

Hazardous Materials Commission

Final Minutes Operations Committee

August 11, 2006

Members and Alternates

Present: Henry Clark, Don Grant, Jimmy Rodgers, Leslie Stewart (alternate), Igor Skaredoff (alternate),

Absent: Pam Aguilar, Mike Shimansky, Sharon Fuller (represented by alternate),

Staff: Michael Kent, Kim Cox

Members of the Public: Gail Garrett; Lee Jones, Jannat Muhammad, Johnny White

- 1. Call to order, announcements:** The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Clark at 10:15
 - The Contra Costa County Community Development Department has received a CalTrans planning grant to develop alternate truck routes proposals for North Richmond. They are implementing this project with the Neighborhood House of North Richmond and the West County Toxics Coalition. The kick-off meeting to explain the project to the community is September 23 at 1:00 at the Senior Heritage Apartments
 - The Marina School site in Pittsburg is undergoing a clean-up effort under the supervisor of DTSC. They are soliciting interested parties for their public participation process. Commissioner Clark noted that the public notice fail to discuss asbestos concerns or the gas plume under the site.
 - The Johns Mansville manufacturing site in Pittsburg is undergoing a clean-up. The plan is to bury asbestos contaminated material on-site. Commissioner Clark expressed concern with this proposal because of long-term safety considerations.
 - Commissioner Skaredoff announced that the Concord Naval Weapons Station is going to stop work on capping their landfill until next year. He also reported that he asked them if they had looked for radioactive material in the landfill, and was told that screening had been done and none was detected.

- 2. Public Comments:** Lee Jones, a North Richmond resident, said he was concerned about a recently announced proposal to study the feasibility of building a container port just north of the Chevron refinery, and wanted to know if the community could do anything about it. Johnny White said they are coming to explain the proposal to the Shields-Reid Neighborhood Association the following week. Commissioner Clark noted that comments could be made during the EIR process if it got that far.

3. Approval of Minutes: The August 11, 2006 minutes were approved 3-0-1, with Commissioner Rodgers abstaining.

4. Old Business:

None.

5. New Business: Emergency Preparation for Pandemic Flu and Vulnerable Populations.

Kim Cox, Health Emergency Response Coordinator for Contra Costa Health Services Public Health Division, gave a presentation on this topic (attached). She stressed that Contra Costa County has a very good system with a state-of-the-art lab and an active business community. Since pandemic have happened roughly every 30 or 40 years, it is a more a matter of when and not if the next one comes. She reviewed the difference between normal flu seasons and pandemic flu, and the role of avian flu in pandemics. She then reviewed the County's planning process for responding to a pandemic flu outbreak they are currently in the middle of, and the planning assumptions they are working under. They are working with other agencies and organizations on preparedness activities, will conduct training exercises and drills, and have developed outreach materials for the public.

To better serve vulnerable populations during health emergencies they have surveyed 13 agencies serving vulnerable populations and are trying to identify other agencies serving these groups. They asked these organizations a series of questions aimed at better understanding the barriers to services during emergencies, the best approaches for overcoming those barriers, the best methods for communicating with vulnerable populations, the current state of emergency preparedness, and the understanding of the Public Health Division's role in health emergencies. A series of 11 recommendations came out of their surveys. The key feedback from the surveys was that more education is essential, social networks will be necessary to respond adequately to health emergencies, and people need to hear important messages from someone they trust. The next step is to do more outreach to groups to get them to participate.

6. Items of interest to the Committee: A recent article in the newspaper about surplus ships being towed to Richmond for cleaning before being towed to Texas for recycling was discussed. The committee was concerned that the cleaning of the ships resulted in heavy metals in the paint being dislodged onto the bottom of the Richmond harbor. The article also indicated that there wasn't good agency cooperation in planning the activities. With over 50 more surplus ships possibly to be cleaned in the future, the committee was concerned about more contamination. They directed staff to write a letter to Supervisor

Gioia expressing their concern, and urging him to work with the appropriate agencies to make sure future work is better coordinated and alternatives are considered.

5. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 12:00