

CASA Board of Directors Meeting Summary

September 17, 2020

Remote – Zoom Conferencing

In attendance:

CASA Board Members and Alternates:

Randy Angle, NGO Rural

Leigh Allard, NGO Health

Ann Baran, NGO Rural

Rob Beleutz, Mining

Bill Calder, NGO Urban

Tom Davis, Provincial Government -
Environment

Jim Hackett, Utilities

Rob Hoffman, Petroleum Products

David Lawlor, Alternate Energy

Don McCrimmon, Oil and Gas, large
producers

Alison Miller, Petroleum Products

Keith Murray, Forestry

Rich Smith, Agriculture

David Spink, NGO Urban

Ruth Yanor, NGO Industrial

Andre Asselin, CASA Executive Director

CASA Secretariat:

Alec Carrigy, Katie Duffett, Lauren Hall, Anuja Hoddinott, Daniel Schiffner

Guests:

Rhonda Lee Curran, Jenna Curtis, Sushmitha Gollapudi, Hamid Namsechi, Marilea Pattison-Perry, Douglas Thrussell, Sharon Willianen, Laura Blair, Alberta Environment and Parks

Jill Bloor, CRAZ

Julie Carter, WBEA

Kristina Martel, LICA

Brittney Morgan, Capital Power

Andria Panidisz, CAPP

Karla Reesor, PRAMP

Wayne Ungstad, NSCA

Regrets:

James Baldwin, Chemical Manufacturers

Holly Johnson-Rattlesnake, Samson Cree
Nation

Mary Onukem, Métis Settlements General
Council

Kathy Rooyakkers, Local Government –
Rural

Martin Van Olst, Federal Government

Bev Yee, Provincial Government –
Environment

**Clean Air Strategic Alliance
Board of Directors Meeting
September 17, 2020**

Executive Summary

A revised operational plan that will run through the end of 2021 was brought forward by the executive committee for the board's consideration. The board approved the revised plan with minor revisions.

The board heard presentations updating the status of the three current projects. The CAAQS Symposium Working Group submitted a draft project charter, which the board approved, disbanded the working group, and created the CAAQS Achievement Project Team. The AAQO Project Team asked for approval to transmit the NO₂ and SO₂ backgrounders and appended stakeholder perspectives to AEP as advice for revising the NO₂ and SO₂ AAQOs and proposed a revised project charter that extended the project timeline to December 2020. Both these items were approved by the board. The ROVER III project has experienced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the project team will not request an amendment to the charter until the next board meeting in hope that there will be more clarity around COVID-19 and the US/Canada border reopening.

In terms of potential new work, an opportunity for CASA to facilitate more informed decision making by studying human health impacts related to air quality and assigning dollar quantification to those impacts was raised. The board agreed to send out a call for members to form an ad-hoc group to explore opportunities and challenges related to this potential project idea.

There were also brief updates from other groups. The Electricity Framework Review Project Team will be able to provide a substantial update at the December board meeting. The Impacts of Reduced Customer Transportation and Industrial Activity on Air Quality in Alberta due to COVID-19 Ad Hoc Group is waiting on receipt of an information package before it can proceed further.

**Clean Air Strategic Alliance
Board of Directors Meeting
September 17, 2020
Remote – Zoom Conferencing**

Meeting Summary

Andre Asselin convened the business meeting at 9:05 a.m.

1 Administration

1.1 Convene Meeting and Approve Agenda

Andre noted he would be chairing the meeting, welcomed everyone to CASA's one hundredth general business meeting, and acknowledged that the meeting was collectively taking place on the traditional lands of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 First Nations and the Métis peoples. He confirmed that the meeting has quorum.

He reviewed remote meeting etiquette and clarified that consensus decisions would be sought by asking the board if there are any blocks to the decisions, and that no blocks would indicate the board had consensus.

Decision: The board agreed that decisions have consensus if no blocks are expressed.

The agenda was reviewed, and new business regarding opportunities to study human health impacts related to air quality was proposed.

Decision: The agenda, amended to include new business, was approved by consensus.

1.2 Review Actions from June 24, 2020 Board Meeting

There were four items from the June board meeting and updates were provided in the package for this meeting. It was noted that a further update was provided for the second and fourth action items in the GoA update that was distributed last week.

Discussion:

- Regarding the first action item, the ad-hoc group was originally scheduled to hold its first meeting in September, has this meeting occurred or when will it occur?
 - The team will require a report that AEP is working on to move forward, so the first meeting of the ad-hoc team has been delayed until March, when the report is expected to be released.
 - AEP noted that the report will be made available to the group sooner than March, though it will not be intended for public release. The exact date the report can be provided to the group remains uncertain.

1.3 Summary of Previous Meeting

Clarifying edits were submitted and incorporated into a revised version of the meeting summary, which are reflected in the package.

Decision: The board approved the summary of the June 24, 2020 board meeting by consensus and the summary will be posted to the website.

1.4 Operational Plan

The operational plan outlines the work of the CASA board and project teams and is typically updated annually. The 2020 operational plan was approved in December 2019. However, given the circumstances of the pandemic and the ongoing challenging economic climate, the board discussed its priorities at the June meeting, and the discussion centered around evaluating CASA's current priorities in the short term window of 3 to 6 months and 9 to 12 or 15 months. It was decided that staff would prepare a revised operational plan that ran to the end of 2021.

The executive committee has approved bringing this revised operational plan for 2020–2021 to the board for consideration and approval.

Discussion:

- Under the “Resources” section, there are no specific staff or resources listed as directly supporting each item. For the sake of transparency, would there be value in outlining this support? For example, an ‘S’ could indicate that the Secretariat is assigned to supporting this item.
 - The resources dedicated to each item are typically outlined at a high level, either the board, the executive committee or the project teams, and staff support every aspect of CASA's work. Some text outlining the accountabilities of each group can be added to the introduction for clarity.
- Some of the timelines do not seem to line up with the seasons indicated in the table, and some of these timelines may not be realistic due to the challenges posed by the current pandemic.
 - Text was added in the introduction of the plan to state which season aligns with which months to provide clarity and alignment with board meetings, whose 2021 dates are not nailed down yet. The timelines are a best attempt at planning while also retaining some flexibility as the projects go about their work. For example, the EFR team is meeting tomorrow and will come back with a better idea of its timelines at the next meeting.

Decision: The board approved the revised 2020–2021 operational plan as presented with the revised introductory text.

2 CAAQS Symposium Working Group

Co-chairs Brittney Morgan and Julie Carter delivered a presentation from the CAAQS Symposium Working Group. The group is requesting that the board approve its draft project charter, disband the Working Group, and strike a project team to execute this important work.

Discussion:

- The board asked for a more detailed explanation on the costs that are budgeted, given that the meetings are proposed to be held virtually.
 - The costs of running virtual meetings are expected to be low (e.g. software expenses), but the budget also covers additional meeting support, should it be necessary, such as hiring a consultant to run those meetings, and/or potential speaker fees. Document compilation costs are also included, such as printing and compiling and can cover expenses related to graphic design.
 - These costs are best guesses and may change.
- Could we add the information that the Impacts of Reduced Customer Transportation and Industrial Activity on Air Quality in Alberta due to COVID-19 ad hoc group will collect as one of the data sources included in the project charter for this project team?
 - Anytime there is a new project, there is a review of what relevant information is available. The team will consider the ad hoc groups work.
- Board members suggested that section 4.1 of the project charter “Considerations in Potential Management Actions and Approaches” could include a cost benefit analysis as one of the approaches that will be examined.
- It was suggested that the project goal on page 4 of the charter makes it sound as though implementers support CAAQS exceedances; this should be changed.
- In Appendix B there is no mention of Alberta regional planning documents under resources. There is a lot of great information in these plans and the charter should perhaps include them.

Decision: The CAAQS Achievement project charter is approved by consensus with some minor wording additions to be incorporated.

Decision: The CAAQS Achievement Project Team was struck by consensus.

Decision: The CAAQS Symposium Working Group is disbanded by consensus.

The chair thanked the working group on behalf of the board for all their hard work.

3 Ambient Air Quality Objectives (AAQOs) Project Team

The board received an update on the team's work and were asked to approve extending the project's timelines by amending the project charter. Team co-chair Alison Miller presented.

Discussion:

- The current decision sheet, and information and decision sheets submitted to the board for previous meetings, included text that the team's objective is to revise the AAQOs to be consistent with CAAQS. That is not a team objective as per the project charter and should not be included in future decision sheets.
- The team provided non-consensus advice on TRS/H₂S, what is AEP doing with that?
 - We are working on these and believe that we are in final stages of getting it together for the TRS. We are also doing some work with the AER on this and hope to have something in the next couple of months.
- There has never been consensus from industry due to actual or perceived hardships experienced from improvements to air standards.
- AAQOs serve two purposes that, although linked, have different focuses. One is that they are used to set emission controls, such stack height requirements; second, they set the objectives used throughout province as indicators of air quality and its acceptability. If we do not address this issue of competing objectives, we will always have difficulties with non-consensus.
 - Measurement standards and air quality objectives have drifted closer together over time partly due to each relying on the AAQOs.
 - There has been continuous improvement in air quality monitoring. Even when there is non-consensus the report is still valuable in providing information and clarifying various perspectives that the GoA can use to inform policy decisions.
- We are always talking fence line. The term "fence line" is misleading because emissions often concentrate several kilometres away from the source, especially when the source is elevated. Has there been consideration to have Alberta Health or a similar entity involved to look after the health of people working or living in those areas?
 - The project team has active participation and input from Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, and Health Canada.
 - When this multi-stakeholder process started many years ago to update AAQOs, we used science and health documents to try and find consensus. Fast forward 20 years to now, there is much more activity and more of the airshed is in use. Additionally, AAQOs are not only metric for measuring air quality; regional measurements and others often set competing limits. Trying to amalgamate all these scales further complicates the issues we are trying to address.

The board expressed thanks for the work done by the project team to date.

Decision: The board approves transmitting the advice from CASA on revising the NO₂ and SO₂ AAQOs to the GoA.

Decision: Approve the revised project charter by extending the project timeline to December 2020.

4 ROVER III Project Team

Co-chairs, Rob Hoffman and Rhonda Lee Curran, presented an update on the progress of the Rover III Project Team to date. Prior to beginning the presentation, Rob recognized the extensive work done by the members of the team and CASA Secretariat over the past months despite the inevitable obstacles presented by the pandemic. Their work has resulted in the Government of Alberta granting an exemption to the ROVER III project so that United States based contractor Opus can enter Canada. The project was expected to end September 2020 but has been delayed due to the inability of Opus to find staff willing to cross the border during the pandemic. Instead Opus will undertake a smaller pilot study this fall to survey potential study sampling locations, at no additional cost. Opus will also work with the University of Alberta researchers to test vehicles that have been tampered with.

The project team will request an amendment to its project charter at the next board meeting when the team expects there will be more clarity around its timelines. The goal is to conduct the field season in Spring 2021. There may be an opportunity to sample for ammonia in the 2021 field season, using new technology.

Discussion:

- What types of tampering will occur when testing vehicles? Also, what are our goals with the ammonia testing?
 - We are not clear on all parameters that our University of Alberta partners plan to test with tampering, but we believe they plan to test a particulate filter amongst others. Regarding ammonia, the goal is to create awareness of contributors to these emissions in Alberta. This awareness could inform design standards for the future.

5 Information Reports and Opportunity for Questions

Four reports were provided for the board's information, the GoA update was provided last week as a supplementary package. There was an opportunity for discussion on each item.

5.1 Executive Director's Report

Discussion:

- When will we receive our core funding grant?
 - The grant funds were expected to arrive in September to help alleviate cash flow challenges AEP was experiencing due to the pandemic. The money should flow within the next few weeks.
 - It was also confirmed that there has been sign off on the request for funds related to CASA, so it should be available soon.
- It was suggested that some of the abbreviations used in the CASA balance sheet may be misinterpreted. As this document is publicly available, perhaps the full words should be used in this document.

5.2 Electricity Framework Review Project Team Update

Discussion:

- Do we need to extend the timelines for this project?
 - This project team is meeting tomorrow to update its tasks and timelines, so there will be a substantial update at the next board meeting in December, which will likely include a request for extension.

5.3 Impacts of Reduced Consumer Transportation and Industrial Activity on Air Quality in Alberta due to COVID-19 Ad Hoc Group Update

No discussion.

5.4 Government of Alberta Update

Discussion:

- Is Item 3 in the update saying the same as what was stated in the previous meeting.
 - Yes, it is essentially saying the same thing, though in fewer words.
- Are there any other updates to the department reorganization?
 - There have not been many significant changes since the last update in June. Senior management has been confirmed, including Hamid Namsechi as the Director of Air Policy and Bob Myrick as Director of Airshed Sciences. Some progress has been made in regulatory transformation.

Action: Staff will seek an update on the regulatory transformation work from AEP for the next meeting.

- Are we collecting data on mobile sources as part of the provincial emissions inventory? There is currently a gap in mobile sources of emissions from facilities such as oilsands operations.
 - IAEMP does collect data on the mobile emissions, although IAEMP was specifically created for the Capital Region and was developed in response to the Capital Region exceedances of PM_{2.5}
- Regarding red tape reduction, what exactly is the government looking at and will they share any proposed changes with CASA?
 - Suggestions can be submitted by the public or through department recommendations. There is not anything applicable to CASA yet, but it will be brought forward if there is. There may be benefit to a future meeting to do a presentation if there is anything from an air regulatory perspective.

6 New or Unfinished Business

The NGO sector group raised possible opportunities for CASA to study human health impacts related to air quality.

- One issue that we experience in the NGO sector is that, when looking at air quality management strategies and AAQOs or other policy, we do not have a means to quantify the environmental and health benefits of emission reductions. Being able to quantify the benefits would help to prioritize initiatives to get the maximum benefit from reductions.
- Our proposed idea is to use existing tools and applications to evaluate current ambient air quality in Alberta, understand the health implications of that air quality, and assign a dollar quantification to those impacts. For example, has the COVID-19 pandemic provided insight on what happens when we reduce transportation in urban areas by 50%?
- Similar work could estimate the impact if Alberta were to cut oil and gas or electricity production by 50%. We have reached out to Alberta Health to see if they are interested in supporting such a project.

Discussion:

- It is good to consider dollar value benefits, and we could look at how the health care system is affected by air quality risks beyond dollar figures. When someone enters the health care system, it affects all Albertans.
- There is a big opportunity for CASA to look at this. We can partner with the schools of Public Health at the universities to look at the impacts on air and how it has affected people's health, then examine changes in hospitalization rates and do a cost benefit analysis. The COVID-19 pandemic allows an opportunity for CASA to do a before and after comparison to see how we can improve the air in general to help people.
- There has been a lot of research coming out examining how the change in emissions has impacted use of resources and people's health. This may dovetail well with other work that CASA is doing.
- This idea makes good sense and is worth further exploration. Are there any technical comments from GoA experts?
- This is music to my ears. My team is responsible for conducting full cost accounting of benefits to the health care system when putting together policy options for elected officials. However, we often lack provincial data and must resort to using national numbers when conducting our analysis.
- This is a great idea to get more specific information. National data just lists death totals, more specific dollar value information would be beneficial.
- Airsheds and the Alberta Airsheds Council already do a lot of outreach to measure air quality impacts on human health. It may be possible to partner with them to get more quantifiable data.
- This is an interesting piece of work, but also potentially very challenging and with unforeseen consequences. Establishing some of the parameters, such as the value of a human life, could create information that stakeholders do not want to make public.
- How long would we need for a project such as this? It often takes up to two years to get quantitative air data in Alberta.

- The time lag for data depends on the project and what is being evaluated.
- This would present a lot of work to be done from a technical analysis perspective, which is not CASA's expertise. So, this is maybe a two-step process where the GoA or Alberta Health do the preliminary technical work and then CASA takes it on once the initial analysis is complete.
- Some tools to do this are already available and being used. It is a matter of how we would use those tools in an Alberta context and using Albertan expertise. I also think that this is of interest to all CASA stakeholders, which makes it a fit for CASA. It may be an inconvenient truth that air emissions are impacting public health, but that is not a good reason to shy away from getting good information. Having this information should be core for CASA.
- There is a significant concern around this work potentially being used to value a human life. It is a very slippery slope. CASA does not have the expertise around this table to take on that work and it may be undesirable for the groups around this table to put those values out in public.
- There are other metrics that can be used other than the value of a human life, such as hospital admissions. I think we need to at least complete an initial exploration to evaluate what we would need to move forward with this.
- Some members expressed major reservations about this project and fail to see where industry could be a useful participant but would be happy to see a more fleshed out proposal and is comfortable with there being an ad hoc group.
- AEP expressed interest in moving forward with an ad hoc group to explore this issue.
- Sometimes CASA has taken on projects that are not suited to this group. This may be one of those projects. Some members would be interested to participate in the discussions before seeing a statement of opportunity being developed and brought to the board.

Andre summarized the points and noted that this type of conversation is helpful in identifying potential work. It was suggested that CASA strike an ad hoc group to flesh out the discussion. The group's discussions would determine the outcome. Any interested members can join this ad hoc group, flesh it out, and potentially write a statement of opportunity for a new project.

Action: Staff will put out a call to members to form an ad-hoc group to explore opportunities and challenges related to the human health impacts related to air quality. potential project idea.

The next meeting is planned for December 10 in Edmonton, with an evening event scheduled for December 9, but it remains to be determined in what format these may occur.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

The following action items arose from the meeting:

Action: Staff will seek an update on the regulatory transformation work from AEP for the next meeting.

Action: Staff will put out a call to members to form an ad-hoc group to explore opportunities and challenges related to the human health impacts related to air quality. potential project idea.