREASED COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH VALLEY UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES – Mr. Sheikh said the District has been working to increase partnerships with Valley universities and colleges to identify ways to take advantage of their resources to help understand air quality issues, develop effective strategies and also see if we can help develop more Valley-based capacity with respect to air quality. He noted there are many more opportunities now, with the expansion of UC Merced and the leadership at Fresno State that is really interested in trying to grow some of the programs there that might be helpful with respect to transportation and air quality. He introduced Sheraz Gill, Deputy APCO, who presented potential areas of partnership and collaboration with colleges and universities in the San Joaquin Valley and asked

for the Board's direction in future endeavors.

Dr. Sherriffs commented that this is an important area and terrific opportunity. He noted many District staff have graduated from local Valley educational institutions and said clearly it has been important to us and will continue to be in the future. He added there are numerous opportunities in terms of research collaborations and getting these institutions to take advantage of programs that we have will help them to become ambassadors for District projects, such as charging stations.

Public Comment: None

15. RECEIVE INFORMATION REGARDING INDOOR AIR QUALITY – Mr. Sheikh introduced Jon Klassen, Director of Air Quality Science and Planning, who gave Board members an update on indoor air quality and recent efforts aimed at reducing exposure and potential impacts.

Dr. Sherriffs said many Board members are asked questions about this area and voiced appreciation for the information. He reminded everyone that a standard air conditioner filter can make a huge difference. He said it was important to continue to get the word out as this is an important and relatively inexpensive step that residents can take to reduce exposure.

Mr. Sheikh said this was an important update to continue to bring to the Board, both as an educational piece but also as we move forward with school filtration projects, there are a variety of things that could be done in that area. He added often many concerns that are attributed to outside air concerns, may also be due to many things occurring inside of homes and that can attribute to asthma or other areas of concerns. He said staff will continue to communicate these best practices to residents through the Healthy Air Living Program and noted disadvantaged communities often have challenges with having decent HVAC systems, which is why measures were added to the recently adopted CERPs to help with weatherization and other improvements that can be made.

Public Comment: *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Evan Shipp

The Board took a brief recess at 9:28 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:38 a.m.

16. COLLABORATION WITH LAND MANAGERS TO INCREASE PRESCRIBED BURNING AND REDUCE FOREST FUELS TO MINIMIZE AIR QUALITY IMPACTS FROM WILDFIRES – Mr. Sheikh said addressing wildfire emissions and all of the overwhelming consequences that come from them has been a high priority of the Board. He introduced Morgan Lambert, Deputy APCO, who has continued to update the Board for several years on a variety of activities related

to trying to minimize the frequency and intensity of wildfires and the corresponding emissions. Mr. Lambert presented an update on the District's efforts to collaborate with land management agencies to increase prescribed burning and reduce forest fuels to minimize air quality impacts from wildfires, and also welcomed several District partners from land management agencies at the state and federal level, including Len Nielson from Cal Fire, Angel Prieto and Joe Gonzales from the U.S. Forest Service, who also presented and participated in the discussion.

Supervisor Wheeler thanked the U.S. Forest Service and Cal Fire for all of their cooperation with the District. He said he hoped to see more controlled burning take place. Supervisor Wheeler said Cal Fire has grant funding available for projects such as road improvements, and encouraged other Board members to look into the funding for their counties.

Supervisor Crocker said it is important to note that in order to have prescribed burns, many times pre-thinning is required prior to the burns. In addition, he commented about the environmental benefits of forest management and health. He said there was recent San Francisco Chronicle article that highlighted the 2017 Peer Fire in Tulare County, which was catastrophic and killed 55 monarch giant sequoias which was a huge loss.

Dr. Sherriffs thanked the U.S. Forest Service and Cal Fire for what they do to protect us all. He said it is clear the Board supports the consideration of eliminating permitting fees and want to do everything they can to make it easier for people and public agencies to participate in these programs. He said it is important for the District to be involved in this area, from a health standpoint and also what can be done to encourage mechanical thinning, and fuel breaks to avoid the catastrophic wildfires and air quality issues. He added the 5 year funding plan was great, but noted that it would be an ongoing process forever to keep the forests healthy and growing. He also said it was necessary to think about what the District was going to do to help sustain this funding, as it will come from the state's Cap and Trade Program and added the more we embrace the disruption of climate change, the more success we will have meeting our health-driven air quality goals.

Supervisor Elliott thanked the presenters for the great presentation and increased emphasis on forest management, as all are in agreement that it has been too long neglected. He added his personal support for the reduction and elimination of the fees for prescribed burning, saying we should reduce fees every chance we get as it encourages more people to participate which makes common sense.

Mr. Sheikh summarized that the Board was interested in opening up the process to consider reducing those fees and said staff would get to work on that and return to the Board with a potential rule amendment for consideration in the future.

Public Comment: None

17. COLLABORATION WITH COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS TO INCREASE COMMUNICATION REGARDING AIR QUALITY ISSUES – Mr. Sheikh said this item is related to the ongoing work to deal with wildfires and air quality episodes and to find more partnership opportunities to help communicate these various issues with the public. He introduced Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, who presented a report on current communications with San Joaquin Valley County Public Health Officers and potential opportunities for enhanced communication and collaboration. Tom Jordan, Senior Policy Advisor, gave the Board a brief overview of some of the recent legislative issues and why there is a different sense of timeliness of these issues at the state level.

Mr. Sheikh added staff is envisioning a kickoff meeting to discuss what a more formal engagement process might look like, and coordinating future meetings with some frequency to allow continued collaboration on these issues. Chairman Mendes asked Board members to help ensure these meetings are taking place in their respective counties.

Supervisor Wheeler asked staff to include each Board member on the invitations to their respective County Public Health Officers. Ms. Holt responded affirmatively. Dr. Sherriffs added he looks forward to attending as many of these meetings as possible.

Public Comment: None

18. PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON INCREASING ONLINE AVAILABILITY OF DISTRICT PUBLIC RECORDS – Mr. Sheikh said the Board has always placed a high priority on making sure the District's processes are transparent and providing a high level of public transparency. He introduced Ryan Hayashi, Director of Compliance, who presented information on the potential of increasing online availability of District public records to continue enhancing public access to District records and improving District efficiency in addressing public records requests.

Mr. Sheikh added this was a discussion item and there was no intent to take any formal action at this meeting. He asked for the Board's guidance on this ongoing trend and said he wanted to make sure the Board was informed on some of these considerations that have a lot of obvious benefits but potentially both resource issues and concerns that would need to be addressed. He said many of the District's requests are for very basic information, and it could provide some significant resource benefits to be able to provide at least that level of information up front. He said there would be a lot of work that would take place with stakeholders to make any extra information available and would be in close coordination with anyone impacted by any movement by the District in that direction.

Supervisor Pedersen, asked if the District does make this information available online, would that relinquish its responsibility under the Public Records Act. Annette Ballatore, District Counsel, responded if there were a publicly accessible method of providing this information it would satisfy the District's Public Records Act obligations by pointing the requestor to the source of the information.

Supervisor Crocker said he generally likes transparency and efficiency and it is always good if we can do things better. He said the caveat is that he is not supportive of facilitating efforts that demonize our businesses as there are outside groups that may want to use this information to attack businesses that support Valley counties and communities. He said he appreciated the fact that the District's process would include working with groups to see what comments they may have. Supervisor Mendes agreed and said District staff would need to look at the type of information that could be made readily available versus that type that would only be released upon request.

Public Comments: *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League

19. PUBLIC COMMENT – None
20. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS – Mr. Sheikh reminded the Board that there is no November meeting scheduled, and the Board's next meeting would be on December 19, 2019. He thanked staff for making the Study Session a success once again, including Imtiaz Haq, ITS Director, My Dang, ITS Manager and Brandon Swedblom, Network Systems Analyst II, from the ITS department for the technical set up; Michelle Franco, Deputy Clerk of the Boards, and her team for the preparation work; and Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, for doing a lot of coordination to make this meeting happen. Lastly, he thanked the Board members for their careful attention to these issues and again demonstrating their leadership in so many areas that the District is involved in.
21. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – Chairman Mendes thanked the Board for staying on task and getting the work done. Supervisor Wheeler thanked District staff and the Board for holding this meeting at the Pines Resort and said it was a valuable opportunity to discuss policy and provide additional guidance to staff in their continued work to improve the Valley's air quality.

ADJOURN

The Board adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER. The next scheduled meeting of the Governing Board is: Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting starts at 9:00 a.m., in the Central Region Office, Governing Board Room, 1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue, Fresno. The meeting will be held via videoteleconference (VTC) with the Northern Region Office (Modesto) and the Southern Region Office (Bakersfield) participating via VTC.