

**OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSISTANCE AND
PROTECTION**

**MINOR BARNETTE
DIRECTOR**



**ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSISTANCE AND
PROTECTION BOARD**

**PETER H. DeVRIES
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RICHARD L. SIEG
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**NATHAN ATKINSON
WILLIAM CROUSE
BRENT ROCKETT
MARY BETH WILLIAMS
CHARLES E. WILSON**

**FORSYTH COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE and PROTECTION
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

The Forsyth County Environmental Assistance and Protection Advisory Board met on April 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. with remote participation via internet teleconference and telephone conference call.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Beth Williams
Charlie Wilson
Bill Crouse
Brent Rockett

Nathan Atkinson
Richard Sieg

MEMBERS ABSENT:

FCOEAP PRESENT:

Minor Barnette
Valerie Shores
Amanda Severe
Shontell Robinson
Peter Lloyd

Steve Lyda
Michael Settle
Jeffrey Ebbitt
Janice Hillanbrand

I. Call to Order

**Forsyth County Government Center, 201 North Chestnut Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101-4120
Phone 336-703-2440 Fax 336-727-2777**

Recycled Paper

II. Approval of the January 21, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Sieg opened the discussion to approve the January 21, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Wilson made a motion to accept. Mr. Atkinson seconded the motion, all members of the Board in attendance approved.

III. Director's Update

In deference to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and protecting staff, employees have begun remote work and distancing measures. Cleaning practices in office and at monitoring sites have been put in place, staff are telecommuting, and site visits to permitted facilities have been suspended at this time except where ongoing violations require remediation. Community Hygiene is still actively pursuing complaints and ambient air quality is still being monitored.

In relation to COVID-19, the OEAP is tracking increased costs and reductions in revenue from the pandemic. Most should be covered through federal reimbursement. In the interim training and conferences have been postponed or cancelled, and online training is being utilized as available. Visible opacity training, or "smoke school", is required once every six months. It has been cancelled at this time and there are two people still currently certified, who attended before the cancellations. The remaining staff will recertify over the summer and Smoke School has been tentatively rescheduled for June.

There are still two vacant positions for the office, a Community Hygiene Environmental Specialist and a recently reclassified Data Specialist. The environmental specialist position is assigned 80% air quality services work and will remain vacant for an undetermined amount of time due to a soft freeze on county hiring, put in place by the county manager. The data specialist position has been filled with an anticipated start date of April 27 or May 4.

During the past six weeks there has been a major shift in the distribution of solid waste as schools and businesses remain empty. Residential garbage collected has increased 30-40%. The collectors are struggling with the additional volume redistribution, and one provider has temporarily suspended curbside recycling services to protect employees and in the interest of continued garbage collection without interruption due to employee quarantine measures. There has also been approval to the collection services requiring all garbage to be bagged for collection to minimize risk to collection staff.

In conjunction with higher residential trash collection has been an increase in residential burning, both impermissible and permissible. There have been many correlating smoke complaints due to this burning.

There has been a suspension of two enforcement cases that are now rescheduled due to court closures. Several more cases may go to court due to lack of abatement.

The state fuel tax is pennies per gallon, not a percentage of the price, but reduced driving and retail fuel sales could have an impact on department revenue.

Mr. Crouse inquired about the plastics in the recycle stream no longer being sent for processing but moved to landfills. Mr. Barnette clarified that all recyclable plastics generated in Forsyth County, collected in curbside programs and convenience centers, are being transported to material recovery facilities. There is one facility in Forsyth County and one in Davidson county being utilized at this time. The ultimate destinations from those facilities have not been verified, and may depend on market values.

Mr. Wilson suggested the need for publication to create more awareness of the OEAP and benefits of recycling, which Mr. Crouse supported. Mr. Barnette supplied that there is regular communication with the news media, though generally responsive and the OEAP has a full-time outreach and public educator presenting information.

IV. Other Business

Board members approaching the end of their service term should be receiving letters from the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners regarding potential re-appointment. The vacancy on the board will be filled with a new member and officer elections should take place at the next meeting.

V. Next Tentative Quarterly Meeting:

Date: July 21, 2020

Location: 201 North Chestnut St. Winston-Salem, N.C.

VI. Mr. Sieg adjourned the meeting.

Dated: 11/3/2020

Minor Barnette

Minor Barnette, Director

Approved: _____ Richard Sieg, Vice Chairman