



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday November 17, 2022

Special Meeting

At 6:01pm, Chairman Dr. Jim Johnson called the meeting to order, read the ethics statement.

**Board members present:**

Chairman Dr. Jim Johnson

Vice-Chair Dr. Marian Johnson-Thompson

Rev. Dr. Rodney Sadler Jr.  
(online)

Dr. Danelle Lobdell

Marilynn Marsh-Robinson

Carlos Velazquez (online)

La'Meshia Whittington

Elke Weil (online)

**Board members absent:**

Jeff Anstead

William Barber, III

Randee Haven-O'Donnell

Dr. Deepak Kumar

Naeema Muhammad

Sherri White-Williamson

Carolina Fonseca Jimenez

Veronica Carter

### **New Business**

1. Division of Air Quality Permitting Overview, *Michael Abraczinskas, Air Quality Division Director, DEQ (10 min)*

Mr. Abraczinskas presented on the air quality permitting process for wood pellet facilities.

Dr. Johnson-Thompson asked if the additions to the Air Quality permit for Enviva Pellets Ahoskie were made based on public comments.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded yes.

Dr. Johnson-Thompson added that she didn't remember hearing these recommendations at the public hearing.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded that DAQ also received public comments via mail, email, and voicemail.

Ms. Whittington asked for more details on how DAQ monitors and ensures Enviva is in compliance with the air permit.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded that DAQ does unannounced inspections; uses the record keeping, monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure compliance; and stack testing requirements. Additionally, there is the complaint process, including the anonymous comment tool.

Dr. Johnson-Thompson asked if there have been any complaints submitted regarding noise.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded yes they received public comments about noise, but DAQ does not have the ability to address noise in air permits.

Ms. Marsh-Robinson asked how Title VI factors into the issuing of air permits.

Ms. Kramer responded that DEQ looks to EPA for guidance on creating a proactive Title VI program.

Ms. Marsh-Robinson asked about DAQ's engagement with the Meherrin Tribe.

Ms. Kramer responded that DEQ reached out to the Meherrin Tribe before and after the public hearing.

Ms. Whittington asked what the mechanism in the process was that triggered that lead to the rescission of the permit in Robeson County.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded the Active Energy facility ultimately requested the permit to be rescinded and left the state.

II. Community Perspectives:

- a. *Dr. Ruby Bell, Sampson County resident and member of Impacted Communities Against Wood Pellets Coalition (10 min)*

Dr. Ruby Bell presented recommendations to DEQ's EJEAB regarding wood pellets and the Enviva Ahoskie air quality permit on behalf of Impacted Communities Against Wood Pellets Coalition.

Mr. Velazquez asked about the processes of contacting other Tribes as well as BIPOC and Spanish speaking communities about facility permits.

Dr. Ruby Bell responded that Impacted Communities Against Wood Pellets Coalition has BIPOC representation being informed in the area.

Ms. Kramer responded on behalf of DEQ that we contact a Tribe in accordance with the Tribal area locations defined by the Commission of Indian Affairs but if there are other Tribal communities we should be aware of we would like to know.

Ms. Marsh-Robinson asked if acrolein is monitored by DAQ.

Mr. Abraczinskas responded yes, it is a HAP and TAP emission, so it is reviewed by DAQ at Enviva Ahoskie.

- b. *La'Meshia Whittington, Member, DEQ's Secretary's EJ and Equity Advisory Board (10 min)*

Ms. Whittington presented a Community Perspective of Biomass and Health Impacts to Environmental Justice communities.

The board will have discussions after this meeting to make plans for next steps.

III. Public Comment Period 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

The Board heard from 26 members of the public who provided their views on wood pellet and biomass permitting. For more details on Public Comment Period visit the recording (timestamp 1:14:22):

[Secretary's Environmental Justice and Equity Board: Special Meeting 11/17/2022 - YouTube](#)

Members of the Board thanked the public and community members for their participation in the special meeting.

At 8:33 pm, Dr. Johnson-Thompson made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ms. Marsh-Robinson.