

**Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**  
**AIR QUALITY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
 Final Minutes 5/4/2023

**Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (AQTAC or Committee) Members Present (via Teams or in-person)**

Rob Altenburg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joseph Guzek	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marianne Payne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Tissue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scott Brown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Christine Heath	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Richard Shaffer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shaun Vozar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kimberly Coy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michelle Homan	<input type="checkbox"/>	John Shimshock	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Walliser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joseph Duckett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charles McPhedran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Slade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edward Wiener	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Josephine Gaskey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Nines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kevin Stewart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	*Joined after roll call	

**CALL TO ORDER & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

Chair John Tissue convened the meeting at 9:15 am.

**Approval of Minutes**

John Tissue requested a motion to approve the 03/09/23 meeting minutes with the following changes:

- Page 1: replace “made” to “requested” (Approval of Minutes)
- Page 1: remove “or a call for not identified emissions”
- Page 2: change “error rates vary” to “precision varies”
- Page 4: change “Light Detection and Ranging, (LiDAR)” to “Leak Detection and Repair, (LDAR)”

Joe Duckett made a motion to approve. Kevin Stewart seconded. John Tissue, hearing no opposition, so moved to approve the minutes.

Note: For future meetings, committee members will provide comments to the liaison in advance of the meeting. The liaison will incorporate changes using “track changes.” These suggested changes will be discussed at the meeting.

**PRESENTATION**

Mark Hammond, BAQ Director, presented on DEP and BAQ priorities.

- DEP Priorities:
  - Climate Change (impacts all DEP program areas)
- BAQ Priorities:
  - AQTAC will continue to provide technical air quality information to DEP
  - Implement a long-term (2 to 5 year) planning process
  - Provide additional management training for managers
  - Technical writing training (provided by MARAMA)
  - Presentation skill development
  - Deploy project management techniques
  - Office efficiency re-organization enhancements
  - Integration of the Air Toxics Program within the Modeling Section
  - Source test re-engineering workgroup (focus on efficiency and effectiveness)
  - Sustainability of backlog reduction systems

## AQTAC Final Minutes 5/4/2023

- PFAS: testing at landfills and other source categories
- Retirement Planning / Knowledge transfer: 73% of managers in Air Quality are either eligible to retire or will be retiring in the next 5 years
- Staffing complement

Additionally, Mark referenced permitting, regulating, and inspection as routine activities performed by DEP staff. He noted the recent inspections of oil and gas wells.

### **Discussion**

Joe Duckett asked for examples of climate change adaptive activities currently being worked on at DEP. Mark noted PennDOT's drainage designs that accommodate heavier rainfall rates. Climate change adaptation at DEP will likely be specific to each bureau. Mark suggested committee members refer to the Climate Change Action Plan, prepared by the Energy Office for additional information.

Michael Nines commented on the standardization of source testing protocols. He offered the committee's expertise as a resource to complement DEP's efforts to standardize protocols and review memos, etc. Michael asked for a list of sources that DEP might be considering for this effort. Mark Hammond agreed that this expertise would be invaluable to DEP and aligns to BAQ's long-term planning efforts. Mark indicated considerations such as review cadence.

Michael Nines asked about PFAS test method development. Additionally, he asked for clarification of other industries, outside of landfills, that might be a focus for this development. Mark Hammond commented that DEP is using the EPA test method. DEP staff obtain feedback from industry on the method and are also in discussions with EPA. The PFAS test method is currently not a reference method with no applicable standards.

### **PRESENTATION**

John Tissue presented on Meet the Members of AQTAC.

### **Discussion**

Kevin Stewart asked about DEP's motivation for the survey and asked about the usefulness of the information to DEP. John Kreuger responded that the survey results confirmed that committee members have extensive technical experience in a myriad of disciplines. John indicated the importance in diversity of opinion. He also noted this information is important to DEP's understanding of the complement that exists within AQTAC membership.

John Tissue asked for information regarding DEP's motivation for the survey. John Kreuger responded that the results provide general information of membership expertise that could be useful to both DEP and AQTAC membership.

**PRESENTATION**

Kirit Dalal, Division Chief, DEP, gave a presentation on Rulemakings/State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions.

**Discussion**

Robert Altenburg asked if DEP had any additional actions for the zero-emission vehicle rule making. Kirit responded that DEP did not have any additional update but will keep AQTAC committee members apprised of any future actions.

Christine Heath asked if DEP could provide an update on the status of RGGI. Mark Hammond indicated that RGGI is still being litigated and the stay is currently in place; timing is uncertain.

Michael Nines asked for updates on submissions and implementation of RACT III. Mark Hammond responded that DEP has received a very good response, overall. Follow-up was required from only one source sector. Application of the knowledge obtained from the development of the two previous regulations was very helpful with the deployment of RACT III.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No requests for public comment were received for this meeting.

**PRESENTATION**

Kurt Klapkowski, Deputy Secretary, Office of Oil and Gas Management, presented on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Update and Well Plugging Program Opportunities.

**Discussion**

Joe Duckett requested clarification on the DEP IIJA dashboard. Joe noted that the information indicates that up to 90% of the wells plugged thus far have no environmental or human impact. Kurt responded that was correct. DEP had 90 days from the date of the award to obligate funding. 225 individual contracts would be required to plug all wells with environmental impacts, at an estimated per contract cost of \$150,000 - \$200,000. The initial effort focused on the cumulative impacts associated with 25 high-priority wells. The contracts also included nearby lower priority wells. Kurt expects to see an increase in the number of high-priority wells being plugged moving forward.

Kevin Stewart asked for clarification regarding motivation for sealing wells with no environmental or health impacts. Kurt indicated that sealing a well prevents possible future environmental or health impacts. Kevin commented on the legal structure used in the oil and gas industry. He asked for clarification regarding the number of legacy wells that require clean-up. He noted the 27,000 legacy wells referenced by DEP differs from the 200,000 legacy wells reported by EPA. Kurt responded that the 27,000 legacy wells represent wells that have been inspected, verified and logged. Costs associated with documenting undocumented orphan wells are considered in Phase I. Thus, the number of documented legacy wells is expected to increase significantly. Documentation will include area-wide surveys and developing digital maps based upon historical data. Additionally, Kurt offered to share his April 24<sup>th</sup> U.S. House Natural

## AQTAC Final Minutes 5/4/2023

Resources and Environmental Committee testimony with AQTAC. He noted that the legal structure for the oil and gas industry is being discussed at an international level.

Charles McPhedran asked if DEP's program was tracking crypto currency mining operations at various locations within the Commonwealth, including at gas well heads. Kurt is aware of these operations. Although the program does not typically regulate energy end use, its potential impacts and DEP regulatory legal authority are being explored.

John Tissue asked about the emission reduction effectiveness and longevity of a plugged well. Kurt responded that a plugged well should be 100% effective in eliminating emissions from the well, however, venting must be considered. Additionally, well plugging may result in moving the methane to an alternate location. The plugs should last for a significant time. Kurt is not aware of studies that examine the longevity of a plugged well.

John Tissue requested a follow-up presentation in 2024, or possibly to include the topic in the "Old Business" section of the meeting. Kurt suggested considering a targeted presentation on the hazardous air pollutant study or a presentation on methane emission modification protocols.

Christine Heath asked for DEP's well-plugging baseline performance. Kurt responded that DEP started plugging wells in 1989 and spent approximately \$37 million, plugging more than 3,330 wells. Permit surcharges of \$150 for oil wells and \$250 for gas wells generate, on average, approximately \$400,000 per year in revenue. DEP is reserving most of this funding to issue emergency contracts for well plugging; plugging about 12 wells per year recently. In contrast, Kurt indicated that Texas has implemented an oil and gas production fee, affording Texas the opportunity to spend approximately \$350 million during the period 1992 – 2022 to plug approximately 45,000 wells and to remediate approximately 6,000 wells.

In closing, Kurt announced the Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board meeting, scheduled for June 6.

### **OLD & NEW BUSINESS / OPEN DISCUSSION**

John Tissue opened the meeting for other AQTAC business/open discussion.

#### **Old Business:**

Joe Duckett suggested DEP consider providing an update regarding incorporation of AQTAC's comments on the permit forms. Additionally, Joe referenced that there were no updates on the Department of Health and University of Pittsburgh oil and gas health-effects study. He recommended the item remain in "Old Business".

#### **New Business:**

Joe Duckett suggested that DEP send AQTAC members a notice when meeting minutes are posted to the website for review. John Tissue suggested that AQTAC use the meeting invitation that is sent out in advance of the meeting.

## AQTAC Final Minutes 5/4/2023

Additionally, Joe Duckett asked for DEP to consider including the impacts of using artificial intelligence on the air program at future meetings.

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

With no further business before AQTAC, John Tissue requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joseph Duckett made a motion to adjourn. Kevin Stewart seconded. John Tissue, hearing no opposition, so moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:13 pm.

The next AQTAC meeting is August 17, 2023.

Minutes prepared by Joseph Martini, Air Quality Program Specialist (AQPS). For additional information about AQTAC, please contact the AQTAC Liaison ([RA-EPAQTAC@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EPAQTAC@pa.gov)) or by visiting the AQTAC Web page at:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Air/BAQ/AdvisoryGroups/Air-Quality-Technical-Advisory-Committee/Pages/default.aspx>