

Hazardous Materials Commission

Draft Minutes Operations Committee

June 12, 2015

Members and Alternates

Present: Rick Alcaraz, Fred Glueck, Ralph Sattler, Don Tatzin, Audrey Albrecht (alternate), Peter Dragovich (alternate)

Absent: Henry Clark (represented by alternate), Leslie Stewart (represented by alternate),

Staff: Michael Kent

Members of the Public: None

- 1) **Call to order, announcements:** Commissioner Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:05.

Michael Kent announced:

- The pipeline safety public forum presented by the Commission and the Alamo Improvement Association on June 6th was videotaped and will be reshowed on CCTV four times in mid-June.
- The Planning and Policy Development committee meeting scheduled for June 17 is cancelled because it conflicts with the Refinery Safety Working Group meeting that several commissioners are part of.

- 2) **Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes for the May 8, 2015 meeting were moved by Commissioner Glueck, seconded by Commissioner Alcaraz and approved 5 – 0 with Commissioner Tatzin arriving after the vote.

- 3) **Public Comments:** None

- 4) **Old Business:**

- a) **Update on consideration of a pharmaceutical disposal ordinance**

Given the Supreme Court decision not to hear the appeal of the Alameda County Ordinance, meaning the 9th Circuit Court decision to uphold it remains in effect, Supervisor Piepho has indicated she is interested in introducing consideration of a similar ordinance for Contra Costa County, but has not done so yet.

In East Contra Costa County, Delta Diablo Sanitation District has placed collection bins at the Pittsburg Police Department and is exploring sites at County Health Departments and other medical clinics, and other locations.

Spanish-language versions of the pharmaceutical disposal educational posters the Commission helped develop have now been placed at the County Hospital and will be posted in County Clinics.

b) Develop follow-up questions for County Departments previously sent inquiries about implementation of the County's Environmental Justice Policy

The committee reviewed the letters they received from the Agriculture, Public Works and Conservation and Development Departments and Environmental Justice Framework received from the Public Health Department. They then had a general discussion of the common themes they saw in the letters and made a range of general observations.

Commissioner Tatzin said it seemed like to him that there may be a lack of community understanding of the services that are provided due to a lack of funding to promote these activities. He thought that maybe an approach the Commission could take would be to write a letter to each department saying what the Commission learned from their letters compared to the County's EJ policy, and to identify some things they may want to look at, and how the Commission could help them.

Commissioner Albrecht thought that the letters were just saying what they thought would sound good to us, and she is not sure how to get them to do more.

Commissioner Gleuck thought that maybe an overall Environmental Justice awareness and training should be part of the requirements for all employees. Commissioner Tatzin added that maybe some written accountability measures were also needed.

Commissioner Gleuck said he also saw there being two types of EJ issues. One is people making complaints about something being ignored by a County Department. The other is private citizens taking actions to directly address specific projects or facilities.

The Commissioners saw a common themes with the Department's response to Question 8 – *How do you determine who are the members of the community with special needs in terms of their ability to engage?* One acknowledged that it is probably Spanish-speaking workers, but were only partially addressing this, one said they relied on the Board of Supervisors to identify community members with special needs and how to outreach to them, and the other said they do not try to identify community members with special needs but rather follow outreach requirements prescribed by law and react to those that ask for more information.

The Commissioners felt there needed to be a more proactive approach to outreach to address Environmental Justice concerns. Commissioner Glueck thought that maybe there needed to be more guidance, and funding from the County to do more outreach.

Commissioner Sattler said that maybe there should be formal review every year or every other year of the County's EJ programs to make sure they were functioning properly and Commissioner Albrecht added that there needed to be support from the Board of Supervisors and accountability measures for this.

Commissioner Tatzin observed that it seems what the departments are saying is that they training their employees to comply with their own policies and practices for engage the public, but this raises the question as to whether this is adequate to address Environmental Justice concerns. None of the Departments have written policies for addressing the EJ policy, but none see this as a problem. Maybe we need to point out how Environmental Justice concerns can get ignored by just following standard operating procedures.

The committee decided that the best course of action would be to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors sharing their observations and conclusions from analyzing the responses from the departments, and encourage the Board to take action to support the Departments efforts to address the Environmental Justice policy. They directed staff to draft a letter for consideration at their next meeting.

5) New Business None

6) Reports from Commissioners on Matters of Commission Interest: None

7) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.