

Action Summary Minutes

San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Central Region Office, Governing Board Room
1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue, Fresno, CA

Thursday, November 19, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Meeting held via Zoom Webinar and video teleconferencing with the Central Region Office (Fresno). This meeting was also webcast. Given the international COVID-19 pandemic, and consistent with the California Department of Public Health's recommendations and Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, no physical location was provided for public attendance.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – The Vice Chair, Supervisor Pareira, called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.
2. ROLL CALL – was taken and a quorum was present.

Present:

Drew M. Bessinger, Mayor	City of Clovis
David Couch, Supervisor	Kern County
Kuyler Crocker, Supervisor	Tulare County
Christina Fugazi, Councilmember	City of Stockton
Buddy Mendes, Supervisor	Fresno County
Tania Pacheco-Werner, Ph.D.	Appointed by Governor
Lloyd Pareira, Supervisor, Vice Chair	Merced County
Craig Pedersen, Supervisor, Chair*	Kings County
Alvaro Preciado, Councilmember	City of Avenal
Monte Reyes, Councilmember	City of Porterville
Dr. Alexander Sherriffs	Appointed by Governor
Chris Vierra, Mayor	City of Ceres
Tom Wheeler, Supervisor	Madera County

**Arrived at 9:13 a.m.*

Absent:

Bob Elliott, Supervisor	San Joaquin County
Kristin Olsen, Supervisor	Stanislaus County

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER, MAYOR CHRIS VIERRA – Vice Chair Pereira presented a plaque to Mayor Vierra in appreciation of his many years of service on the Governing Board. Mayor Vierra said he wanted to thank some of the previous Board members that he served with over the years including former Supervisor Steve Worthley from Tulare County, from whom he learned a great deal. He said the Board was very fortunate to have great staff and he looks forward to seeing all the great work that the Board and staff will continue to do in the future. He added he has enjoyed his time on the Board and was looking forward to spending more time with his family during his retirement from public service.

Chairman Pedersen arrived at 9:13 a.m.

Chairman Pedersen thanked Mayor Vierra for his service on behalf of the Board and said he would truly be missed.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR – Item Numbers (16 – 20): *These matters are routine in nature and are usually approved by a single vote. Prior to any action by the board, the public was given the opportunity to comment on any consent item.*

16. APPROVE ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES FOR THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING: REVIEW OF 2020-21 RECOMMENDED BUDGET OF THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020

17. RECEIVE AND FILE LIST OF SCHEDULED MEETINGS FOR 2021

18. RECEIVE AND FILE OPERATIONS STATISTICS SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 2020

19. RECEIVE AND FILE BUDGET STATUS REPORTS AS OCTOBER 31, 2020

20. ACCEPT AIR MONITORING ASSETS FROM CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD

Public Comment: *The following persons provided public comments on this item:*

- Ivanka Saunders, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Moved: Wheeler
Seconded: Bessinger
Ayes: Bessinger, Couch, Crocker, Fugazi, Mendes, Pacheco-Werner,
Pareira, Preciado, Reyes, Sherriffs, Vierra, Wheeler, Pedersen
Nays: None

***Motion unanimously carried to approve Consent Calendar Item Numbers 16
– 20***

6. PUBLIC COMMENT – *The following persons commented on this item:*

- Connie Young, Citizens Climate Lobby
- Janet Dietz-Kamei, Fresno Resident

7. APPROVE THE LOW-DUST NUT HARVESTER INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND ALLOCATE \$12,866,995 IN STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING – Todd

DeYoung, Director of Grants and Incentives, presented this item which asked the Board to approve the District's Low-Dust Nut Harvester Incentive Program to deploy low-dust nut harvesting equipment in the San Joaquin Valley, and allocate \$12,866,995 in available state and federal grant funds towards the program.

Dr. Sherriffs said the technology was impressive and there were great outcomes in terms of the efficiency of the machines, the apparent decreased emissions from harvesting, the cost savings for the growers, and the health benefits. He suggested prioritizing replacement of the most heavily used older machines first. He added if the program has been oversubscribed in the past, we should focus a little more heavily on the older machines with priority for the Shafter AB 617 community. Lastly, he said he was hoping the District would get the word out about how good this program is for the farming community and the economic sense that it makes.

Supervisor Mendes said Mr. DeYoung and his team are knowledgeable, efficient, and do an excellent job with the District's incentive programs. He suggested not deviating from their existing processes because staff knows all of the little intricacies and what really gets the bang for our buck.

Supervisor Pareira said Dr. Sherriffs hit on some good points, and said the harvesting dust has a shorter impact distance compared to some of the other pollutants that we address. He suggested the District intensify its outreach upwind of the AB 617 community of Shafter, and perhaps staff can make direct contact with each grower in that area. Otherwise, he said he agreed with Supervisor Mendes that District staff do a phenomenal job on these incentive programs.

Supervisor Couch said he was fortunate enough to represent the Shafter area, and thanked staff for their great work on these programs. He said he would not

pick any particular area around Shafter, because there are people that live in every direction from Shafter. He said the District would do some good with this program no matter where the machines were located. He added he was thinking of La Colonia, where there are residents that have been very active in the AB 617 process, and they live right next to almond orchards.

Supervisor Crocker agreed with Supervisor's Couch's recommendation to not place too many restrictions as far as where the funding could be spent, recognizing there would be benefits no matter where the projects were located. He asked about the stated example that one new harvester replaced two old harvesters. Specifically, he asked if staff was finding that was common throughout the pilot. Mr. DeYoung responded staff received feedback from some of the participants that they did not have to make as many passes or use as many harvesters. Supervisor Crocker said if we were looking at one machine potentially replacing two, the benefits would be not only in dust management but reduction of all other particulates and possible NOx reductions.

Samir Sheikh, Executive Director/APCO, said the questions that were raised are really important as the District moves forward with transitioning from a pilot to a larger-scale program. He said this is the first step in a journey to work with the almond and other nut crop growers over a multi-year period to educate growers, transition technology, and deploy best management practices to address all components of harvest emissions.

Mr. Sheikh response to Dr. Sherriffs' and Supervisor Pareira's points regarding outreach surrounding specific impacted communities, he stated the Board previously adopted the Community Level Targeted Strategy. Under this strategy, where there may be communities that may be impacted, there may be opportunities with outreach and targeted funding to partner with growers in the area to reduce harvest emissions. He added the first come, first serve model works really well at this stage of a program and said we would learn more as we continue the roll out. He said as staff collects information over the next year or so, they will come back to the Board to report on the distribution of funds throughout the Valley and continue to make adjustments.

Chairman Pedersen said with respect to the 75% funding that was alluded to within the AB 617 communities, he wanted to make sure that while we identify these areas as areas that have issues we realize that the costs are not nominal. He said that could create challenges for smaller farmers to make these kinds of decisions. He said it was important to continue to be fair with the allocation of funds across the District with the recognition that AB 617 is there. He said he has been supportive of AB 617, but has also said it should carry its own weight. Mr. Sheikh responded that the AB 617 program would be entirely funded by the AB 617 funds that were specifically allocated towards that measure by the state. He said when the Board adopted the Shafter CERP, they allocated \$2.5 million specifically to that measure in the CERP. He said the enhanced incentive was what was adopted in the CERP and what came out of the community

recommendations that were really intended on ensuring that growers in the Shafter vicinity had enough incentive to participate in this program.

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

- Ivanka Saunders, Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability
- Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League
- Byanka Santoyo, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
- Janet Dietz-Kamei, Fresno Resident
- Sasan Saadat, Earthjustice
- Gustavo Aguirre, Central California Environmental Justice Network
- Jesse Roseman, Almond Board of California

Dr. Pacheco-Werner thanked the Board and staff, and said it was really exciting to see this program funded at this scale. She added that she wanted to remind everybody that part of the District's mission as a public health agency is to educate the public on the Valley's air quality challenges and work to address all of the sources of pollution as we work to improve air quality.

Moved: Couch

Seconded: Wheeler

Ayes: Bessinger, Couch, Crocker, Fugazi, Mendes, Pacheco-Werner, Pareira, Preciado, Reyes, Sherriffs, Vierra, Wheeler, Pedersen

Nays: None

Motion unanimously carried to approve the Low-Dust Nut Harvester Incentive Program and allocate \$12,866,995 in state and federal funding

8. ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE \$869,000 FROM THE CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD TO EXPAND THE ECOSYSTEM OF SHARED MOBILITY IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY PILOT PROJECT – Mr. DeYoung presented this item, which asked the Board to accept \$869,000 in Cap and Trade funding from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for the expansion of the *Ecosystem of Shared Mobility in the San Joaquin Valley* pilot project; authorize the Executive Director/APCO to enter into agreements with CARB and subcontractors as necessary to administer this project in the San Joaquin Valley; and authorize the Executive Director/APCO to make administrative changes to the project as necessary.

Dr. Sherriffs said this was obviously a great program and there is general enthusiastic support by the Board. He asked staff to share any initial impressions of what we have learned over the past few years.

Mr. DeYoung responded the program can be characterized as a success prior to COVID-19, as we launched the app in the North Valley, which really does a great job of linking multiple transit platforms together and allows folks to really plan their routes and plan on how to get around in one easy to use location. He said

staff received a lot of great feedback on that app and the integration that it provides. Regarding the other portion of the program, he said we were up to 250 consistent riders of the program in the South Valley for the Ride Share program. And this was again utilizing electric vehicles and those hybrid plug in vans were necessary. He added staff was ramping up the outreach within the communities and the surrounding areas prior to COVID-19, and said there has been great interest in getting the program back.

Public Comment: None

Moved: Wheeler

Seconded: Pareira

Ayes: Bessinger, Couch, Crocker, Fugazi, Mendes, Pacheco-Werner,
Pareira, Preciado, Reyes, Sherriffs, Vierra, Wheeler, Pedersen

Nays: None

Motion unanimously carried to accept and appropriate \$869,000 from the California Air Resources Board to expand the Ecosystem of Shared Mobility in the San Joaquin Valley pilot project

9. APPROVE UP TO \$4,000,000 IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TUNE IN TUNE UP VEHICLE REPAIR PROGRAM – Brian Dodds, Program Manager, presented this item which asked the Board to authorize the Executive Director/APCO to execute a contract amendment with Valley Clean Air Now, with Board Chair signature, for up to \$4,000,000 in vehicle repair funding for the continued implementation of the Tune In Tune Up vehicle repair program.

Mayor Bessinger said this program, and the programs that we run in conjunction with our agricultural community, are really the flagship programs that the District operates. He said this program permits people who are struggling financially to conduct vehicle repairs. He said this program really helps the residents of the Valley who have the greatest need in our community.

Dr. Sherriffs said he was confident this is a program that the entire Board is very proud to be supportive of and always looking for ways to help improve it. He added COVID-19 has completely changed how we outreach to communities and how we share our messages and asked staff to share a little bit about how the program has pivoted to deal with community outreach in this new environment. Mr. DeYoung responded there are a couple of ways that program outreach continues and we have utilized the existing network of community organizations that we have built up through the event based model to continue outreach to their constituents. He said we have also used a combination of traditional media and targeted social media to get the message to residents about contacting Valley Clean Air Now directly to participate in these programs. He added this variety of messages and outreach ensure that the program continues to see very strong participation.

Dr. Sherriffs added his observation that the program is succeeding moving forward because of its exceptionally strong base and the ability it has had to make a strong impact. He said the challenge really remains because we don't know how long we are going to have to continue with only this model. He said we will probably need to get back to the old model to continue to sustain and grow it to keep that outreach alive.

Mayor Preciado commented on the success of the outreach of the program despite COVID-19, saying the numbers are increasing and there is a big need for this program in the Central Valley. He voiced support for the idea of increasing resources to reach out to more communities in the Valley.

Councilmember Fugazi said this continues to be a very important program in her community. She said she receives messages often from people asking when the Tune In Tune Up events are coming back. She said residents are very appreciative when they find out they can still participate in the program. She said it was important to realize that not everyone has social media and to continue to use other avenues to let people know this program is still in place. She added she loves that it is still going on and looking to the future, but said people still love the actual in person events. She said if the District were to completely do away with them, residents would not be too happy about that. But, in the interim, while we are in this state of COVID-19, we definitely just need to make sure to get the information out to the people because we do have the monies allocated for it.

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

- Tom Knox, Valley Clean Air Now

Moved: Mendes

Seconded: Pariera

Ayes: Bessinger, Couch, Crocker, Fugazi, Mendes, Pacheco-Werner, Pareira, Preciado, Reyes, Sherriffs, Vierra, Wheeler, Pedersen

Nays: None

Motion unanimously carried to approve up to \$4,000,000 in additional funding for the continued implementation of the Tune In Tune Up vehicle repair program

10. RECEIVE THE GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING – Mehri Barati, Administrative Services Director, presented this item which asked the Board to receive the Government Finance Officers' Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

Supervisor Mendes congratulated the Ms. Barati and her Finance team for achieving this prestigious award.

11. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL FRESNO AND SHAFTER AB 617 COMMUNITY EMISSION REDUCTION PROGRAMS – Ryan Hayashi, Deputy APCO, provided the Board with an update on the implementation of Community Emission Reduction Programs (CERP) previously adopted by the Board for the AB 617 communities of South Central Fresno and Shafter, and asked them to direct staff to submit annual progress reports for South Central Fresno and Shafter AB 617 communities to the California Air Resources Board.

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

- Ivanka Saunders, Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability and AB 617 Steering Committee member
- Cynthia Pinto-Cabrera, Central Valley Air Quality Coalition
- Janet Dietz-Kamei, Fresno Resident
- Gustavo Aguirre, Central California Environmental Justice Network and AB 617 Steering Committee member

Mr. Sheikh acknowledged the public comments that were made. He said he also wanted to recognize the staff involved in the AB 617 program. He gave kudos to staff for spending the time working with residents through the numerous meetings and in between meetings providing services, equipment, and laptops which were approved by the Board through various actions. Lastly, he said he wanted to acknowledge the Board for being willing to take on this program and to support this program through various actions, and said staff looks forward to the work in the coming years. He said we are just getting started now and building the partnerships that we need and will keep moving forward and looking forward to working with all of the stakeholders to implement the CERPs.

Councilmember Fugazi said the Stockton community is going through this process right now and said she wanted to commend staff. She said there have been a number of meetings and she has observed there are varying degrees of public understanding of what causes poor air quality. She said the fundamental basis for AB 617 is to improve air quality and she looks forward to the future of other communities in the Central Valley being able to take advantage of AB 617.

Dr. Sherriffs said he attended the steering committee meetings for Fresno and Shafter last week and reminded Board members they are all welcome to participate in the process. He said it was very impressive, as there was a lot of material covered in a very short period of time. He added the real work is being done in the subcommittees to deal with the details and the complexity of this stuff. He said it is important to remember that communication is not simple and it remains a continuing challenge. In addition, he thanked Mr. Hayashi and staff for all of their efforts, flexibility, and improvements. He added that one of the great

themes in the successes is the need for partners and how much more successful things are when bringing partners together, and the District has had some extraordinary success being part of that process. He thanked staff and the community members for their engagement in this great program.

12. VERBAL REPORT ON CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD ACTIVITIES – Dr. Sherriffs provided highlights of the California Air Resources Board meeting of October 22, 2020.
13. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/APCO COMMENTS – Mr. Sheikh advised the Board that the District's Annual Report to the Community has now been made available in a Spanish language version and thanked Mayor Preciado for the suggestion. He said that is now available electronically in both English and Spanish. He said if anyone would like to request a hard copy, staff can make them available as well.

Mr. Sheikh also announced that as of November 1st, the District entered the implementation phase of our residential wood burning emission reduction strategy. He added Board members may have noticed a lot of the outreach on local media and staff will continue moving forward with the implementation of the more stringent rule that was put into place through our PM2.5 Plan recently. He added enforcement was also in place as well as all of the outreach regarding the incentive programs that are available to residents to replace their older wood-burning devices. He said at the end of the season, staff would return to the Board with a comprehensive report. Lastly, he gave the Board a quick update on the District and COVID-19 related implementation.

14. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – Chairman Pedersen voiced concern regarding comments that large growers should be forced to upgrade their nut harvesting equipment without incentive funding. He said the day we go from the carrot to the stick is the day we step backwards and noted the Board has created relationships over many years and with those relationships comes trust.

Dr. Sherriffs commented on the COVID-19 pandemic and said he salutes the District for its rigor and being careful to protect the health of staff as well as the health of the public. He added there is a lot of confusion about messaging during the pandemic and said it is very important to be consistent. He said people want to do the right thing but they hear different things, and we need to work much harder to have a strong and consistent message.

Vice Mayor Reyes commented that everyone needs to think about what the difference between being cavalier is and what the difference between being courageous is. He said in this case being courageous is being an early adopter of some of these protocols that were put into place because it took a great deal of courage to take these steps. He said it was important to remember during Thanksgiving that we do not want to jeopardize what we are truly thankful for.

Mayor Preciado thanked the AB 617 community participants for their valuable comments during the process. He also thanked staff for producing the District's Annual Report to the Community in Spanish.

15. **CLOSED SESSION** - Annette Ballatore, District Counsel, announced that the Board would adjourn to Closed Session to discuss the item below followed by adjournment.
- Public Employee Performance Evaluation pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957 and 54957.6 for the following:
 - a) Executive Director/APCO
 - b) District Counsel

Public Comment: None

ADJOURN

The next scheduled meeting of the Governing Board is: Thursday, December 17, 2020, 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 video teleconference (VTC) with the Northern Region He