

KITTITAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY

11:00 A.M.

JANUARY 27, 2014

Board members present: Vice-Chairman Gary Berndt and Commissioner Obie O'Brien. Excused: Chairman Paul Jewell.

Others: Mandy Buchholz, Deputy Clerk of the Board; Sue Billings, Air Quality Program DOE; Andrew Lyons, HopeSource; Holly Myers, Environmental Health Supervisor; Brenda Larsen, Fire Marshal; Mark Larson, Public Health Official; Jim Allen, KVCH; Robin Read, Public Health Administrator; Erin Moore, Environmental Health Permit Tech; Amy Fuller, Assessment Coordinator; Joe Seemiller, Fire Marshal City of Ellensburg; Rich Elliott, Deputy Chief KVFR and one member of the public.

SPECIAL MEETING

DOE AIR QUALITY UPDATE

COMMISSIONERS

At 11:00 a.m. Vice-Chairman Berndt opened a Special Meeting to receive an update on the Kittitas County (Ellensburg area) air quality from Department of Ecology.

Sue Billings, DOE Air Quality Program explained that DOE began monitoring the air quality in Kittitas County in 1999. She stated that recent reports from the monitor are showing concern for the air quality and she warned that if the air quality continues to worsen there is potential the County could be in Federal non-compliance for air quality. That would come with a whole list of expectations and regulations. She provided handouts and explained that fine particle pollution (PM2.5) is a serious health concern. Many of the particles are toxic however most are so small that when you breathe them in they get past your body's defenses and go deep into your lungs, which is where serious problems such as scarring of the lung tissue can become a concern. She stated that studies have shown that death rates in several U.S. cities increased when there were higher levels of fine particles in the air. She stated that fine particle pollution is most dangerous to the health of infants, children, pregnant women and the elderly as well as people with lung or heart disease. She indicated that fine particle pollution is particles of soot, dust, and smoke that are 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller (smaller in diameter than a human hair), which is why they call it PM2.5 for short and when breathed in

2014-01-27 MINUTES

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these particles can cause or worsen respiratory problems especially for children and the elderly. She explained that in Ellensburg, the main sources of PM2.5 appears to be wood stoves and fireplaces, various forms of outdoor burning, and wildfires, and Ecology would like to study the area more to get additional information about all possible sources. She stated that they are seeking funding to allow them to do further research in the area etc. She reviewed the handouts she presented with provide explanation with regard to what will happen if Ellensburg violates the air quality standard, what Ecology is doing about the problem and what we can do now.

Robin Read, Public Health Administrator stated that Public Health does do air quality assessments. Holly Myers, EH Supervisor stated that they are working on an air quality advisory committee and once that is set up they will do a survey and then work on outreach. She stated they are projecting it to be a year-long project.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


Mandy Buchholz

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Chairman Paul Jewell