

# Secretaries' Science Advisory Board

## MEETING MINUTES - Draft

### Webex Event Virtual Meeting

Monday, June 7, 2021

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretaries' Science Advisory Board (SAB) met on Monday, June 7, 2021 by Webex Event as a virtual public meeting. SAB members in attendance were: Tom Augspurger, PhD (Chair); Viney Aneja, PhD; Jamie DeWitt, PhD; Rich Di Giulio, PhD; Dave Dorman, DVM, PhD; Elaina Kenyon, PhD; Gina Kimble, PhD; Detlef Knappe, PhD; Davin Madden; Thomas Starr, PhD; Michael Stoskopf, DVM, PhD; and Betsey Tilson, MD, MPH. Also, in attendance were DEQ and DHHS staff: DEQ Assistant Secretary Sushma Masemore; Frannie Nilsen, PhD; Michael Pjetraj; Mike Abraczinskas; Brian Wrenn; Michael Scott; Danny Smith; Julie Grzyb; Zack Moore, MD; Virginia Guidry, PhD; Sharon Martin; Bridget Shelton; Amy Risen, PhD; Joelle Burseson; Rahatul Ashique; Mercedes Hernández; and Louise Hughes.

#### **I. Call to Order (Chairman Tom Augspurger)**

Meeting called to order at 10:04 AM.

#### **II. Review and Approve Agenda**

Chairman Augspurger noted the modifications to the draft meeting agenda, sent May 27, to postpone the Chemical Prioritization Status Update. Dr. David Dorman moved to accept the agenda as modified, Dr. Detlef Knappe seconded, and the agenda was approved by unanimous rollcall vote.

[June 7, 2021 Agenda](#)

#### **III. Ethics Statement**

Chairman Augspurger read the ethics statement and reminded the members that if anyone had any conflict of interest, or issues for which a conflict may be perceived, to indicate so. Dr. Jamie DeWitt explained that she is currently working on research on PFAS, receives funding from the NC General Assembly and the federal government for said research, and serves as an expert witness in cases involving PFAS. Dr. Knappe also stated he receives federal funding for PFAS research. There were no other potential conflicts expressed.

#### **IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes for April 5, 2021**

The draft meeting minutes were circulated to all members for review on May 7 and May 27, 2021. Dr. Elaina Kenyon moved to approve the minutes as circulated; Dr. Gina Kimble seconded, and the April minutes were adopted unanimously by rollcall vote.

## **V. DEQ and DHHS updates**

### DEQ Update:

*Provided by Sushma Masemore Assistant Secretary for the Environment, DEQ.*

1. Mrs. Masemore thanked the Board for their leadership, time, and expertise they provide to DHHS and DEQ. She had three points to emphasize:
  1. Agencies are looking forward to getting back to in-person meetings and will be transitioning to in-person and remote meetings as required.
  2. Chemours site: (3 major Divisions involved)
    - DAQ – evaluating stack test data from carbon adsorbers and thermal oxidizer/scrubber system – data is being posted on the website as it is quality assured.
    - DWR – plans for stormwater capture of Outfall 002; system is to be installed by 6/30/21 for 99% PFAS removal of the PFAS indicator parameters (HFPO DA, PFMOAA, PFMA). This summer, DWR Water Science staff are collecting PFAS samples in surface waters at public water supply reservoir intakes at 25 sample locations and testing of at least 23 PFAS analytes in Yadkin-Pee Dee and Broad River basins.
    - DWM – private well sampling in Bladen County up to 17 miles radius continuing the remainder of 2021 that private sampling will continue until wells that are clear of PFAS are reached, and directionality of the contamination does line up with the DAQ data provided. Thus far 6000 wells have been tested; 260 wells have PFAS compound Gen X above the provisional health goal of 140 ng/l. Surface water seeps have been examined; seeps A and C are operational, seep B should come online by next week, and seep D should be online within the month. Sediment testing in Cape Fear River continuing.
  3. Collaborative work with PFAS Network, EPA Region 4 ongoing.

### DHHS Update:

*Provided by Dr. Zack Moore State Epidemiologist; Epidemiology Section Chief, Division of Public Health, DHHS*

1. COVID updates: NC has seen declines of all metrics including cases, positivity rate, hospitalizations, and mortality rate as well as sustained reductions of all metrics in long-term care facilities. The state surpassed one million reported cases with 25% of the population estimated to be infected with the virus. The state surpassed 13,000 deaths. Trends are very encouraging. Vaccine efforts: 50% of the adult population vaccinated,

the population over 65 is ~78% vaccinated. A lot of work has currently been done with people who are willing to receive the vaccine but face barriers to get vaccinated.

2. OEEB: Still working with the COVID response. The wastewater monitoring is going on in 11 sites and will be expanding to 19 sites. The data is online now. Working on reducing workplace transmission of the virus.
3. PFAS: developing a health presentation.
4. Plans for increasing climate and health efforts. Applied for increased federal funding to increase resiliency against climate effects. Plan to focus on climate justice and flooding effects. Second component focuses on mitigation and includes conducting energy audits at childcare centers.

## **VI. PFAS Discussion**

Chairman Augspurgen introduced the discussion of PFAS with the following slide presentation, explaining that as there is no charge yet from the agencies regarding PFAS, the Board should both widen and narrow the focus on PFAS to advise the agencies, considering the approaches explained during the presentations the Board has heard over the last several meetings. He also introduced questions that spurred the discussion and presented a summary table of PFAS reported in North Carolina. The discussion can be heard/viewed in the meeting recording.

[PFAS Topic Presentation](#)

[Draft PFAS Summary Table](#)

[June 7, 2021 Meeting Recording](#)

## **VII. Public Forum**

None of the public signed up to speak.

Chairman Augspurgen reminded the Board of the next meeting: August 2, 2021. He expressed the hope it would be an in-person meeting, but there is a possibility of a remote option as well.

With no further business, Chairman Augspurgen invited a motion to adjourn. Dr. Dorman moved to adjourn; Dr. Di Giulio seconded. All voted in favor.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2021; details of meeting logistics to be announced.

**The meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Louise G. Hughes*

*Assistant to Sushma Masemore, Assistant Secretary for the Environment, DEQ*