

Minutes
Environmental Protection Committee
Savannah Economic Development Authority
906 Drayton Street
Savannah, GA 31401

Tuesday, October 24, 2023
9:00 a.m.

Committee Members

Ray Lambert, Chair
Dan Garcia, Vice Chair
Nancy Addison
Patrick Denney
Joe Hatfield
Kevin Jackson
Lesley Reynolds
Paul Shailendra
Bodine Sinyard
Dwight Davis, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Randy Dellinger
Charles DePriest
Mark Hennessy
Duncan Johnson
Tim Lowe

Guests

Bryan Tolar, GA Urban Ag Council
Mary Landers, The Current
Beth Remmes, Georgia Interfaith Power and Light
Ben Kirsch, Ogeechee Riverkeeper
Jen Hilburn, One Hundred Miles
Rena Peck, Georgia River Network
Alicia Keyes, One Hundred Miles
Justin Taylor, The Current
Karen Robertson, RobMark
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Government Relations
Monet Murphy, Georgia Conservancy / Savannah St. Univ.
Royce Johnson, Jack Hill State Park

Staff Members

Walter Rabon, Commissioner
Thomas Barnard
Trevor Santos
Kyle Pearson
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Mike England
Steve Friedman
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Taylor Brown Fisher
Jaynie Gaskin
Ray Smith

Jeff Cown, Director
James Boylan

The October 24, 2023 meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee was called to order by Chairman Dwight Davis.

Chairman Davis called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee. Mr. Lambert called on James Boylan, Chief of the Air Protection Branch, to present Proposed Grant Criteria for the Georgia Diesel Emissions Reduction Program, Chapter 391-3-21-.15.

Mr. Boylan stated the purpose of the grant is to reduce diesel emissions that can negatively impact human health and the environment by assisting public schools with school bus replacements. He further stated the program is funded through the federal Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA). He added the amendments will encourage replacement of 2009 model year or older buses, require replaced school buses to be scrapped, and require project applicants to provide a 75% match.

Mr. Boylan stated the funding available is \$696, 467.00 and first priority will go to public school systems in counties that were designated as maintenance for the 2015 ozone standard. He further stated that second priority will go to public school systems in counties designated as maintenance for the 2008 ozone standard and third priority is all remaining public-school systems. He added EPD will issue the first solicitation for applications within 4 months of DNR Board approval of the grant criteria and if funds remain after initial distribution of funds, additional solicitation will be issued.

Mr. Boylan requested a favorable consideration.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the Proposed Grant Criteria for the Georgia Diesel Emissions Reduction Program, Chapter 391-3-21-.15.

Mr. Lambert asked Mr. Boylan to continue with Item B, Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Enhanced Inspection and Maintenance, Chapter 391-3-20.

Mr. Boylan stated the Georgia Enhanced Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program covers gasoline-powered passenger vehicles registered in the 13-county Atlanta Metropolitan Area and it is required by the Clean Air Act Amendments for areas that were moderate or higher nonattainment areas for the 1979 1-hour ozone standard. He further stated 3,216,150 emissions tests were conducted in 2022 and there are 708 vehicle emissions testing stations and 1,974 active inspectors. He added the proposed amendments will provide updates to definitions, terminology, correct formatting and grammar.

Mr. Boylan stated “emission standards” is being amended to replace the evaporation system function check with verification of presence of a fuel cap because a pressure test is no longer required, which will have minimal impact on vehicle emissions. He further stated “On-Road Testing of Exhaust Emissions by Remote Sensing Technology or Other Means,” is being repealed because on-road testing of exhaust emission by remote sensing technology is no longer required. He added this will have no impact on vehicle emissions and will save \$86,000 per year.

Mr. Boylan stated after briefing the Environmental Committee of the DNR Board today, there will be a public hearing and 30-day public comment period beginning in November 2023. He further stated he plans to request adoption of the proposed amendments at the January 23, 2024 DNR Board meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.