Minutes of the
Butte County Air Quality Management District
Governing Board of Directors Meeting of
May 27, 2021

Members Present:
Bill Connelly          Supervisor, District 1
Tod Kimmelshue        Supervisor, District 4
Doug Teeter           Supervisor, District 5

Remote:
Debra Lucero          Supervisor, District 2
Tami Ritter           Supervisor, District 3
John Busch            Vice Mayor, Biggs
Alex Brown            Councilmember, Chico

Staff Present:
Stephen Ertle        Air Pollution Control Officer
Cora Collins          Clerk of the Board

Remote:
Aleah Ing             Administrative Services Officer
Jason Mandly          Senior Air Quality Planner
Ursula Parker         Senior Air Quality Compliance Specialist

Members Absent:
Angel Calderon       Councilmember, Gridley
Chuck Reynolds        Mayor, City of Oroville
Rose Tryon            Councilmember, Town of Paradise

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was closed to public attendance. Public comments were accepted before and during the meeting by emailing ccollins@bcqmd.org.

1. Call to Order.
Chair Ritter called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the BCAG Conference Room, 326 Huss Drive, Suite 150, Chico, California.

    Roll Call.
PRESENT: Connelly, Kimmelshue, Teeter.
ABSENT: Calderon, Reynolds, Tryon.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Consent or Regular Agenda.

No additions or deletions.

3. Consent Agenda.
   3.1 Minutes of the April 22, 2021, Meeting of the Board of Directors.
   3.2 Activity Report on Butte County Air Quality Management District Activities.
   3.3 Financial Status Report for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.
   3.4 Status Report on Calendar of Events.
   3.5 Status Report on Communications.
   3.6 PERS CERBT Report.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve Consent Agenda Items.

Board comments: None.

Public comments: None.

A motion was made by Councilmember Brown and seconded by Supervisor Kimmelshue to approve the Consent Agenda. Supervisor Lucero abstained.

Motion carries by the following vote:
AYES: Supervisor Ritter, Supervisor Connelly, Supervisor Kimmelshue (Seconded), Supervisor Teeter, Vice Mayor Busch, Councilmember Brown (Motion).
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: Supervisor Lucero.
ABSENT: Councilmember Calderon, Mayor Reynolds, Councilmember Tryon.

4. Items removed from the Consent Agenda for Board consideration and actions.

No items removed.


Jason Mandly, Senior Air Quality Planner, reported on proposed updates to the District’s Carl Moyer Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Most updates are administrative changes, to clarify language or to optimize the Program, to increase efficiency and to ensure compliance with State requirements.
A significant update is the addition of Appendix J – Infrastructure Program, which includes the requirements to fund infrastructure projects such as battery charging stations and alternative fueling stations (natural gas and hydrogen). The District's On-Road Equipment Replacement Program already has provisions for infrastructure that supports zero-emission school buses. The District was tentatively awarded $54,660 ($47,652 in project funds, $6,808 in administrative funds) under the Carl Moyer Program Year 23 (FY 20-21) State Reserve. Eligible projects allowed under this funding allocation are limited to battery charging stations and hydrogen fueling stations. The addition of Appendix J will guide District staff with the implementation of these projects.

Board comment: None.

Public comment: None.

A motion was made by Supervisor Lucero and seconded by Supervisor Kimmelshue to approve updates to the District's Carl Moyer Program Policies and Procedures Manual through approval of Resolution 2021-15.

Motion carries by the following vote:
AYES: Supervisor Ritter, Supervisor Lucero (Motion), Supervisor Connelly, Supervisor Kimmelshue (Seconded), Supervisor Teeter, Vice Mayor Busch, Councilmember Brown.
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: Councilmember Calderon, Mayor Reynolds, Councilmember Tryon.

6. Approve Fiscal Year 2020-2021 AB 617 Implementation Grant. The District was awarded $47,726.00 in FY 2020-2021 funds by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to implement the goals of AB 617.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve Resolution 2021-18 allowing Air Pollution Control Officer to sign grant agreement with CARB and accept funds.

Jason Mandly, Senior Air Quality Planner, reported the District has been approved for a grant under the Community Air Protection (CAP) Program for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 from funding provided by SB 74 (Chapter 6, Budget Act of 2020). This grant award is for related expenses necessary to implement AB 617 (C. Garcia, Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017).

This funding allocation is the 4th year of funding under this program. AB 617 Implementation funding has been used to evaluate the applicability of statewide AB 617 stationary source control measures, emission inventory activities, wildfire recovery efforts, staff training, air monitoring support, public outreach, and for the funding of local CAP Support Grants.

Staff requested approval of Resolution 2021-18 to receive additional funding and approve the amended grant agreement with CARB.

Board comments: Supervisor Ritter asked that any typos with the FY be changed to reflect 2020-2021 and not 2018-2019.

Public comments: None.
A motion was made by Councilmember Brown and seconded by Supervisor Kimmelshue to approve Resolution 2021-18 allowing Air Pollution Control Officer to sign grant agreement with CARB and accept funds.

Motion carries by the following vote:
AYES: Supervisor Ritter, Supervisor Lucero, Supervisor Connelly, Supervisor Kimmelshue (Seconded), Supervisor Teeter, Vice Mayor Busch, Councilmember Brown (Motion).
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: Councilmember Calderon, Mayor Reynolds, Councilmember Tryon.

7. Approve Community Support Grants. The District solicited for projects to be funded with Community Air Protection (CAP) Support Grants.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve awards for CAP Support Grants.

Jason Mandly, Senior Air Quality Planner, reported the Board approved the use of up to $75,000 in FY 18-19 and FY 19-20 AB 617 Implementation funds to be used towards CAP Support Grants in March 2021. The District released a press release and application package on April 5, 2021, and accepted project proposals through May 7, 2021. The application period also occurred during Air Quality Awareness Week where additional outreach occurred. A list of project proposals was provided in the agenda packet.

Board comments: Supervisor Ritter asked for a clarification of “priority population”. Jason Mandly and Supervisor Connelly explained 80% of grant funding will be used for low-income communities and 20% would be used towards other communities.

Public comments: None

A motion was made by Supervisor Connelly and seconded by Supervisor Kimmelshue to approve awards for CAP Support Grants. Councilmember Brown abstained as one of the applicants was the City of Chico.

Motion carries by the following vote:
AYES: Supervisor Ritter, Supervisor Lucero, Supervisor Connelly (Motion), Supervisor Kimmelshue (Seconded), Supervisor Teeter, Vice Mayor Busch.
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: Councilmember Brown.
ABSENT: Councilmember Calderon, Mayor Reynolds, Councilmember Tryon.

8. Review of Impacts to Burn Program from Reduced Water Allocations in 2021. District staff to provide a review of reduced water allocations in 2021 and its potential impacts to air quality concerns as it relates to the fall rice harvest and burning of rice fields.

ACTION REQUESTED: None. This item is provided for information and discussion.

Ursula Parker, Senior Air Quality Compliance Specialist, reported: As of May 10, 2021, 41 counties in California are now under a drought state of emergency, representing 30 percent of the state’s population. Butte County, along with over 73% of area of the State, has been classified as in “Extreme Drought,” with water “inadequate for agriculture, wildlife, and urban needs; reservoirs are extremely low; hydropower is restricted”. Water contractors, who are dealing
with reductions in water supplies, have reported that there will be very little, if any, water available for flooding rice fields after rice harvest for straw residue decomposition this fall.

The agricultural community was advised of the probability of water restrictions earlier this spring and some rice farmers, but not all, can be flexible; some have planted varieties of rice which are harvested earlier in the season and others may use diesel or electric-powered irrigation pumps to withdraw water from the groundwater aquifer to flood fields after harvest. However, many will be faced with managing their fields after harvest by “working” the fields multiple times (chopping, chiseling, and disk ing the field) more than what would be required with a more traditional flooding method. The increased tractor use in the field will likely increase diesel and dust emissions.

The District is prepared for increased demand to burn rice field stubble. The Connelly-Arias-Chandler Rice Straw Burning Reduction Act, passed by California legislature in 1991, limits burning to no more than 25% of the planted rice acres in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, which includes Butte County, with a maximum limit of 125,000 acres, whichever is less. In recent years, the number of permits issued for burning of rice stubble has steadily fallen and the percentage of rice acres burned versus those planted have been below 10% since 2012. Only a handful of farms are able to burn their maximum allowable acreage due to more frequent meteorological conditions during the fall that make it difficult to burn and avoid smoke impacts to the public. Increasing smoke impacts from wildfires has also reduced this type of burning. Wildfire smoke activity in recent years has led the public to be more concerned about smoke impacts from agricultural burning activities. Last year’s extended wildfire smoke impacts resulted in a period of no burn days that lasted from August 17 until October 20 (except for October 10 through 12), which significantly impacted the number of days prior to wetting rains that rice straw burning could be completed.

District staff have established an excellent working relationship with our local agricultural community and diligently search for opportunities to maximize the burning opportunities when the conditions favor superior smoke dispersion. As we approach the 2021 season ahead, Staff will continue to assist farmers in following methods that maximize the amount of burning that can be conducted without impacting the public while meeting National Ambient Air Quality Standards. In addition, the District works closely with other neighboring air districts to coordinate activities through the Sacramento Valley Smoke Management Program Plan (Plan). The Plan is reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) each year and over the past several months, a Subcommittee to the TAC has been working on updates to the Plan for 2022. One of the proposed updates include a review of the mathematical equation that has been historically used by the California Air Resources Board to better identify superior ventilation conditions to increase the allocated acreage allowed to be burned during those conditions.

Board comments: Supervisor Kimmelshue informed the other Board members that Councilmember Tryon and himself met with Stephen Ertle and Ursula Parker regarding concerns that rice farmers had brought to their attention. He thanked Stephen and Ursula for the research, the report, and their flexibility when working with the rice farmers.

Supervisor Ritter asked how larger farms have more flexibility. Ursula Parker replied, larger farms can plant varieties of rice with different harvest times. Harvested fields are called in and put on a ready list. An early harvest fields is then traded for later harvest fields. Smaller farms are less flexible because they have less planted acres and limited harvest time. When called to burn they might not have staff available to help while in the middle of harvest. Stephen Ertle added that the geographic location of a field is also a factor.

Supervisor Lucero asked how fallowing would affect the air quality. Ursula Parker replied, fallowing would not affect air quality - burning is limited to no more than 25% of the planted rice acres in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, which includes Butte County, with a maximum limit of 125,000 acres.
Public comments: None.

9. **APCO Report.** Report from the Air Pollution Control Officer on current areas of potential interest to your Board, including air quality-related activities at the local, state, and federal scenes.

Stephen Ertle, APCO, reported:

Local level:
- In the past month, Purple Air monitors have been installed in Cohasset, Forest Ranch, Butte Meadows, Jarbo Gap, Sterling City, and Forbestown. Purple Air data is available on the District’s website.
- Air Quality Awareness Week:
  1. Free bus ride, BCAG reported a 12% increase in average ridership on those days,
  2. Release of publication “Every Breath We Take” produced by N&R Publications.

State level:
- Staff are watching the following developments:
  1. Supreme Court ruling regarding prevailing wage,
  2. AB 833 - possible 5% cut to administrative funds related to grants,
  3. Asbestos delegation, staff continue to wait for clear direction as to who will run the program,
- TAC and CAPCOA have plans for in-person meetings.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** None. This item is provided for information and discussion.

Board comment: None.

Public comment: None.

10. **Other Business.**

No other business.

11. **Public Comment Period.** Any person may address the Board of Directors on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Board that is not on the agenda for this meeting. Any person may address the Board on an agendized item when that time is called. The Chair requests that each person addressing the Board limits their presentation to five (5) minutes.

Stephen Ertle, APCO, acknowledged Mr. Jackson’s observations as valuable and important to the District. On May 21, 2021, Stephen Jackson sent an email to the Butte County Board of Supervisors. Staff forwarded the Mr. Jackson’s email to all the Board members. He then read the District’s response, addressed to Chair Ritter.

Board comments: Supervisor Ritter asked, after a complaint is received and handed to another agency, who handles the enforcement? Stephen Ertle replied it depends on the applicability. Supervisor Lucero asked if everything was done in a timely matter. Stephen Ertle replied, yes, staff followed their regular process and sought feedback from other districts and CARB and worked to keep the investigation moving forward.

12. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m. The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at the Butte County Association of Governments Board Room, 326 Huss Drive, Suite 100, Chico, California.
Stephen Ertle, Air Pollution Control Officer
Butte County Air Quality Management District

I hereby attest that this is a true and correct copy of the action taken by the Butte County Air Quality Management District Board of Directors on May 27, 2021.

ATTEST: ________________________________
Cora Collins, Clerk of the Governing Board