

SOUTHWEST CLEAN AIR AGENCY

Board of Directors Meeting  
April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 3:00 PM  
Southwest Clean Air Agency  
11815 NE 99th St. Suite 1294  
Vancouver, Washington

This meeting will be held by video conference using Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81677716119>

Meeting ID: 816 7771 6119

Or call in by phone (669) 900-9128

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order  
SWCAA Chair Bob Hamlin
- II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum  
SWCAA Chair Bob Hamlin
- III. Board of Directors Minutes  
Board of Directors Minutes – March Meeting
- IV. Changes to the Agenda  
SWCAA Chair Bob Hamlin
- V. Consent Agenda
  - A. Approval of Vouchers
  - B. Financial Report
  - C. Monthly Activity Report
- V. Info Items & Public Comment  
None
- VII. Public Hearing  
None
- VIII. Unfinished Business/New Business
  - A. Decision on Cost-of-Living Wage Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2022/2023**

**Issue** - A decision on SWCAA’s employee cost of living wage adjustments is one of the early budget decisions that must be made prior to submitting the proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget for Board approval.

**Summary** - The proposed Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the May Board meeting. SWCAA does not utilize an automatic step pay increase system as is used by many government agencies. Instead, salaries are increased annually through a cost-of-living wage adjustment and merit pool adjustment for eligible staff.

SWCAA's Board, with some exceptions, has typically approved a cost-of-living wage adjustment equal to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Portland/Vancouver Region and more recently the Western Region. Attachment A shows a history of SWCAA salary increases. The 2021 CPI for the Western Region was 6.1 percent which is significantly higher than it has been in years past.

SWCAA's Board may want to look at the COLA and merit pool increases collectively rather than individually to determine overall employee salary adjustments and may choose to combine agenda items A and B.

Attachment B provides data for comparison between total salary increases (cost of living increases plus step increases) in other jurisdictions served by SWCAA along with different options for SWCAA salary increases. This information is being provided to inform the Board's decision regarding combined COLA and merits pool increases for comparison purposes since SWCAA does not utilize a step system.

## **B. Review of Merit Pool for Fiscal Year 2022/2023**

**Issue** - Whether to approve funding of merit salary increases for fiscal year 2022/2023.

**Summary** – In May of 2021 the Board tentatively approved a 3% Merit Pool with the opportunity to adjust or reconsider the approval at this Board meeting. Merit Pool funds would be allocated based on annual performance evaluations and go into effect on July 1, 2022.

Attachment B provides data for comparison between total salary increases (cost of living increases plus step increases) in other jurisdictions along with different options for SWCAA salary increases and cost implications. This information is being provided to inform the Board's decision regarding combined COLA and merit pool increases.

## **C. Tentatively Set a Merit Pool for Fiscal Year 2023/2024**

**Issue** - Whether to tentatively approve and announce funding of merit salary increases for fiscal year 2023/2024.

**Summary** – SWCAA's longstanding practice has been to use a merit system for salary increases along with CPI adjustments instead of using a step system for raises. SWCAA's policy is to announce the potential Merit Pool amount to staff in advance of the award.

**Recommendation** – Tentatively approve a merit pool for salary increases to be allocated to staff based on annual performance evaluations in 2023. The funds are to be awarded at the end of next fiscal year (i.e., July 1, 2023) and this decision will be reviewed by the Board prior to adoption of the 2023/2024 budget.

#### **D. Performance Evaluation for Executive Director**

The Board may go into Executive Session for discussion related to the performance evaluation in accordance with RCW 42.30.10(1)(g). Any salary adjustment or other decision will be made during the open public meeting following the Executive Session.

### **IX. Control Officer Report**

**A. EPA Reinstates Waiver for California’s LDV GHG Standards and ZEV Sales Mandate (March 9, 2022)** – EPA announced its decision to reinstate California’s authority under Clean Air Act (CAA) Section 209 to implement the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission standards and zero emission vehicle (ZEV) sales mandate adopted under the state’s Advanced Clean Car (ACC) program. In 2013, EPA granted California a waiver of federal preemption to implement these and other ACC standards. In 2019, under the so-called “SAFE 1” rule, EPA revoked the waiver for the GHG standards and ZEV mandate. EPA writes that its decision this week “rescinds EPA’s 2019 waiver withdrawal, thus bringing back into force the 2013 ACC program waiver, including a waiver of preemption for California’s ZEV sales mandate and GHG emissions standards.” EPA further writes that it is also “withdrawing the interpretive view of CAA section 177 included in its 2019 action, that States may not adopt California’s GHG standards pursuant to section 177 even if EPA has granted California a waiver for such standards. Accordingly, other States may continue to adopt and enforce California’s GHG standards under section 177 so long as they meet the requirements of that section.” In a press statement, EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan is quoted as saying, “Today we proudly reaffirm California’s longstanding authority to lead in addressing pollution from cars and trucks. Our partnership with states to confront the climate crisis has never been more important. With today’s action, we reinstate an approach that for years has helped advance clean technologies and cut air pollution for people not just in California, but for the U.S. as a whole.” For further information: <https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/notice-decision-reconsideration-previous-withdrawal>

**B. Administration Announces Billions of Dollars in Funds for Clean Buses (March 7, 2022)** – During a White House event at which the proposed rule to reduce nitrogen oxide and greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty trucks was announced (see related article in this *Washington Update*) Vice President Kamala Harris, EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan, Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Administrator Nuria Fernandez announced a number of programs to fund clean buses. At EPA, there will be a new Clean School Bus Rebate program under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which directs an “unprecedented” \$5 billion over five years to replace existing school buses with low- or zero-emission models. In addition, Administrator Regan announced that a total of \$17 million would be awarded under two 2021 school bus rebate opportunities. Under the American Rescue Plan Electric

School Bus Rebates program \$7 million will fund 23 new zero-emission electric school bus replacements and related charging infrastructure for school districts in underserved communities in 11 states. The 2021 round of funding under the longstanding the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) School Bus Rebates program will provide \$10 million for the replacement of 460 school buses in 39 states with new electric, diesel, gasoline, propane or compressed natural gas buses that meet current emission standards. At FTA, \$1.47 billion in competitive grants funded by the Bill will modernize transit vehicle fleets and related equipment and facilities. For further information: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-awards-rebates-totaling-17-million-fund-clean-school-buses-reduce-diesel-emissions>

**C. EPA Proposes Rule to Reduce NO<sub>x</sub> and GHG Emissions from Heavy-Duty Trucks (March 7, 2022)** – EPA announce the release of a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to reduce nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from heavy-duty (HD) trucks. With respect to NO<sub>x</sub>, EPA includes in the 1,374-page pre-publication version of the NPRM two proposed options to tighten emission standards for heavy-duty engines (HDEs) – spark- ignition (gasoline) and compression-ignition (diesel) – from the current 0.20- grams-per-brake-horsepower-hour (g/bhp-hr) standard set in 2001. Under Proposed Option 1, the standard would be reduced in two phases, beginning with a 0.035 g/bhp-hr standard in model year (MY) 2027 for all HDEs and tightening to a 0.02- g/bhp-hr standard in MY 2030. EPA writes, “The proposed updates are intended to balance further incentivizing zero and near-zero emissions vehicle development with ensuring that the standards achieve an appropriate fleet-wide level of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction.” Publication of this proposal in the Federal Register will start a 46-day public comment process. EPA will hold a public hearing 15 days after publication. For revised heavy-duty truck NO<sub>x</sub> standards to apply with MY 2027 EPA must finalize the rule by the end of this calendar year. For further information: <https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/proposed-rule-and-related-materials-control-air-1>

**D. EPA Issues Toxics Release Inventory for 2020 (March 3, 2022)** – EPA announced the 2020 Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) analysis showing that air releases of pollutants included in the TRI decreased by 9 percent (52 million pounds) from the previous year, continuing a long-standing trend of reductions. The TRI analysis includes information from the 21,022 facilities that reported data. According to TRI data, since 2011, releases to the environment have decreased by 27 percent, mostly due to declining releases to air and land. Air releases declined during that period by 34 percent (277 million pounds). Again in 2020, the largest decreases were from the electric utilities sector. Releases of ammonia, methanol and sulfuric acid accounted for almost half of all air emissions in 2020. Releases of substances identified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as carcinogens decreased by 9 percent from 2011. Upgrades to the latest TRI information include the addition of reporting on 172 per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) added to TRI by the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act; new demographic information in the TRI mapping tool that allows users to overlay maps of facility locations with maps of overburdened and vulnerable communities; new maps that display international transfers of chemical waste by facilities in each state (showing to which country the waste was sent and how it was managed there); a profile of the cement manufacturing sector; and new

GHG reporting information for certain sectors. For further information: [www.epa.gov/trinationalanalysis](http://www.epa.gov/trinationalanalysis)

**E. EPA Releases AirToxScreen Containing 2017 Estimates of Exposures and Risks from Air Toxics (March 2, 2022)** – EPA has released AirToxScreen, which is a new air toxics risk screening tool that provides estimates of cancer risk related to air toxics and, along with EJScreen 2.0 (released on February 18, 2022), replaces EPA’s National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA). AirToxScreen contains estimates based on 2017 information, which is the most recent data set available. The tool will be updated annually and is intended to help federal, state, local and tribal agencies and the public to identify where more detailed analysis may be needed to determine actual risks. To develop the estimates in AirToxScreen, EPA compiled a national air toxics emissions inventory with data from state, local and tribal agencies and industry, estimated ambient concentrations and population exposures and developed estimates of potential health risks. State, local and tribal agencies were afforded an opportunity to preview the data in AirToxScreen prior to its public release. For further information: <https://www.epa.gov/AirToxScreen> and <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

- X. Issues for Upcoming Meetings
  - Fee Restructuring Decision - May
  - Budget – May
  - Presentation on Air Pollution and Geographic Distribution – June

XI. Adjourn

Notes:

- (1) Served by C-TRAN Routes: 7, 72 and 76.
- (2) Accommodation of the needs for disabled persons can be made upon request. For more information, please call (360) 574-3058 extension 110.