

Meeting Highlights*

AB 617 Shafter Community Steering Committee Meeting #22

August 10, 2020, 3:00pm-5:00pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Action items for the Shafter Community Steering Committee:

- Contact the Air District to request/suggest agenda items for future meetings

Action items for San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District:

- Organize a special meeting on community air monitoring and consider assembling an air monitoring subcommittee
- Email CSC members with phone numbers and contact information for all energy and solar programs presented
- Consider another CSC member poll about meeting start times about starting meetings later so more members can attend

Welcome and Introductions:

Hanna Stelmakhovych, Facilitator, Institute for Local Government (ILG)

Erica Manuel, CEO & Executive Director, ILG

Ryan Hayashi, Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer, Valley Air District

Hanna welcomed the Shafter CSC participants, guests, speakers and members of the public and introduced herself and the ILG team. She gave an overview of Zoom instructions and Spanish translation services then reviewed the agenda and timeline of the meeting. Erica outlined Zoom and chat box etiquette. Ryan thanked everybody for attending and continued support of the AB 617 program. Ryan provided a stipend update:

- After state-led efforts to provide resident members of steering committees failed, the Air District found a path to provide stipends to resident members of the CSC
- Stipends will include a \$75 reimbursement per regularly scheduled, full CSC meeting for up to 15 meetings per year, which is equivalent to \$1,125 per calendar year
- Subcommittee meetings do not qualify for reimbursement
- Stipends are subject to the availability of AB 617 funding on an annual basis
- ILG will provide the stipends, which will be retroactive to January 2020
- There will be an application required to receive the stipends
- Stipends can be expected within 30 days of the full CSC meeting
- To qualify for a stipend, a resident member must be present for 75% of the CSC meeting or 90 minutes of a 2 hour meeting
- There will be a record kept of any residents that participate together on the same computer or Zoom screen

Question: What will the resident need to do procedurally or will it be automatic? How will alternates qualify?

District Response: The next step is to go to the Governing Board for approval on Aug. 20. If it is approved, the District will work with ILG to notify all resident members. If a resident is interested in receiving a stipend, ILG will work with them to get the necessary paperwork filed. Alternates qualify when they are filling in for the primary member when they cannot attend. Our understanding is alternates are people who are interested and want to participate in the process, but do not have the time to fully commit to the process.

Monitoring Plan Update:

Chay Thao, Program Manager, Valley Air District

Chay presented an update on community air monitoring and an overview of ozone trends. Presentation highlights include:

- The District is continuing to conduct localized air monitoring in the Shafter community
- The air monitoring van is actively monitoring pollutants in areas of interest and CSC-recommended locations
- The District compared the ozone readings in Shafter to the Bakersfield, Oildale, and the Bakersfield Municipal Airport sites and the readings appear to be consistent between all sites for 2019 and 2020
- The mobile air monitoring van has measured PM2.5, ozone, CO, NO2, and SO2 and all are below the federal allowable standards
- A detailed quarterly report will be available soon and we are working to make it easier for everyone to access the data

Comment: This report would be more useful if it included all the mobile data that has been collected, including data on the same day from different locations around Shafter to see how the measurements vary by location. Federal data seems less relevant at this time. We also recommend developing a special committee where Air District experts can go through the monitoring data.

Question: The Shafter monitor has always been well below Bakersfield for ozone, but this year we have more violations than the Bakersfield monitor. Why has this turned around?

District Response: Typically Bakersfield tends to be one of the higher sites. There hasn't been a rise in Shafter, but you are correct; it's running higher than Bakersfield. Our initial analysis has been looking at vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the freeways and how it affects ozone as it relates to the shelter-in-place orders. The site at Bakersfield, being closer to Highway 99 should be more sensitive to the changes in the shelter-in-place orders due to decreased traffic, which could partially explain the decrease seen there, whereas activities around the Shafter area do not appear to have been impacted to the same degree due to the shelter-in-place order.

Comment: Looking at regional and statewide trends during this pandemic, there has been a decline in air pollution. If the information is available, can we look at the data for this same timeframe from a year ago and see how the pandemic has played a role in this decline? I second the motion to having a subcommittee for the community air monitoring plan.

District Response: In the next couple of months, we will have data to compare with the previous year and will be able to look at the impact of the pandemic on emissions.

Question: When you use the mobile air monitoring van, is it during business hours or after-hours?

District Response: It has been during business hours, however, we will take hours into consideration for future monitoring to ensure we are fully capturing the spectrum of monitoring information.

School Filtration and School Bus Measures Update:

Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, Valley Air District

Jaime gave an overview of the school filtration subcommittee meeting. Presentation highlights:

- The District has developed an application for school filtration based on the guidelines for AB 617 that have come from CARB

- The District has been contacting all the schools to connect with them and understand their individual circumstances and capabilities to install new air filters
- The District will be circling back on school buses, currently we have three electric buses currently headed to Shafter

Pesticide Measures Update:

Nan Singhasemanon, Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)

Nan mentioned a recent in-person meeting between a few CSC members and the Kern County Farm Bureau about pesticide notifications and gave a brief update. Presentation highlights include:

- There have been a number of meetings about the mitigation pilot and they are on track to look at applications this fall
- Work will occur in the Shafter area
- The next standing update will have more to report

Comment: If the group wants to have a subcommittee on pesticides, are CARB, and DPR are willing to participate?

Question from Spanish-Speaker: She received a letter for solar energy and was breaking down the percentage of low income requirements and is wondering if an elderly person who makes more than is stated can qualify?

ILG Response: You are taking us into our next agenda item and we will answer that question shortly.

Solar and Energy Efficiency:

Bertha Aguilar, GRID Alternatives

Sarah Sharpe, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

Jessica Olsen, Program Manager, Valley Air District

Todd Payne, Community Action Partnership of Kern (CPAK)

Jessica provided an overview of some items included in the Shafter CERP--seeking incentives for local businesses and homeowners to install solar panels and energy storage, weatherization, and enhanced energy efficiency. Three guest speakers with related opportunities and programs presented to the group.

GRID Alternatives presentation highlights:

- GRID Alternatives aims to help families save up to 80% on their electric bills
- All systems are provided at no cost due to a DAC-SASH program, which is a single family solar homes program
- All GRID Alternatives' programs are income-based
- GRID Alternatives offers energy education and training for employment in the solar industry

Question: The cost on an older home's breaker box and some re-wiring could cost the homeowner. Solar should not be put on a roof unless the roof has at least a 15-20 year life expectancy. A lot of people have an adequate roof, but it might not last 10-15 more years. Is there money for these other costs as well?

GRID Alternatives Response: We have a construction person who ensures the roof is in good condition. If it is not, they let the homeowner know. If breaker boxes are older and won't pass the city inspection, we include that in the cost and upgrade the box.

Hanna prompted the CSC with a question about how we can help promote this program and let the rest of the Shafter community know about it.

Comment/Question: We have to fully understand the program before we can promote it. If someone goes to solar, they are probably also considering electric vehicles and electrifying their entire house. How much over the last year or two of usage do you allow the homeowner to go? Can they go 30% over what the usage was assuming they are going to use more electricity and less fuel like gasoline for a car and natural gas for a house?

GRID Alternatives Response: We calculate usage for the last 12 months and design the system accordingly. Bringing in an electric vehicle would require a completely different calculation.

CPUC Presentation Highlights:

- The CPUC has a Disadvantaged Community Advisory Group and has adopted an Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan
- The DAC-Green Tariff package makes solar energy available to people who cannot put it on their home, such as renters or people who have an old roof
- The utilities purchase green energy from a solar farm and the CPUC sells it to the community members who sign up and live in a disadvantaged community
- The CPUC just adopted a program to automatically enroll people into this DAC-Green Tariff program
- There are roughly 180 households in Shafter that are qualified
- The DAC-Community Solar program just launched and is meant for people who cannot put solar on their own home
- To qualify, they must live in the vicinity of a solar facility and have a community sponsor who puts solar on their property and signs up low-income communities within its vicinity—up to 40 miles away
- The Self-Generation Incentive Program provides battery storage on a home and there is \$1 billion available through 2024

Question: With regard to electrification of home heating, hot water, and cooking, what state programs are coming down the road to help people fully electrify their home?

CPUC Response: What you're talking about would fall under "building de-carbonization". There was legislation passed last year directing the CPUC to develop some programs. Those are being developed right now and we are happy to have you as a party in the proceeding.

CAPK Presentation Highlights:

- CAPK has utility assistance and weatherization programs, funded by state and federal dollars
- A client can call in, request information, receive the application, and schedule a time to meet one of the techs to help with set up
- If someone qualifies for either of the programs, they qualify for both—they have the same income guidelines
- Once a year, CAPK can pay one utility bill for clients
- For weatherization, CAPK will come out and do a home assessment, see what the house qualifies for and replace everything for free

Comment: There have been complaints in the San Joaquin Valley about solar fraud. The CPUC is happy to help people file complaints. If you have received solar and were told it was free, but later found out you had debt on your mortgage, please contact the CPUC.

CERP Measures Tracker Update:

Jessica Olsen, Program Manager, Valley Air District

Todd DeYoung, Director of Strategy & Incentives, Valley Air District

Jessica presented the CERP Measures Tracker, which has been posted on the main Shafter webpage. Presentation highlights:

- The tracker is in English and Spanish and has been designed to track the progress of every single measure in the CERP
- Based on the type of measure, the measure number and the description as written in the CERP, anyone can see the details of what we wanted to accomplish in the CERP at the time, then a status update on implementation, as of the date of publication
- Links are included if there was a recent presentation on that measure
- With regard to the CERP measure incentive program development, the funding that goes along with the CERP is tied to the community air protection program (CAPP) guidelines
- For programs that don't fit within the existing CAP guidelines, there is a process for getting community identified projects approved so state funding can be used; many of the incentive-based measures identified in Shafter fall into that bucket
- The District has 12-13 measures in the development process of right now and once submitted, will need to work with CARB staff to get them approved
- Draft program plans will be posted on the community webpage so CSC members can see what is being proposed, in addition to being emailed out to the committee

Question: Is the tracker something that's currently running at the Shafter 617 portal? Is there methodology or criteria on how different metrics are being implemented?

District Response: Yes. As we are developing the individual measures and submitting them to CARB. The measures have a lot more detail, so as they are posted CSC members can dive into each one and see exactly what is being proposed.

Wrap Up/Next Steps:

Hanna Stelmakhovych, Facilitator, Institute for Local Government (ILG)

Hanna reiterated the request from the CSC to have an air monitoring-specific subcommittee meeting and thanked everybody for participating in the meeting.

Question: Is it possible to consider moving our meeting time to later in the day?

District Response: We took a poll to select this start time, but we are happy to re-evaluate and see if another time works better for CSC members.

Comment: I run a small community solar company based in Fresno and we are looking for community partners that might be able to collaborate on community-designed and community-owned solar projects. I will put my info in the chat if anyone wants to follow up.

Reminders:

Next meeting is September 14 via Zoom. All the presentations, meetings highlights, transcripts and the Zoom meeting recording will be posted online.

**Refer to meeting audio to review the full details and comments from the meeting.*