

## Minutes

Coalbed Methane/Natural Gas in Coal Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee (the Committee)  
Meeting Minutes  
Red Deer Room, Red Deer Lodge  
May 10, 2004  
9:00 to 2:45

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In attendance:

Mike Ekelund (chair)	Department of Energy
John Hermans (alternate)	Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Phyllis Kobasiuk	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties
Bob Willard	Alberta Energy & Utilities Board
Mary Griffiths	Alberta Environmental Network Society
Sharil Baumgardner	Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Committee
Tom Nahirinak	Alberta Surface Rights Federation
Don Bester	Butte Action Committee/Rimbey & District Clean Air People
Deryl Hurl	Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen
Mike Gatens	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers / Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas / Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada
John Jensen	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers / Canadian Society for Unconventional Gas / Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada
Robert Donick	The Coal Association of Canada
Else Pederson (observer)	Freehold Petroleum & Natural Gas Owners Association
Brad Murray	Freehold Petroleum & Natural Gas Owners Association
Barry Cole (alternate)	Sustainable Resource Development
Gene Roach (facilitator)	Community Development
Karen Henderson (secretary)	Alberta Energy
Larry Charach (observer)	Alberta Energy
Sharla Rauschning (presenter)	Alberta Energy
Hal Knox (presenter)	Alberta Energy & Utilities Board
Nga de-la-Cruz (presenter)	Alberta Environment
Rick Hyndman (observer)	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Absent:	
Peter Watson (alternate chair)	Department of Environment
Gene Rawe	Alberta Beef Producers

## **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting started at 9:30.

## **Review/Ratification of Documents**

### ***ACTION***

*The following documents were ratified by the Committee without amendment:*

- *April 5, 2004 Minutes*
- *March 8 Minutes (amended)*

## **Minister's Statement**

Mike Ekelund advised that during the April 20th Legislative session, the Minister of Energy, Honourable Murray Smith, said he did not believe a moratorium or suspension of NGC development was necessary and that it is important to continue to collect, assemble data and respond with an appropriate policy for Albertans.

## **Letter**

Mike Ekelund advised that a response will be sent regarding the request from the Butte Action Committee. Tom Hegan of RADCAP (Rimby and District Clean Air People) has made a similar request as well. Mary Griffiths advised the Pembina Institute also supports this request. She advised that Tim Beleck had sent a similar letter to Mike Ekelund, including an actual case illustration.

### ***ACTION***

- *A copy of Mr. Beleck's letter will be sent to the MAC and working groups for information.*

## **Information Sessions**

Sharla provided a presentation on the status of the information sessions and the summary document on "what we heard". Drafts of feedback from the last four sessions were also distributed. Alberta Energy has hired a technical writer consultant to prepare a summary document of the feedback from all sessions and this should be available for MAC review within a week and a half after the last session in Grande Prairie (May 19). Once the MAC has approved it, the document will be posted to the web, distributed to the working groups and mailed to those who requested it.

### ***ACTION***

- *The MAC requires at least 5 working days to review the draft summary.*
- *Karen will e-mail a copy of Sharla's presentation to MAC members.*

## **Western Governors' Association "CBM Best Practices Handbook"**

Larry Charach gave a brief presentation of the above noted handbook, sponsored by the Western Governors' Association (WGA). Alberta Department of Energy had an associate member status with the WGA. The purpose of the handbook is to share and encourage best practices in developing the resource. Released in April 2004, the handbook is intended to be a "living document" with updates on an ongoing basis. Some of the frequently asked questions in the handbook reflect some of the issues raised in Alberta. Karen had previously forwarded a copy on to the working group Chairs.

## **Water Issues Working Group**

Nga de-la-Cruz provided an update of their April 21 meeting. Their Terms of Reference have been finalized. Tony LeMay of Alberta Geological Survey gave a presentation on water quality

and David Trew gave a short presentation on the Alberta government's water strategy. The intent was to ensure all water working group members had a common level of understanding. They continue to work through issues, although have not created a consolidated issues list yet as they want to specifically focus on NGC related issues.

They have established a sub-working group to focus on the more technical aspects of water data and this sub-group will report back to the main group at their next meeting on May 19.

The appropriate registration of water wells was discussed. The MAC agreed the issue was important but was not a strictly NGC related issue and emphasis needs to be placed on issues most directly associated with NGC development.

#### ***ACTION***

- *At the next MAC meeting, Nga will provide a list of the working group issues.*
- *Karen will contact Tony LeMay to see if he is available to give his presentation at the next MAC meeting.*

#### **Surface/Air Issues Working Group**

Barry Cole provided a brief update on their working group. They are also working through issues. They will ask Gene Roach to facilitate the process once they start to develop recommendations. The MAC approved the working group recommendation that the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) Flaring and Venting Project Team (FVPT) examine existing flaring and venting regulations to determine if they are appropriate for NGC or if changes are needed.

#### ***ACTION***

- *Dave Bartesko will confirm Gene's availability for the fall series of working group meetings.*
- *Mike Ekelund will follow up with CASA regarding the Surface/Air Working group recommendation.*

#### **Development of Action Plans for Working Groups**

To ensure issues are categorized and prioritized appropriately, the MAC has requested the working groups classify issues into one of the following categories:

1. Issues specific to NGC - no group/organization or process exists to address issue e.g. cumulative impacts of dewatering aquifers. Working group to address and develop specific recommendations
2. Issues specific to NGC - group/organization with related expertise or a process to address issue already exists to examine the issue and provide feedback e.g. flaring and venting could be addressed by CASA. Working groups would request the team/organization to develop recommendations or their feedback would be used by the working group to develop recommendations for the MAC.
3. Issues not NGC specific but general- no group/organization or process exists to address issue e.g. shallow well drilling and completion. Working groups could provide general recommendations or findings to the MAC
4. Issues not NGC specific but general- group/organization with related expertise or a process to address issue already exists to examine the issue and provide feedback e.g. noise issues and the EUB. Working groups would request the team/organization to develop recommendations or their feedback would be used by the working group to develop recommendations for the MAC.

Priority is to be given to issues most directly associated with NGC development (categories 1 and 2). Consideration will be given to lower priority issues (categories 3 and 4) within the available time of the working groups.

In addition, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the working groups need to be consistent with each other and need to specifically address situations where the working groups members are unable to reach consensus on a particular issue.

The MAC will provide guidance as required to the working groups on this process. In addition, the respective Chairs need to maintain open communication between the working groups to ensure issues are adequately addressed, identify any overlaps or common issues and ensure timelines are met.

***ACTION***

- *The working group chairs will review their issues list, prioritize and categorize them and provide an action plan and current status at the next MAC meeting.*
- *The working groups will provide an update at the next MAC meeting regarding the Terms of Reference and what changes, if any, were implemented.*

**Orphan Well Program**

Hal Knox of the EUB presented information on the orphan well program. The Orphan Well Association (OWA) is made up of a board of directors with one representative from EUB; two from Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and two from Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada. Higher risk companies are expected to pay a higher levy.

***ACTION***

- *Hal will provide Karen with a copy of the presentation for distribution to the MAC members.*
- *The EUB will provide more detailed information as to the number of wells drilled, number shut-in, number of orphan wells etc. for the next meeting.*
- *The MAC will discuss how to ensure appropriate time is allotted for invited speakers at the next meeting.*

**Next Meeting (9:30 June 7, Red Deer Lodge)**

The following will be addressed at the next meeting:

- Status updates, issue prioritization/categorization and action plans from Water and Surface/Air Working Groups
- Review of working groups Terms of Reference
- Presentation by Tony LeMay (to be confirmed)

**Future Meetings**

July 12  
August 16  
October 4  
September 13  
November 1  
December 6 (if required)