

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 28, 2009

ATTENDANCE:

Present: K. Anderson, J. Van Hamme, G. Hayes, J. Murray, T. Owen, P. Powers, S. Purdy, R. Reid, J. Sparks, L. Tabata

Regrets: D. Crespin-Mueller, G. McKay, R. McGivern, V. Montagliani, N. Riesle,

Guests: Rick Adams (Regional Manager) and Ralph Adams (Air Quality Meteorologist),
Ministry of Environment

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>CALL TO ORDER: Judith Murray in the Chair. Meeting was called to order at 10:15 am.</p>		
<p>PRESENTATION: Ministry of Environment Ralph and Rick were invited to give an overview of the regulatory and scientific aspects of Airshed Quality Management.</p> <p>DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY Regulatory Framework: The Director has the decision making authority, which is delegated to the Regional Managers. Regional Managers are given delegated authority for certain sections of the Environmental Management Act (EMA). The Ministry sets policy that guides Regional Managers' decisions and also can remove or restrict their decision making authority.</p> <p>Ministry has no authority to prevent businesses from constructing industrial facilities. In order to build, businesses merely have to work with the city to ensure there is proper zoning. However they cannot discharge anything into the atmosphere until applying for a permit to the Ministry.</p>		

<p>PERMIT APPROVAL PROCESS</p> <p>For low and medium risk facilities, standards are set in regulations that facilities must follow. Facilities are required to register and meet those standards. With these facilities there is no required consultation with the Ministry of Environment or stakeholders but they are required to meet the regulations.</p> <p>For larger industrial projects such as Nexterra, ACC, Domtar, SBC Firemaster, groups are required to consult with First Nations if necessary, and are required to advertise in the BC Gazette and the local newspapers. Consultation with stakeholder groups may be required, depending on the feedback from the newspaper advertisements (response and issues raised). If the business's technology cannot achieve the standards that the group claims or if the technology is new or untested, they are given a temporary permit (approval) and must prove that they can meet the standards before they are given a full permit.</p> <p>After the permit decision, parties that provided responses in writing to the advertisements are notified and there is a 30 day period to appeal with a \$25 appeal cost. The applicant as well as any other affected party is able to appeal if they disagree with conditions of the permit.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: Are the types of emissions taken into account as well as the amount of emissions?</p> <p>The type of emissions is taken into account when the decision is made. The Ministry will not grant a permit if it will have an adverse effect on health even if the emission in question is not accounted for in the Environmental Management Act. The Ministry calculates the ambient concentrations of particulates and then sends the data to Interior Health, which looks at the concentrations and determines whether they have an adverse effect on health. If no standards exist for a particular emission, then the Ministry will look at other modern jurisdictions such as the EPA standards to make their decision.</p>	
<p>MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT JURISDICTION</p> <p>Ralph explained the only control the Ministry has is over 'point source emissions' which are individual stacks in an industrial facility. Managing industrial point sources does not completely protect air quality. Other significant sources include vehicle emissions and wood burning stoves. Emission inventories show that (in tonnes per annum released into airshed), approximately only 1/3 of site particulate matter in Kamloops comes from industry.</p>	

<p>IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT</p> <p>Local government is the desired leader of an airshed plan. The function of an airshed plan is primarily to protect and where possible improve air quality. Most sources of pollution are driven by population growth. The primary need is public education and reduction in point sources from cars, wood stoves, and small diffuse sources through city initiatives. Anti-idling programs are important, Kamloops does have one but it is not well publicized.</p> <p>Bylaws</p> <p>Bylaws can be very helpful. A bylaw that some cities have implemented is a Misuse of Wood Stove Bylaw (using improperly cured wood or burning garbage). Kelowna has a Nuisance Bylaw to address this.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: Can there be a Moratorium put on permits until there is an airshed plan in place?</p> <p>A moratorium on permits would not survive an appeal with the Ministry of Environment and the City would probably not be willing to close its doors to industry.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: Are the decisions solely based on Air Quality? Are economic factors taken into account?</p> <p>The Environmental Management Act does not dictate to include social or economic factors in the decision. The appeal board would be able to overturn any decision using those factors. The Ministry looks at the condition of the environment that will receive the pollution and determines whether it will degrade the environment or cause human health impacts.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: How accurate are the models used in the proposals?</p> <p>Domtar's proposal used a model originating from California which is the most accurate model currently available. 80% of the health risk to individuals is due to long periods of exposure to low levels of pollutants. The Domtar model predicted that the annual average in air quality would improve everywhere. The only drop in air quality predicted was during one 24 hour period out of a 3 year model, which showed a 0.1 microgram increase in one small area in the middle of the Thompson River.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: Is management or financial capability taken into account in the decision?</p> <p>There is no set standard to take this into account. If the facility cannot meet the requirements there is an enforcement framework the Ministry</p>	

<p>follows. For technology that has not been proven effective before, a temporary permit is issued so the business can demonstrate it can meet the standards.</p>	
<p>QUESTION: Is it possible for individuals/groups to register to be notified of upcoming applications? It could possibly be done as a courtesy but it is currently not happening.</p>	
<p>PREVIOUS COMMITTEES An airshed committee was started in 2003/2004 however it did not get enough political support and subsequently collapsed.</p>	
<p>FINAL REMARKS Airshed planning and education must be done through a long term program with the local government. Rick and Ralph have not had much success with individual presentations.</p>	
<p>AGENDA Agenda items will be carried over to the next meeting since there is not enough time left in the meeting to address them.</p>	
<p>REPORTING Judith proposed to circulate Dorys and Penny's reports to the committee through email. Working group summaries should be available before the meeting. A week prior to the meeting reports will be sent.</p>	
<p>VICE CHAIR A Vice-Chair needs to be selected who must be a senate appointed member. Members can nominate candidates through email and an election will occur if there is more than one nominee. Note that the Vice Chair will eventually move into role of Chair.</p>	
<p>AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP Robin will write up a terms of reference for the group. Robin put forth the motion of EAC having a seat at the table if an Airshed Committee is created. Seconded by Tom, Penny. Motion Carried.</p>	
<p>NEXT MEETING & ADJOURNMENT The next meeting will be Nov. 25 at 10:00 am. Meeting adjourned at 11:41 am.</p>	