

AQAC MINUTES
January 6, 2015

Members/alternates present: Kathy Tonnessen, Guy Hanson, Bert Chessin, Ryan Leach, John Garberson, Beth Berlin, Jan Hoem

Members/alternates absent: Sue Spanke, Bill Flanery, Phil Perszyk, Garon Smith

Staff: Sarah Coefield

Public: Ronni Flannery, Gary Matson, Judy Matson, Dave Atkins

1. **Jan Hoem called the meeting to order**
2. **Excused absences recognized** – Bill Flanery and Phil Perszyk were excused
3. **Agenda approved.**
4. **December minutes approved with one correction.**
5. **Public comment on non-agenda items**

Gary Matson told the group that he's interested in what the Council does in Missoula. His particular interest is coal exports. He informed the Council that there will be a public comment period for Tongue River Railroad Environmental Impact Statement this April. Gary said he thinks Missoula County has standing for coal exports because climate change affect everyone.

6. Article Presentation

Bert Chessin presented two articles. The first article, "It's a historic year for temperature extremes" by John Metcalfe, was published by The Atlantic's *CityLab*. The article is a summary of the record heat and record cold in 2014. Bert said the article suggests something weird is going on with U.S. weather – usually a year is either hot or cold, but does not generally have both extremes.

Bert said the second article, "NASA finds good news on forests and carbon dioxide" from the NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory, provides a little ray of sunshine. According to the article, tropical forests are absorbing more CO₂ than expected. He said that if we can make improvements in the tropics (such as slowing the rate of deforestation and increasing reforestation), there is a potential to soften CO₂'s impacts.

Ryan Leach said he was skeptical of the first article. He said that if you start looking at the statistics, you start to see that there are lots of ways you can cut it. Ryan said that the way you run the model (i.e. the parameters for year, etc.) will impact the splits you observe.

Jan said that she is concerned deforestation is ongoing. She said the rate of deforestation may be slowing, but once it's gone, you can't get it back.

Bert said the Brazilians seem to be taking reasonable efforts to cut down illegal deforestation.

Kathy Tonnessen will present at the next meeting.

7. Interview membership candidate

The Council interviewed Ronni Flannery for one of the vacant alternate positions. Ronni works as the Montana Healthy Air Director for the American Lung Association of the Mountain Pacific. She answered the Council's questions about her interest in, perception of, and vision for Missoula's air quality. She also spoke with the Council about asthma rates, her availability for meetings and her areas of expertise.

Following the interview, Guy Hanson made a motion to request the Air Pollution Control Board Chair appoint Ronni Flannery to the Air Quality Advisory Council. Ryan Leach seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

8. Action Item: Review additional membership application(s), select interviewee(s).

The group looked over applications from John Ottman and Dave Atkins for the remaining alternate vacancies. Guy said he planted the seed to get Atkins to apply for the Council. He told the group that Atkins, who recently retired from the U.S. Forest Service, was instrumental in Missoula receiving the grant that became a foundation for the Seeley Lake Woodstove Changeout. Sarah Coefield told the group that she has had interactions with John Ottman in the past, and he's a responsible burner. He had approached her with an interest in smoke management on the local level, and she directed him to the AQAC application.

John Garberson said Ottman's business is focused on responsible environmental work, and he's pleased as punch to see both of the applicants in the pool. He said they offer good perspectives.

Bert Chessin made the motion to invite both Atkins and Ottman to the February AQAC meeting for interviews. Guy seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

9. Staff report

Sarah Coefield gave the staff report. The Air Board approved the Missoula County PM10 Redesignation Request and Limited Maintenance Plan (LMP). The Board's motion left room for the document to be edited because MCCHD is still waiting on some comments from the EPA. In the meantime, Sarah said she's starting to prepare for similar work with carbon monoxide (CO). The second CO maintenance plan is due this summer. The CO plan update will (hopefully) be a little less work intensive than the PM10 redesignation request and LMP, but it has many of the same components, including an emission inventory.

Sarah said Ben Schmidt is headed up to Seeley Lake next week to speak with the community council up there and hopefully get their input on some methods to continue the woodstove education effort. The number of days Seeley exceeds the standard in a winter has decreased since the woodstove changeout, but Seeley still has far too many

days over the standard and needs to see some better wood burning practices. Ben has been working on a postcard for Seeley Lake residents to provide some information about the messages on the air quality sign at the elementary school.

10. Public comment

None

11. Select AQAC representative for next Air Board meeting update

Bert Chessin will attend the Board meeting.

12. Announcements, other business

Sarah Coefield told the group about a recent study that linked autism to exposure to particulates during the third trimester of pregnancy. Jan Hoem showed the group the book she's reading about inoculation: "On Immunity." Guy Hanson said the Missoula Community Health Assessment is done. He said it was a rewarding project to work on and he'll send out the link to the group.

John Garberson said there has been lots of publicity about the bus system. There have been comments that buses contribute to better air quality in Missoula, but he hasn't seen the figures to support that claim. He said he would be extremely skeptical that those big buses with four passengers make air quality better rather than worse.

John also brought up weaknesses he sees in the current air quality regulations. Going back to the proposed UM boiler, he said his perception, and the Council's perception, was that the boiler would be dirtier than the system it would be replacing, but it was still permitted. John said he sees a problem that an entity could be holding a permit for one process, but can get a second permit that allows dirtier emissions. He said it's something he'd like to see addressed by the Council and the Health Department

Jan said she's had similar thoughts. She said she would like to have the issue clarified and learn what the Council might do about it.

Guy said it might be good to have Ben walk the Council through the permitting process again. He said he thinks the UM boiler case also has a jurisdictional issue. He said the University followed all laws and procedures. The question is if the process is flawed or not. He said he doesn't think the university had permits for their gas boilers, and didn't need one until the process started. He said Ben can get the Council up to speed.

Sarah said she'd ask Ben to come to one of the spring AQAC meetings. John requested that Ben come in April.

13. Adjourn