CAAC Meeting March 4 – Summary notes

In attendance: Anthony Moffa, Bri Hicknell, Thomas Mikulka, Rebecca Boulos, David Plumb, Scott Morelli (unable to attend: Joshua Cutler)

Key take-aways:

Regarding the Operating Guidelines:
  • Members are OK moving forward with the revised document if it includes the following additions:
    o Quorum for process/procedural decisions is OK leaving at 3, but all 3 must agree unanimously.
    o Clarify that the committee’s final document requires formal approval by all members (unanimous), yet can contain inside that document differences of opinion that persist on specific issues.
    o It’s OK for members to speak with community members, provide testimony to the legislature etc., but always as an individual. We don’t however want members speaking to the press on their own on the issues of the committee, even with the caveat of speaking as an individual.
  • Members will provide a final sign-off on this document via email.

Regarding the Workplan
  • Adjust draft timeline to extend Phase 2 through the summer, Phase 3 will start in the fall. However, there will likely be overlap between Phase 2 and 3, as we may be waiting for data to come in (additional sampling is expected in the coming months).
  • Scott and David will find a solution to create the two folders for information as suggested in the first meeting.
  • Regarding methods to engage the public and key stakeholders in the process:
    o We are extremely transparent and open will all meetings and deliberations (everything filmed), and will allow for public comment at the end of each meeting
    o David can contact people to share the work already completed and encourage people to attend meetings (for instance, can go out now and show workplan and operating guidelines)
    o For some milestones, we may proactively seek to encourage more participation and structure a more interactive meeting. We are still thinking about this possibility. We would expect to always use the council chambers.
    o Overall, we are trying to balance the fact that we are a technical committee with a task from the council, while at the same time working on issues that are of high interest to the public and other stakeholders. Our work can be informed and improved by interactions with these stakeholders, and the legitimacy of the product will increase the more stakeholders see their concerns/priorities are addressed in our process.
Regarding the questions we’re trying to answer in Phase 2:

- Fundamentally there are overarching questions about **substance** and **data/process**
  - **Substance:** What are the main air quality issues in the city; what are the sources/origin of those problems; what are the emissions coming out of those sources? How are they regulated/permitted?
  - **Data/process:** Do we have any data to evaluate these emissions; is it collected in the right way? For tank farms specifically – how are they (and regulators) evaluating their emissions; is it credible? Can we distinguish between the air quality impacts from difference sources (e.g. tank farms vs trucking?)

- To prepare for the next meeting we agreed to:
  - Invite DEP chemist Danielle Twomey to join us for the second half of our next meeting. Also, ask her for her best briefing documents for these questions. (Scott/David)
  - Review existing DEP presentations that show all permits issued (Everyone)
  - Look for examples of other towns with similar profiles that have done this work. California has coastal towns that have worked on this. (Tony)
  - National Ambient Air Quality standards. Could find lists of types of sources for each of the six areas and see if it overlaps with activity in South Portland. (Tony)
  - South Portland sustainability office has data on sources of emissions. (Scott)
  - Dig up the two EPA studies that look at Philadelphia and measure fenceline contamination. (Tom)

Comments from the public:

- One member of the public commented:
  - It would be good to ask for written responses from DEP and other officials
  - While the order that created this committee speaks broadly about a range of air quality issues in the city, the real issue that motivates this work is concern around the tank farms.
  - Don’t forget the distinction between acute and non-acute impacts.
  - Regarding emissions from Global’s tanks, a calculation that adjusts for actual measured vapor pressure, versus estimated vapor pressure, results in much higher actual emissions. (A copy of the calculation was given to committee members).