

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 6, 2013

A meeting of the Environmental Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC) was convened on Thursday, June 6, 2013, at 5:15 p.m., in the Pueblo County Department of Planning and Development Conference Room, 229 West 12th Street. Chair Kester called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Betty Alt
Susan Finzel-Aldred
Doris Kester
Ted Lopez
Gene Michael

Members absent were: Lois Illick (excused) and Chad Wolgram.

Guests present: Ron Greenwell.

Staff present were: Joan Armstrong and Sandra Smith.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 4, 2013 AND APRIL 22, 2013 MEETINGS

Ms. Finzel-Aldred moved to approve the April 4, 2013 and April 22, 2013 minutes as mailed.

Discussion occurred. Chair Kester requested the following corrections be made to the April 4, 2013 minutes:

Page 4, Paragraph 2, Sentences 1 and 3, Lines 1 and 3, and Page 8, Paragraph 2, Sentence 2, Line 2:

The acronym "DVP" should be changed to "DBP".

After discussion, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lopez to approve both sets of minutes, duly noting the above correction to the April 4, 2013 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT – DORIS KESTER

Chair Kester reported she wrote two letters to PACOG stating EPAC's recommendations on the issues from the past two meetings. PACOG accepted the recommendations except for the 7.5 µg/L recommendation for Chlorophyll *a*. PACOG decided to accept a 5 µg/L standard. Chair Kester noted that updated documentation received for this meeting indicated the Department of Wildlife was also in favor of 5 µg/L standard for Chlorophyll *a*. She stated the Pueblo Board of Water Works (PBWW) attorney stated EPAC didn't have all of the information submitted to make an informed decision. She stated Mr. Jack Johnston, the District Manager for the Pueblo West Metropolitan District, called her and asked if Ms. King and he could be on this evening's EPAC agenda. Mr. Johnston wanted EPAC to recommend to the Water Quality Control Division (WQCD) that the Chlorophyll *a* level should be set to a 7.5 µg/L standard. She stated Mr. Johnston and Ms. King have a copy of the letter that was sent to PACOG with EPAC's recommendation of 7.5 µg/L standard, which they were free to use. She stated they are not at this evening's meeting, noting it was not appropriate for EPAC to write a direct letter to the

WQCD, noting PACOG is the deciding agency. Chair Kester stated Mr. Terry Book from the Pueblo Board of Water Works (PBWW) was invited, but because Pueblo West Metropolitan District didn't show, he excused himself from the meeting.

Mr. Lopez commented on the attorney's statement that EPAC hadn't made an informed decision because they didn't have all of the information. He felt that even with the latest package of information, they also didn't have all of the information because there were some comments about the Department of Wildlife in the rebuttal statement requesting a standard of 8 µg/L due to human contact. He stated he didn't understand why the Department of Wildlife was set on a 5 µg/L standard. He attended the PACOG meeting, and he didn't understand what the objection was from the County Commissioners at setting it at a higher standard. He stated someone on the Board made a comment that EPAC didn't accept the Pueblo West original standard suggestion of 10.5 µg/L. He noted that EPAC also didn't accept the PBWW's proposal of 5 µg/L because EPAC felt it was too tight and split the difference. He stated EPAC did agree with Pueblo West that a study was needed. He stated at the first meeting (February 7, 2013), the PBWW indicated no problems due to Chlorophyll *a*. At the second meeting (April 4, 2013), they heard about the St. Charles change in designation of the stem at the St. Charles River because of local conditions for selenium. He noted that change was allowed; therefore, he felt that the rules allowed for change. He stated it seemed more reasonable for all parties concerned to do a study to help determine a number that was more appropriate to the Pueblo Reservoir situation. Chair Kester replied they would just have to wait to see what the WQCD does. Mr. Lopez stated he didn't understand why the Board of County Commissioners was so against allowing selenium hot readings, noting that Commissioner McFadyen didn't understand all of the discussion. They voted to accept the 5 µg/L Chlorophyll *a* standard for Pueblo Reservoir, but they were outvoted in making the changes on the St. Charles River stem. Chair Kester stated they accepted the selenium proposal, noting there was really nothing that could be done about the selenium. Mr. Lopez stated the standard set for the Pueblo Reservoir was based on studies of several lakes around the State of Colorado, which seemed unfair and warranted a study of Pueblo Reservoir to set its standard. Chair Kester stated PACOG has made a decision and it has gone to the WQCD. There is nothing more EPAC can do to influence the decision-making process. She stated the EPAC letter was in the proposal packet sent to the WQCD.

PUEBLO WEST METROPOLITAN DISTRICT – JACK JOHNSTON/CONNIE KING

Mr. Johnston and Ms. King were not in attendance.

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR REPORT – SUSAN FINZEL-ALDRED

Ms. Finzel-Aldred distributed the results from the May 11, 2013 Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Day. She stated the last time the event was held was in 2010. Residents have had the opportunity to accumulate three years worth of hazardous wastes. Over 900 cars were processed in five hours; in 2010 there were only 500. Promotion for the event was done through billboards, flyers, newspaper, and radio. The largest piece of data was the collection of 30,000 pounds of hazardous chemicals; in 2010, the amount was only 13,000 pounds. The chemical company she contracted with had to call for backup for packing containers and trucks to handle the volume. The event was set up at 6:00 a.m. and they left at 8:00 p.m. She stated they are working on the budget to figure out how to pay for the overages. They want to figure out how they can have the event on a yearly basis so they are not inundated. She stated she has over 15 years of data of HHW events, noting it is consistent. She stated her recommendation is to find a sustainable funding source and strategy to handle this event on an ongoing basis rather than the labor-intensive events that are hard to plan and budget. She

spoke with other HHW coordinators around the State and they tried to get out of the event business as soon as possible and set up permanent drop-off sites that were more manageable within the budget. She reported they collected 27,000 pounds of electronic waste and 3,600 gallons of paint, noting 56% of the residents brought paint, 33% had E-waste, and 23% had chemicals. She stated the expense for the event has increased to approximately \$50,000, noting the revenue collected was only \$1,372.00. She stated there was no way to charge participants for the actual costs of these events. She stated they would be able to cover the expenses with the financial contributions received from Waste Water, Storm Water, and Landfill User Fees. The 2001 Waste Management Plan stated a household hazardous waste drop-off center would be a good idea. She stated the overwhelming comments received at the event were ones of appreciation. Ms. Alt questioned where electronics could be taken between scheduled events. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied the Recycle Guide lists Southern Colorado Services and Recycling on the Eastside and Best Buy will take computers and small TVs. She stated you could also go online to Dell, Apple, or IBM to see if they have a buy-back program. You can go to Office Depot or Staples and buy a box to ship your item to the company. She stated Southern Colorado Services and Recycling has a grant to start the VERN program, which employs the disabled to dismantle E-waste into smaller components, which are then shipped to Colorado Springs or Denver for processing. Mr. Lopez stated he remembers the first event that was held in 1996 at Dutch Clark Stadium. He stated financing issues needed to be brought to the attention of the elected officials. He noted EPAC was instrumental in getting the Landfill User Fee. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied there were several possible proposals; however, there are many regulations that need to be complied with. She stated they need to have facilities that handle household hazardous waste and yard waste separately. Mr. Michael questioned if staffing was one of the biggest problems of funding. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied staffing would consist of four to five people, but the majority of the cost comes from disposal and fuel costs. Mr. Michael stated they did a lot of work with the Happy Worm Herders, the problem they had was they tried to make it with an all volunteer staff, and it eventually fell apart. He was convinced it would take paid staff to make it work. He questioned how much it would take to fund a recycling facility. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied the El Paso Household Hazardous Waste Center has a budget of \$350,000 to \$400,000 a year, noting they serve El Paso and Teller counties. She noted they have six landfills that generate user fees and Pueblo only has one. Mr. Lopez questioned what the budget would be for Pueblo. Ms. Finzel-Aldred anticipated \$250,000 for at least the first year. Mr. Lopez suggested implementing a per capita fee and increased education. Other places he has visited use paid staff as well as volunteers. Ms. Alt was surprised that people would not pay a small amount to dispose of their waste. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated she charged \$5.00 per vehicle in 2010 and 500 cars showed up. People said they weren't going to pay and some people that came to the gate said they had no money. She didn't turn them away. She said the \$2,500 collected at the 2010 event didn't even pay for her newspaper and billboard ads. Mr. Lopez stated people need to get used to paying. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated the cost of the 2010 event was \$38,000. Mr. Lopez stated everything was a "hard sell" in Pueblo because there hasn't been any willingness to move forward, especially by elected officials.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated the neighborhood clean-ups were going well. The Bessemer clean-up, held on April 27th, served 145 attendees; the Eastside clean-up, held on June 1st, served 110, collected 200 tires plus an additional 350 tires collected throughout the neighborhood by the Municipal Court and Graffiti Program juveniles and their parents. She stated the Bessemer clean-up was held on the same day as the Comcast Cares Day. The Comcast employees from Colorado Springs and Pueblo partnered and wanted to do a big project in the Bessemer area. They brought 50 volunteers that walked the west side of Lake Minnequa open space and collected over 100 tires that had been exposed after the grass fire as well as trash and glass

bottles. They repainted the totem pole in Bessemer Park and walked alleys and picked up tires. She distributed flyers about the Blende/Salt Creek clean-up event, June 15, 2013. The cost of tickets is \$15. She stated Geo-Cycle has given the City Public Works Department a trailer, which is being used on a consistent basis by the Graffiti Program kids when they find tires. The City is being charged a reduced fee for the service. She stated Blende didn't have a clean-up last year and anticipated a good turnout at the event. She stated she is busy organizing her summer camps, kids presentations, getting ready for the Colorado State Fair, and has three clean-ups in September on the 14th, 21st, and 28th for Avondale/Boone, Pueblo West, and Hyde Park.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated she was holding her own without Ms. Kedward. Her Department has helped in making sure she is not at events alone. The hotline calls are increasing to about 100-150 a month, some taking about 15 to 20 minutes each. She is going to be working with the City and County webmasters to put more information about trash and recycling services on their web pages.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated the City would have the first reading of the Full Service Trash and Recycling Plan next month. We will have to see if City Council will pass as written. It outlines districting and franchising, curbside trash service for residential households of eight units or less, requiring curbside service, setting up a solid waste enterprise, and has pay-as-you-throw and recycling components. She noted there has been a major pushback from the waste haulers. If it does not happen, she suggested to some City Council members changing the requirements for a waste hauler's license. Mr. Lopez felt there was not enough input from the community. He was not in favor of being made to have a contract if he only generated one shopping bag of trash a week. He felt neighbors with the same amount of waste should be able to partner together in a contract, noting the plan needs flexibility. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated that not all of the details have been fully vetted. She stated this Council, who is most likely to make this happen, is going to try to pass something we can live with.

WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE – NONE

- Appoint a Representative to replace Mr. Pelto.

Mr. Michael volunteered to be the representative for the Water Quality Subcommittee.

SOLID WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE – T. LOPEZ

Mr. Lopez stated he made copies of the survey the City handed out and used them at the Household Hazardous Waste event last month. He stated it confirmed what EPAC has learned over the last 17 years that there is a demand for more recycling events. He stated he received comments from people saying they would be willing to pay. He stated he was pleased the City and the City Public Works Department were moving forward with a concrete plan based on the Solid Waste Management Plan. He stated districting was an option to prevent a monopoly. He noted if Salem and Portland, Oregon, could handle their waste management programs, why couldn't Pueblo? They are all subject to the same Federal anti-competitive laws. He stated City and County individuals belong to PACOG and EPAC is a subcommittee of PACOG. EPAC's mission is to look at environmental issues, including water and land use to a certain extent. EPAC then reports back to PACOG, which filters down to the individual City and County departments. He felt PACOG and other agencies haven't utilized EPAC as a resource for public education, which would help in the efforts in changing the culture of Pueblo. Chair Kester stated Ms. Finzel-Aldred has done a lot to educate people about the importance of being aware of the

impact on the environment as well as Mr. Lopez. Mr. Lopez stated that public education needs to be provided on a regular, consistent basis so that it becomes common knowledge. Ms. Alt stated you can read about a specific event, but if you don't need it immediately, you forget about it. Chair Kester stated people need to know where to go to get the information. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated her Department faces many ordinances, rules, and regulations and how to enforce them on a regular, consistent basis. Chair Kester stated part of the problem with illegal dumping is those people can't afford to pay for proper disposal of waste. Ms. Alt stated in the towns she has lived before, there was a charge for such events. She stated if you didn't clean your walks and streets, they charged you and people paid it. She questioned why Pueblo couldn't charge for these events. Mr. Lopez stated consistency and convenience, but maybe certainty. For example, in New Jersey you can't park facing the wrong way anymore. When there is a snow event you can't park on the street; you are ticketed. In Pueblo, there seems to be an attitude of "what are you going to do about it?" and there's no penalty. He stated the City has a new ordinance regarding weed control, but in looking at properties from Main Street to 29th Street, there appears to be no enforcement. Chair Kester stated enforcement costs money. Ms. Smith asked if the Public Television Channel was still used to distribute community-recycling information and if there was a charge. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied she has used slide shows and posted notices on the Public Channel, and has utilized the other local network news stations for specific events as well as posted information about the services of the Pueblo City-County Health Department on their respective web pages.

AGENDA AUGUST 1, 2013

The next regularly scheduled EPAC meeting is Thursday, August 1, 2013, at 229 West 12th Street, from 5:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before EPAC, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra M. Smith
EPAC Recording Secretary

SMS