

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency Board of Directors

FROM: Ashley Featherstone, Director

RE: Minutes for January 11, 2021

DATE: March 1, 2021

Enclosed, please find the Minutes for the **Monday, January 11, 2021** WNCRAQA board meeting. The next meeting of the WNCRAQA Board is scheduled for **Monday, March 8, 2021 at 4:00 pm**. Due to recommendations to limit public gatherings and Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), this meeting will be conducted remotely as authorized by Session Law 2020-3 and GS §166A-19.24. The meeting will be hosted via Zoom Webinar. The public may listen to the meeting as it occurs at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3kAbvNp>. Meetings will continue to be virtual until further notice.

*\*\*\*Public comment on agenda items will be taken via electronic means only. The following criteria for comment will apply: (1) any public comment must be received by 5:00 pm Sunday before the Board Meeting by sending an email to [wncair@buncombecounty.org](mailto:wncair@buncombecounty.org) or by leaving a voice message at 828-250-6777; and (2) must be no more than 350 words.\*\*\**

Comments will be read into the record, but the Board reserves the right to limit this practice to one hour. All comments received will be retained by the Agency as permanent record.

The Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency Board of Directors met via Zoom Webinar and phone on Monday, January 11, 2021 as authorized by Session Law 2020-3 and GS §166A-19.24 due to COVID-19.

The attendance of the Board members was as follows:

**Members Present:**

*Karl Koon  
Vonna Cloninger  
Joel Storrow  
Evan Couzo  
Garry Whisnant*

**Members Absent:**

*None*

**Staff Present:** *Ashley Featherstone, Director; Kevin Lance, Field Services Program Manager; James Raiford, Permitting Program Manager; Mike Matthews, Senior AQ Specialist; Betsy Brown, Air Quality Supervisor*

**Others Present:** *Michael Frue, County Attorney; Patty Beaver, CIBO; Melanie Daniel, Christopher Santucci, and Roger Coe, Pratt & Whitney*

Mr. Storrow called the meeting of the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency Board of Directors to order on January 11, 2021 at 4:03 pm.

The order of business was as follows:

**I. Public Comment Protocol Announcement**

Mr. Storrow said that the Board takes public comment at the end of the meeting, which is addressed in our by-laws. He and Ms. Featherstone have discussed this. Other entities take public comment earlier in meetings. Mr. Storrow said that he thought hearing public comment earlier in our meeting would be helpful to the Board. He has moved the Public Comment to IV. on the agenda. The Board is considering the Pratt & Whitney permit. There were public comments; and those comments would be helpful for the Board. Discussion of permanently moving the Public Comment will be later in the agenda.

**II. Introduction of New Board Member, Garry Whisnant**

Mr. Storrow introduced Mr. Garry Whisnant. He is not new to the Agency; he served on the Advisory Council for a number of years. He was the plant manager of the Duke Energy power plant that is a permitted by our Agency. He has a good working knowledge of our Agency and is a Buncombe County appointee.

Mr. Whisnant said he appreciated the opportunity to join the Board. He looks forward to working with the Board, and hopes to add some value. He was an employee of what was CP&L, then Progress Energy, and then Duke Energy Progress. He retired at the end of January 2020. Mr. Whisnant served on the Advisory Council for a number of years in the 1990's when he was an Environmental Specialist for Carolina Power and Light. He worked with the Board 25 years ago.

**III. Adjustment and approval of agenda**

Ms. Featherstone would like to add a couple of items under the Director's Report (VII) in the Agenda. The first item is the COVID-19 Update, and the second item the Accela Update and Budget Reallocation. Also under IX. Other Business, Announcements are (B) not (C).

Ms. Cloninger make a motion to approve the Agenda with changes. Mr. Koon seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes  
Ms. Cloninger-yes  
Dr. Couzo-yes  
Mr. Whisnant-yes  
Mr. Storrow-yes  
The motion passed 5-0.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

Mr. James Raiford said that the Agency received four public comments. These comments all concerned a new facility that is on the Board Agenda, Pratt & Whitney. Mr. Raiford said the Agency asked the public to limit their comments to 350 words; all exceeded that. Instead of reading each of them, he gave a brief summary of the comments. He offered to read the comments in their entirety at the Board's request. The comments were all similar in nature and all in support of the Board approving and issuing the permit for Pratt & Whitney.

The summary read at the Board meeting and complete email comments are attached to the Board minutes.

#### **V. Consent Agenda:**

##### **A. Approval of minutes from November 9, 2020**

Mr. Koon made the motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes  
Ms. Cloninger-yes  
Dr. Couzo-yes  
Mr. Storrow-yes

Mr. Frue noted that it is not out of order for a new member to vote on approval of the minutes as they belong to the Board. If he has reviewed the minutes and he is happy with them he can vote.

Mr. Whisnant-yes  
The motion passes 5-0.

#### **VI. Unfinished Business**

##### **A. Board Retreat. February 11<sup>th</sup> 10 am to noon. Budget, fund balance, financial planning.**

Mr. Storrow still would like to hold the retreat. He thought it wise to meet independently of the regularly scheduled Board meetings in order to discuss the budget. Perhaps not just this year, but also every year. After conversations with Ms. Featherstone and other staff, it might be better to hold the retreat later in the spring, maybe in April instead of the previously suggested February date. This would be after our March meeting and before the May meeting, when the Board takes up the 2022 budget for approval. February is too early in the budget process; there are too many unknowns.

Board discussion included support of the retreat, but virtually, not in person. Board members requested the documents for review well ahead of the actual meeting. The

Board will be provided with the documents before the Board retreat, by the March Board meeting if possible.

It was noted that if the meeting is completely virtual, it would be just like the current Board meetings. If the Board met in person and the public was allowed to attend virtually, the Agency would need the use of the County's Zoom cart. The public will be able to listen in on the meeting, in either case.

The Board decided to schedule the Board meeting for Thursday April 15, from 10am until 12 noon. A packet with the subject material will be sent out well in advance.

Mr. Frue said that since the suggested meeting time is in another month than our regular Board meetings it will need to be public. The rule states that any public body should have public comment once a month. Although this Board does not meet once a month, if the Board meets off month this rule would apply.

**B. Director Job Description and Performance Review**

Mr. Storrow said that the County is revamping job descriptions, particularly of Directors. He worked with Sybil Tate, one of the Assistant County Managers on Ms. Featherstone's job description prior to the holidays. Ms. Featherstone also offered input. Last week Mr. Storrow met with Ms. Tate to go through Ms. Featherstone's performance review. Ms. Tate will share that with Ms. Featherstone in the future. He said Ms. Featherstone is doing a fantastic job, meeting and exceeding expectations, and is great for the Agency. He appreciates her leadership. When the process is completed, Board members will receive a copy of the job description and performance review. One thing that was clarified in the job description was that the Director reports to the Agency Board.

**VII. Director's Report:**

**A. COVID-19 Update**

After the Agenda went out the Agency has had another Staff reassignment. Last March Ms. Featherstone was reassigned for a month, helping to reassign Buncombe County employees to help in the community with COVID-19 needs. Since last June all the County offices have been reopened. All staff have been working, either remotely or in the office. Now there is another wave of reassignments related to vaccine distribution. All of the County departments have been asked to provide staff to help with this effort between now and March 15<sup>th</sup>. What they need are greeters, runners, decontamination, Ready Team members to answer questions, people to assist with the logistics of paper work, and contact tracers. The federal government did not allocate additional funds to state and local governments. The County is reassigning people. They hope to get more funds around the middle of March. We only have five staff with one unfilled position, still down one staff member since the previous director retired. The Agency offered one staff member one day per week, not 40 hours per week. Several staff members volunteered. Betsy Brown has had the Ready Team training and is working with them one day per week. The County appreciates the assistance.

**B. Accela Update and Budget Reallocation**

Accela is a development software used over much of the County, such as Permits and Inspections and Planning. Some other counties that have air programs utilize Accela modules to manage their data. This was a new item added to the budget last year to start implementing Accela. Up until now, the Agency has been tracking

permits, inspections, and complaints in spreadsheets and an Access database. We allocated a bit less than \$10,000 this past budget year to get started. We have a three-year plan, at about \$10,000 per year, to get the Agency modernized in this system. What we had scheduled for the current budget year, which goes to July 1, was the build out of a complaint module for the Agency. When COVID-19 occurred, we decided to reorder our plans. Instead of building the complaints module, we decided to develop the permits and inspections module as well as develop the ability to take electronic payments from the plan for year two instead. We were the only County department only taking cash and check, and did not have the ability to take credit card payment or electronic fund transfers for permits. We prioritized the buildup for Mike Matthews who handles the renovation, demolition and asbestos permitting for the County. He is our most public facing staff member. The electronic payments would mean he would not have to take as many payments in cash or check. This has been successful and we have just embarked on the program at the beginning of the year. Mr. Matthews is now entering the permit application data into Accela. We plan to go live with electronic payments any day now. We went to IT to see where we were with the allocation of approximately \$9,500 during this budget year. IT had used up all but 10 hours of the time. There was not enough left in the budget to proceed with any other work before July 1. The complaint module is our next priority. The Agency is working with the County on a code enforcement taskforce that deals with repeat violators. It is a high priority for the County to get all the departments entering these data in Accela. We are the only department not in the complaint module. We would like to reallocate funds from travel budget, usually around \$16,000 of which \$15,000 is available, to cover further development. We do not expect to be traveling and going to training until possibly the fall. This would mean asking the county to move \$3100 of unspent travel funds to IT development fund so IT can work on our complaint module as they have time. We wanted to let the Board know that was what we were planning to do and make sure there were no objections.

Mr. Koon asked about a \$3 technology fee charged for building permits in Accela, what it is and if we would charge that. We are a separate department and paying for the development of Accela ourselves. The County covers the expense of development for other departments. Mr. Raiford was unaware of a technology fee, but said other County agencies do charge to cover the credit card fee. When we do the fee study, we plan to raise fees and not add another fee. Mike Matthews thought the fee in question was charged on City permits. They do have a technology charge. The County is not charging a technology fee now, the trade permits are the only ones that the County is issuing online. Mr. Matthews is going to check if the County is planning to change that and charge a fee.

The fees paid will come straight to Air Quality. Mr. Raiford said the Agency will be able to take credit card payments online, but we would not have a machine to take credit card purchases in person. That is more expensive. Fees are less for electronic fund transfers. Mr. Matthews still takes cash or check. We have considered restricting the size of the permit fee that can be taken by credit card to keep the costs down. We will work with the County on that. When we do our fee study, we can consider the credit card fees. The online payments for permit fees are directly coded to our accounts, Fund 120 and Cost Center Air Quality.

Mr. Storrow asked that Ms. Featherstone talk about the tracking of the online funds and how they make it into our account at our next meeting.

**C. WNCRAQA Business Plan**

The plan was included in the Board packet. County departments were asked to develop business plans by the end of the year that aligned with the County's Strategic plan and their goals. This includes a summary and the new mission statement the Board voted on last year. The Plan lays out our core duties, our day-to-day operations and purpose. New initiatives include Operational Excellence; we plan to increase efficiency with the implementation of the Accela program, improving customer service, including taking online payments and offering online services. We have incorporated the County's Environmental and Energy Stewardship Goals—which includes reducing greenhouse gases (GHG). We are in support mode working with other departments on other initiatives, since we do not have direct influence over some of these factors. We are serving on a County Energy Efficiency GHG reduction work group. The Business plan is a living document and will be updated periodically with new initiatives and our core duties. A formatting error was noted on the last page. The numbering went from 2 to 4, 3 was missing from the form. Staff will make the correction.

**D. Board of Commissioners Presentation-March 16<sup>th</sup>**

The County Commissioners are asking all Boards to provide an update in person. Ms. Featherstone and Mr. Storrow are going to attend and provide an update. The public may attend virtually. They have asked for a list of members, purpose, financial updates, next steps and challenges. They are asking if the Commissioners can do anything to support us. They have supplied a Power Point template. These will be brief, 10-minute presentation and 5 minutes for questions. Ms. Featherstone asked for any suggestions. They are planning to provide basic information: what we do and what is going on with the Agency. We will mention the Board retreat, financial planning, and getting back to full staff.

**E. Vacant Staff Position Update**

This has been mentioned previously. We are trying to get back to full staff after the former Director retired. Ms. Featherstone took that position and James Raiford was promoted into the Permitting Program Manager position, which left a Senior Air Quality Specialist position open. There have been hiring delays and it took awhile for us to get this position posted. It is currently posted and will be for a total of two weeks. Interviews are planned for the last couple of weeks of January, and we hope to make an offer in early February. Staff are County employees per our air interlocal agreement. The County posts vacancies on their website and other places. The position was also posted with two national air quality associations with whom we have memberships.

**F. Air Quality Monitoring Update**

Kevin Lance reported that we closed out the 2020 monitoring season. We had a good season. We had no exceedances. Our data completeness was good. For ozone, data completeness was 94.1 %. For particulate matter, we had 96.8% data completeness. Recently we delivered our ozone equipment to the State Electronic and Calibration Branch in Raleigh to certify our equipment for the 2021 season. We will get the equipment back and reinstall it in mid-February. We have an EPA technical systems audit the week of March 8<sup>th</sup>. The audit will be virtual. This occurs every three years and includes our entire monitoring program. Mr. Whisnant asked how many monitors we had in the field. We operate one ozone monitor at Bent Creek. We have two PM 2.5 monitors operating now that are collocated at Board of Education. They are collocated for EPA data comparison purposes. Regulations require duplicate monitors.

The Buncombe MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) is expected to increase to a half million, and in with that population increase, the rules will require a PM-10 monitor. We are in talks with the State about where this monitor should be located. Rather than the State operate this monitor in Waynesville, we would like to run it at the same site where we currently are operating the PM 2.5 collocated monitors.

Dr. Couzo requested the annual average of PM-2.5 micrograms per cubic meter. The annual average was 4.9 PM2.5 for 2020. The fourth highest ozone 8-hour max was 54 parts per billion in 2020, which is exceptionally low.

Ms. Featherstone noted that the Agency is audited by the State throughout the year. She commended Mr. Lance on a good job. Our monitoring program is doing very well, and we are meeting all our requirements.

**G. Clean Air Excellence Awards Update**

We last met on November 9. On November 10, Mr. Storrow and Ms. Featherstone did a virtual presentation of the Clean Air Excellence Award to Eaton Corporation in Arden. This award is something we do every year with our permitted facilities that ties in with our strategic plan goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which also reduced other air pollution emissions. The County did a story and video, which is now on our website, [wncair.org](http://wncair.org). The link is in a news item about the award. This was a positive experience and the Agency has received good feedback. We appreciate the County giving Eaton recognition.

**H. SO2 Designation Update**

Enclosed in the Board packet is a copy of a letter to the Governor of NC from the EPA concerning SO2 designations for the State. Back in September, we reported that the EPA was proposing to designate our area “Attainment- Unclassifiable” for SO2. Duke Energy Progress operated an SO2 monitor near the plant in Skyland for 3 years. The data from that monitor showed that the area was meeting the standard. That designation has been finalized. Permission was granted so that Duke no longer has to run that monitor. An attachment to the letter shows that other areas in NC are designated “Attainment-Unclassifiable.”

**I. Facility Permit Modifications**

Facility Name	Type of Facility	Facility Classification	Location	Changes from Existing Permit
Shakespeare Company, LLC	Synthetic Fiber Coating Facility	Synthetic Minor	Sand Hill Road, Enka	Name Change, reclassification from prohibitory small to synthetic minor, add four additional process lines to the conductive fibers antistatic coating plant and one additional bicomponent fiber extrusion line to emission sources, and one jet cleaner to the Exempted Activities. Remove VOC work practice condition since rule was repealed.

Shakespeare is requesting a modification of an existing facility. Previously only Section A of the facility permit review was included in the Board packets. Section A included the emissions, general information and staff recommendations for the

facility, but was not the entire review. Mr. Storrow and Ms. Featherstone decided that since the packet was being sent electronically and not by mail, we would include the entire review, which includes additional details if Board members are interested. Staff reclassified Shakespeare from a prohibitory small to a synthetic minor. They are adding some additional process lines, and staff made updates to the permit based on rule changes. We are required to classify facilities as small, synthetic minor, or Title V. The Title V facilities have the highest emissions. A facility can avoid the Title V rules if their actual emissions are lower than the Title V thresholds by taking a synthetic minor limit. True small facilities have potential emissions that are under Title V thresholds and they have lower emissions. A prohibitory small is a special designation that offers regulatory relief for certain types of facilities such as coating facilities like this one. Potential emissions are based on actual uncontrolled emissions because their actual emissions are typically a lot lower than their potential emissions for these types of facilities..

Dr. Couzo asked if the Agency knows the speciated VOC emissions for this facility and others that we permit. The Agency does have this information and we calculate the VOCs on a more detailed level. On the front page of the permit review form, we list the VOCs together. For this facility, the VOCs are mostly acetic acid and formic acid. Agency staff breaks down the VOCs and HAPs in a more detailed level in the emissions calculations, which are attached to the permit package. We can provide these if anyone is interested. The facilities report to us each year and we calculate the emissions each year. To determine facility source classifications of small, synthetic minor or Title V, we look at the facility's VOC and HAP emissions. This facility's emissions are mostly VOCs.

Mr. Koon made the motion to approve the permit modification to Shakespeare Company, LLC. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.  
Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes  
Ms. Cloninger-yes  
Dr. Couzo-yes  
Mr. Whisnant-yes  
Mr. Storrow-yes  
The motion passed 5-0.

**J. New Facilities**

<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Type of Facility</b>	<b>Facility Classification</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Proposed Equipment</b>
Raytheon Technologies Corporation-Pratt & Whitney Division	Airplane Parts Manufacturer	Small	Biltmore Park West, Asheville	Equipment for the manufacture of metal parts includes metal casting operations, grinding, and coating. Specifically, wax injection, shell building, part casting, post casting, machining and coating processes and emergency engines.

Raytheon Technologies Corporation is the parent company for Pratt & Whitney Division. They are an airplane parts manufacturer. This is a request for a new permit. There are representatives of Pratt & Whitney on the Board meeting call in the event there are any questions staff cannot answer. Staff should be able to answer any questions about the permit and their emissions. The facility is a foundry and a



true small source. We have reviewed all their information. There have been discussions that during construction, the facility might need to bring in a concrete batch plant to pour a very large slab, about one million square feet. For now, Pratt & Whitney are not planning to do that. This permit is just for the facility and the manufacturing process.

If they did need to bring in a portable concrete batch plant, it would need to be permitted. The plant would be temporary for construction. We could address any additional permitting if necessary. It might be a separate permit. They would not operate both at the same time. If there were concerns, we could put a condition in the permit that the facility and the concrete batch plant could not operate at the same time. Concrete batch plants are also small sources. There are some NC air toxics that both have in common. If they were to operate at the same time we would have to do an analysis, but it does not look like that will be required.

Mr. Raiford noted that if they did need to run a concrete batch plant on site, they would have to have a regular generator on site, and a toxics review would be required.

Pratt & Whitney need the air quality permit to build the facility. Without the air quality permit the facility can do grading and some site preparation, but they cannot pour the slab. They hope to operate in 2022, maybe as early as December 2021. NC General Statutes mandate that all small source permits be issued for a minimum of 8 years. There are conditions in the permit that require the facility to notify the Agency of startup, and if there are any changes to the facility from what was originally submitted. The largest speciated portion of the VOCs is styrene, a HAP, which comes from paraffin wax. The majority of the emissions are from the melting of wax to build casting molds. Copies of the dispersion modeling are publicly available. The Agency has a copy of their original modeling review. Mr. Raiford also ran the modeling and was able to duplicate the results.

Mr. Koon made a motion to approve the new facility permit for Raytheon Technologies Corporation-Pratt & Whitney Division. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 5-0.

A couple of Board members expressed how pleased they were to have the Pratt & Whitney plant coming to our area.

## **VIII. New Business:**

### **A. Legal Counsel Report**

Mr. Frue has nothing new to report. He said he was available to answer questions regarding Board meeting schedules, and timing of public comment.

### **B. Discussion of Advisory Committee**

Mr. Storrow referred to the May 10, 2011 Memo in the Board packet which include the guidelines for the Advisory Committee. He said that the Advisory Committee

was not as functional and active as it used to be. In recent years it has mostly been utilized for the Clean Air Excellence Awards. There are many ways this committee could be used. Mr. Storrow opened the floor to comments. Ms. Cloninger suggested discussing the committee at the Board retreat. She stated that there are pros and cons to the committee. Mr. Koon also suggested that this should be a topic for the Board retreat. Mr. Storrow stated we would save this item for the Board retreat.

**C. Public comment procedures for virtual Board meetings**

Mr. Storrow stated that he thought it would be better to have the Public Comment at the beginning of the meeting. Currently our bylaws place the Public Comment near the end of the Agenda. This was confirmed by Mr. Frue. Should the Board decide to change the order officially, it would require a motion and a vote to amend the bylaws.

Ms. Cloninger noted that it had always been at the end and has not caused a problem. She mentioned that she did not see why we would need to change it, and we did not often receive public comment at the meetings. Mr. Storrow said that, particularly while our meetings are virtual, it seemed beneficial to have public comment at the beginning. He noted today that since the order of the meeting was changed today, the Board was able to hear comments from the public prior to the vote on the Pratt & Whitney permit.

Mr. Frue noted that the County Commissioners have had Public Comment at the beginning and at the end over the last 15 years. He said it has changed about every two years. The advantage to have it at the beginning is so that we would have public comment before the Board votes. He noted that when you allow live comments in a virtual meeting, they can be difficult to control.

Mr. Koon said he would like to look at the bylaws. He mentioned the meeting where the Board was considering a permit for a pet crematorium. We had public comment while that was being considered. It is different if we are hearing a general comment or a comment specific to a permit. Does that preclude comment on a subject at that point in the meeting?

Mr. Frue said that it did not and that would be at the pleasure of the Board. Mr. Frue said that the General Statue states that the Board has to allow for comment once a month during a public meeting. This is geared more toward public hearings than toward our meetings. There are difficulties staggering comments during virtual meetings and it may be better to pick the beginning or the end.

Ms. Featherstone noted that during the in person Board meeting when we considered the pet crematory, the Board chair was able to recognize those attending and allow their comments prior to the vote. We still had official public comment at the end, but the board chair has recognized someone from the public or someone from a facility when applicable during a meeting. When we are virtual, how does the Board Chair know someone in is "in the room"?

Currently, citizens have to submit their comments in advance and sign up to attend the virtual meeting.

Mr. Raiford referenced the bylaws. He said that in the bylaws the Public Comment is only referenced in the Order of Business and stated that it should be last. Since we are taking public comments ahead of time, we would know if there was

particular interest in a meeting. Of course, if we did allow live participation, we would not know about the comments ahead of time.

Mr. Storrow suggested having Public Comment early in the meeting while we are meeting virtually, but not amending the bylaws.

Mr. Koon mentioned that if we have live public comment at the beginning of the meeting, perhaps we should limit the time to maybe ten minutes. Written comments would be submitted prior.

Mr. Cloninger noted there were people on our meeting who could not speak; she felt they were still on; they should have the ability to comment. Ms. Featherstone said those on the line were representatives from Pratt & Whitney. She said Mr. Raiford could tell us about other possible options, like providing a raise hand or chat feature during the virtual meeting. We could recognize them at that time. These features are not currently enabled. She also noted that we have to be careful with people making comments, but Mr. Raiford would have the ability to cut someone off if the comments were too lengthy or inappropriate. Our meetings do not currently allow for live comments. The County Commissioners are now allowing the public to sign up ahead of time in order to give live comment during the meeting.

Mr. Raiford says the technology is there is we want to accept public comment during the meeting. We already have people register for the meeting; they could register to speak. We could enable the hand raise feature. He can unmute people and allow them to talk.

Ms. Featherstone said there are a list of rules the County Commissioners has for people who sign up to speak, such as no profanity, keep to three minutes, etc.

Mr. Frue said that is the prerogative and job of the Chair to run public comment. Any reasonable rules can be placed on public comment; it is a limited public forum. If you made rules, they would have to be uniformly applied and balanced. Mr. Raiford is the producer and he can silence someone if necessary.

The Pratt & Whitney representatives messaged “thank you” to the Board.

Mr. Storrow said that it sounded like most would like to keep public comment procedures the same. He thanked the Board for their comments.

## **IX. Other Business:**

### **A. Calendar**

#### **1. Approve 2021 WNCRAQA Board Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Koon may be out of town March 8 and could miss that meeting.

Mr. Koon motioned to accept the Board Meeting Schedule. Dr. Couzo seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 5-0.

**2. Next regular scheduled meeting is March 8, 2021**

**B. Announcements**

Ms. Featherstone noted that January is Radon Awareness Month.

She said that ncradon.org is offering free radon kits online, one per household. If you have not tested your home, we highly recommend it.

Radon is second leading cause of lung cancer, after smoking. Radon levels can be higher here in the mountains than in the eastern part of the state due to granite and gneiss, which contain uranium.

**X. Adjournment**

Mr. Koon made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Cloninger seconded the motion.

Voting was conducted by roll call.

Mr. Koon-yes

Ms. Cloninger-yes

Dr. Couzo-yes

Mr. Whisnant-yes

Mr. Storrow-yes

The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting adjourned 5:29pm.

Lindsay Rhoden – Architect and Office Director for MPS Architecture and a Chamber Board member.

- Advocates for Board approval and issuance of the permit
- States the Pratt & Whitney is committed to LEED building certification
- Geared Turbofan product line improves fuel efficiency and reduces regulated emissions.
- Pratt & Whitney is known for industry leading sustainability, environmental, health and safety goals.
- Good for the economy of Buncombe County

Michael Lusick – represents Antonio and Alex Fraga, founders of The FIRC Group which is headquartered in downtown Asheville.

- Commends Pratt & Whitney for their compliance and diligence with air permitting process and advocates for Board approval and issuance of the permit.
- Like the previous comment, mentions Pratt & Whitney's environmental commitments, and that the development will be good for the economy of Buncombe County

Matthew Fogleman – Buncombe County resident, local business leader, civil engineer and advocate for economic development in our region. Office Manager for ECS Southeast, LLP

- Commends Pratt & Whitney for their compliance and diligence with air permitting process and advocates for Board approval and issuance of the permit.
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David Worley – partner at Worley, Woodbery, & Associates, Certified Public Accountants in Asheville, NC

- Supports the permit application and asks the Board to approve
- Will transform economic development in our region
- States that Pratt and Whitney has a strong commitment to the Environment, including a Green Grants program that provides funds for employees who want to improve local communities, and the company won the Connecticut Environmental Award some years ago for emissions reductions
- Pratt & Whitney emphasizes community engagement.

**From:** [Lindsey Rhoden](#)  
**To:** [wncair](#)  
**Subject:** Support of Pratt and Whitney  
**Date:** Friday, January 08, 2021 2:52:42 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hello Western North Carolina Regional air Quality Agency Board of Directors:

I am Lindsey Rhoden and a Buncombe County resident and advocate for economic development in Western North Carolina as an architect and Office Director for MPS Architecture. I am also proud to be a Chamber Board member.

I commend the representatives of Pratt & Whitney for their compliance and diligence with regional air permitting process and am writing to advocate for board approval and issuance of that permit during the meeting of January 11, 2021.

The company commitment to responsible development is reflected in its commitment to LEED certification by the US Green Building Council and in the manufacture of the Geared Turbofan product line for aircraft engines that will improve fuel efficiency by 16%, reduce regulated emissions by 50% and reduce the engine noise footprint by over 75%. The company is known for industry leading sustainability, environmental, health and safety goals that include 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, 10% reduction in hazardous waste, 25% reduction in water consumption and 100% passing compliance and assurance scores on annual permit and program evaluations. These are values we share as a region and strides we can all take pride in.

The proposed Pratt & Whitney development in South Buncombe County will have lasting and positive impacts on the economy of our region and wellbeing of its residents. At full buildout, the company will support over 1200 direct, indirect and induced jobs for local residents contributing over \$76 million in new annual payroll to the household earnings of Buncombe County families. The company builds upon the growing reputation for Asheville and Western North Carolina as a globally competitive workforce for American manufacturing that serves diverse and innovative sectors including automotive, aerospace, life sciences and outdoor products.

**As someone whose career passion is placemaking, I recognize it's projects like Pratt and Whitney that will be a catalyst for growth in our region, and I appreciate the various checks and balances that our region has to ensure smart and calculated growth.** This is a generational opportunity to advance the economic health of local residents, especially during a time of unprecedented economic and community crisis.

For the above reasons, I urge your support of the application before you.

Thank you,



**lindsey rhoden**, *asheville office director*  
47 rankin ave, suite 141, asheville, nc 28801  
o. 828 398 5016 c. 828 450 8420

***ideas taking shape***

**From:** [Michael Lusick](#)  
**To:** [wncair](#)  
**Subject:** January 11 2021 Meeting  
**Date:** Friday, January 08, 2021 4:00:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [Air Quality Board of Directors 1-8-2021.pdf](#)

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To the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency Board of Directors.

I respectfully request you please consider the attached letter for your meeting on January 11, 2021.

Thank you  
Michael Lusick



**Michael Lusick**

Vice President of Hospitality

FIRC Group, INC

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**FIRC**  
GROUP, INC.

January 8, 2021

**To the Western North Carolina Regional Air Quality Agency Board of Directors:**

My name is Michael Lusick and I represent Antonio and Alex Fraga founders and operators of *The FIRC Group*. We are residents of Buncombe County and *The FIRC Group* is headquartered in downtown Asheville. The FIRC Group currently employs over 200 people across our 8 businesses (6 open and 2 under development) all located in Buncombe County. We are advocates for the type of responsible economic development represented by the Pratt & Whitney project.

We commend the representatives of Pratt & Whitney for their compliance and diligence with regional air permitting process and am writing to advocate for board approval and issuance of that permit during the meeting of January 11, 2021.

The company commitment to responsible development is reflected in its commitment to LEAD certification by the US Green Building Council and in the manufacture of the Geared Turbofan product line for aircraft engines that will improve fuel efficiency by 16%, reduce regulated emissions by 50% and reduce the engine noise footprint by over 75%. The company is known for industry leading sustainability, environmental, health and safety goals that include 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, 10% reduction in hazardous waste, 25% reduction in water consumption and 100% passing compliance and assurance scores on annual permit and program evaluations. These are values we share as a region and strides we can all take pride in.

The proposed Pratt & Whitney development in South Buncombe County will have lasting and positive impacts on the economy of our region and wellbeing of its residents. At full buildout, the company will support over 1200 direct, indirect, and induced jobs for residents contributing over \$76 million in new annual payroll to the household earnings of Buncombe County families. The company builds upon the growing reputation for Asheville and Western North Carolina as a globally competitive workforce for American manufacturing that serves diverse and innovative sectors including automotive, aerospace, life sciences and outdoor products.

This is a generational opportunity to advance the economic health of residents, especially during a time of unprecedented economic and community crisis.

For the above reasons, as citizens and business leaders in Buncombe County we strongly urge your support of the application before you.

Thank you.



Michael P. Lusick

Vice President

The FIRC Group

Citizen of Buncombe County

Real Estate Investments

**From:** [Matthew Fogleman, P.E.](#)  
**To:** [wncair](#)  
**Subject:** Air Quality Permit for Pratt and Whitney, Asheville  
**Date:** Friday, January 08, 2021 7:47:57 PM

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To the Western North Carolina Regional air Quality Agency Board of Directors:

My name is Matthew Fogleman, and I am a Buncombe County resident, local business leader, civil engineer, and advocate for economic development in our region.

I commend the representatives of Pratt & Whitney for their compliance and diligence with air quality permitting, and I am writing to advocate for **board approval** and issuance of that permit during the upcoming meeting of January 11, 2021.

I believe that Pratt and Whitney's commitment to responsible development is reflected in its commitment to LEED certification by the US Green Building Council and in the manufacture of the Geared Turbofan product line for aircraft engines that will:

- improve fuel efficiency by 16%
- reduce regulated emissions by 50%, and
- reduce the engine noise footprint by over 75%

Further, the company is known for industry-leading sustainability, environmental, health and safety goals that include:

- 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- 10% reduction in hazardous waste
- 25% reduction in water consumption, and
- 100% passing compliance and assurance scores on annual permit and program evaluations.

These are values we share as a region and strides we can all take pride in.

The proposed Pratt & Whitney development in South Buncombe County will have **tremendous lasting and positive impacts** on the economy of our region and wellbeing of its residents. At full buildout, the company will support over 1200 direct, indirect, and induced jobs for local residents contributing over \$76 million in new annual payroll to the household earnings of Buncombe County families. The company builds upon the growing reputation for Asheville and Western North Carolina as a globally competitive workforce for American manufacturing that serves diverse and innovative sectors including automotive, aerospace, life sciences, and outdoor products.

This is a **generational opportunity** to advance the economic health of local residents, especially during a time of unprecedented economic and community crisis.

For the above reasons, I urge your support of the application before you.

Thank you.

Matthew Fogleman, P.E.  
Buncombe County Resident

**MATTHEW FOGLEMAN, P.E.** | Office Manager, Principal  
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**From:** [David Worley](#)  
**To:** [wncair](#)  
**Subject:** Pratt & Whitney Permit  
**Date:** Sunday, January 10, 2021 1:42:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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To: WNC Regional Air Quality Agency

Dear Board of Directors:

Please accept my comments below for your January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting with respect to Pratt & Whitney's application for a permit for its Buncombe County proposed operations, and my support for this permit.

This Company will bring transforming economic development to our region, on a scale that will offer our citizens significant wage improvement, and provide major impact for a multitude of businesses in our community. They will be a great addition to our community business culture.

Additionally, from the perspective of this application please be aware that this Company has a strong commitment to the Environment. Its Corporate vision includes certain 'Sustainability Objectives', including in the area of 'Social Good'. In this area they cite various programs and initiatives that are "designed with communities and environment in mind". Included is a Green Grants program providing funds for employees who want to improve the communities where they live and work. The Company has build 12 LEED Silver or better buildings in locations in the US and around the world. The Company won a Connecticut Environmental Award some years ago for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 22 percent, and air emissions by 56 percent over a 5 year period through 2010.

And although a world-world corporation P & W emphasizes community engagement. Here is a statement from their Code of Conduct, with my emphasis added:

*"We are active partners in our communities, volunteering our time, resources, and talents to help communities prosper. We operate on a global scale, yet we draw strength and inspiration from our local communities—the places where we work and live. We encourage growth and vitality through positive engagement with our neighbors".*

Therefore, I encourage the Board to approve the application before it with the knowledge that P&W is a 'good actor' in terms of the environment, and its commitment to be supportive of our community. Respectfully,

David Worley

*David Worley*  
Partner

Worley, Woodbery, & Associates, PA  
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**WORLEY, WOODBERY, & ASSOCIATES, PA**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

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