

MEETING MINUTES

Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board Meeting

September 11, 2025

TAB MEMBERS PRESENT

Voting Members: Fred Baldassare, PG, Casey Saunders, PE, Amanda Veazey, John Wang, PhD

Non-voting Advisors: Susan Brantley, PhD

DEP STAFF PRESENT

Kurt Klapkowski, Kris Shiffer, Dan Counahan, Don Hegburg, Joe Kelly, Stephen Brokenshire, Andy Klinger, Myron Suchodolski, Josh Neyhart, Todd Wallace, Nic Pistory

CALL TO ORDER

A hybrid meeting of the Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board (TAB) was held in Room 105 at the Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg and also via Microsoft Teams. This meeting was open to the public.

Klapkowski called the meeting to order at about 10:00 a.m.

Wallace informed individuals in the meeting room and on the Microsoft Teams meeting that this meeting is recorded in its entirety. He stated that in accordance with the state Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Control Act, 18 Pa. C.S. § 5703, individuals participating in this meeting convey their implied acceptance and consent to be recorded.

Klapkowski conducted a roll call.

Wallace introduced Dr. John Wang who was recently appointed by Governor Shapiro as a voting member of TAB. Dr. Wang is Professor of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering at the at Pennsylvania State University and his focus of research has centered on reservoir evaluation, well stimulation and energy investment with application to tighten shale gas, carbon dioxide and hydrogen storage minerals and geothermal energy.

Wallace explained that Dr. Wang is processing the Oath of Office associated with his appointment as a TAB voting member so he will be attending this meeting, but not participating as a voting member.

Wallace informed TAB that Amanda Veazey is participating in this meeting, but she has recently announced that she will be resigning from TAB to pursue other career opportunities. Klapkowski thanked Veazey for her service.

Wallace reminded TAB that the TAB seat formerly held by Kimberly Kaal, PG is vacant and DEP is accepting letters of interest from individuals who are eligible to be considered for appointment to TAB.

This meeting proceeded without a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Given the absence of a quorum, TAB was unable to make a motion to accept the June 25, 2025 draft TAB meeting minutes. Saunders did note that the draft meeting minutes contained a spelling error on page 3. The word “competed” should read “completed.”

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wallace stated that no individuals registered to provide public comment at today's meeting and no individuals that were present in Room 105 in the Rachel Carson State Office Building requested an opportunity to present comment to TAB.

DRAFT EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL POLICY

Kelly clarified the title of this policy is the “Policy for Erosion and Sediment Control and Storm Water Management for Earth Disturbance Associated with Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Processing or Treatment Operations or Transmission Facilities.”

Kelly explained that the original policy was developed in 2012 and this revised policy mainly addresses some housekeeping edits and also reorganized the policy to support the regulatory changes that were enacted in 2016 and to better align with Chapter 78a of the Oil and Gas regulation.

UPDATE ON INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT (IIJA) AND MATCHING GRANT AND METHANE EMISSION REDUCTION PROGRAM (MERP)

Shiffer provided a comprehensive update to TAB members regarding the current status of the IIJA-related grants and the MERP. Shiffer reported that on July 17, 2025, the U.S. Department of the Interior published revised federal guidance on how the IIJA funds could be expended and the different requirements that are contained in the terms and conditions of that award.

Shiffer explained that the revised guidance removed the prohibition for states to use IIJA funds to pursue carbon credits from methane reductions, removed the requirement for

methane quantification, and removed the environmental review and tribal consultation process. DEP follows the state process and uses the Pennsylvania Historic and Archaeological Resource Exchange (PA SHARE) tool and PA Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) process instead of the federal process.

Veazey asked DEP how it will fund methane quantification and how the data will be made available. Shiffer stated that IJA funds will be used and the data will be made available to the public.

Veazey asked how much IJA funding has been budgeted for methane monitoring. Hegburg responded that DEP has reduced the amount of funding to about \$300,000 annually since the requirement for methane monitoring was adjusted by DOI. The Department will rely on contracts to measure methane in certain instances where methane is detected from an abandoned well.

Baldassare asked DEP how will determine the presence or absence of methane leaking from abandoned wells and what method will be used. Hegburg responded that DEP developed a Standard Operating Procedure that provides direction on how to measure form methane. Binary monitoring equipment such as the Bascom Turner monitor will be used by DEP to determine the presence of methane. Shiffer stated the methane measurement webpage is up-and-running and is available to the public.

Shiffer reported DEP was awarded the Phase 1 of the Formula Grant and DEP submitted an application for Phase 2 of the Formula Grant that will be about \$114 million. Brantley asked if there is any indication from the DOI that the federal government will not release these monies. Shiffer responded that DEP has not received any such feedback from the DOI and has no reason to expect it will.

Shiffer provided an overview of the Methane Emission Reduction Program (MERP) and reported that DEP has budgeted 22 percent of the MERP funding to the Orphan Well Plugging Grant Program pursuant to Act 96 and Act 136. This represents \$16.8 million of the \$76 million. DEP has conditionally approved 31 MERP grant applications that total about \$12 million.

RESCISSION OF CIVIL PENALTY TGD – NEW SOP VERSION

Shiffer reported that the DEP Non-regulatory Agenda includes notice that the Civil Penalty TGD is scheduled to be rescinded during the third quarter of 2025. This Civil Penalty TGD provides guidance to department staff on how to calculate a penalty based on various statutory requirements.

The Civil Penalty TGD will be replaced by two Standard Operating Procedures that will serve to direct oil and gas staff as to how to consistently calculate penalties. One will focus on penalties at conventional oil and gas wells and the other will focus on penalties at unconventional gas wells.

TAB WELL PLUGGING SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE – SOP GUIDANCE DOCUMENT AND FAQ SECTION

This subcommittee has met on multiple occasions during 2025 and the main focus of this work group is to address some of the complications of plugging wells. Pennsylvania’s oil and gas regulations includes the term “attainable bottom” and is defined in the regulations as the depth approved by the Department, which can be achieved after a “reasonable effort” is expended to clean out the well to total depth.

This subcommittee has focused on the matter of what constitutes a “reasonable effort” that must be made to plug a well and the opinions of industry have been differed from DEP’s interpretation of this section of the regulations.

Good progress has been made and the subcommittee has developed a draft Standard Operating Procedure that defines terms, establishes a review process, lists documents that should be provided by the operator, includes provisions for pre-plugging planning meetings, and a process to assist with issue resolution.

Also, a decision flow chart and checklist to document common technical difficulties that might be encountered and the tools and equipment that may be needed to assist with reaching an attainable bottom.

Hegburg reported the SOP has been shared with industry members and is nearly completed. The workgroup expects final comments to be provided soon.

Hegburg explained that a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is also under development.

Saunders responded that it is good that these types of issues are resolved to provide more certainty to well plugging operators. There are well plugging jobs that run into similar problems so the SOP and FAQ will be helpful to address these matters. Saunders said that there are many individuals with good experience that are involved in this process and he looks forward to continuing to work as part of this subcommittee to finalize the FAQ document.

STATUS OF WELL SITE RESTORATION FORM (OG-75)

Kelly reminded TAB that this topic is an extension from the request that Saunders made at the March 2025 TAB meeting and his comment that some members of the well plugging subcommittee were confused about the applicability of this form.

Kelly explained there are two situations when an operator must submit a well restoration report for conventional activities – one is after drilling a well and the other is after plugging a well. The Office of Oil and Gas Management has drafted clarifying language to better explain what triggers submission of the form post-plugging or post-drilling.

Kelly reported that DEP is currently updating the form based on comments received and the form will be posted to the DEP eLibrary within several weeks.

Saunders asked if both the form and instructions will be updated. Kelly responded in the affirmative.

PETITION: ONSITE PROCESSING OF OIL AND GAS PRODUCED FLUIDS

Klapkowski reported this Petition was submitted to the Environmental Quality Board to amend Chapter 78a.58 which relates to the onsite processing of solid waste. Klapkowski said the EQB met on September 9 and voted to consider this petition along with others at the next regularly scheduled EQB meeting. Given the action of the EQB Klapkowski said there is nothing much further to report at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Klapkowski asked the TAB members and DEP representatives if there was any new business to be considered by the board. No new business items were suggested by DEP or TAB members.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at about 11:34 am.