***TAMS Steering Committee Call Notes***

**November 17, 2021 @ 10AM PDT**

Attending: Christal Black, Pat Childers, Vallen Cook, Hayden Hardie, Lori Howell, Carma Huseby, Josie Kamkoff, Mehrdad Khatibi, Mike King, Chris Lee, Angelique Luedeker, Mike Natchees, James Payne, Camille QuickBear, Tanda Roberts, Melinda Ronca-Battista, Darlene Santos

**Opening Business**

 Roll Call was completed, and there was a quorum of voting members.

The agendawas approved and an addition was made.

The September notes were approved.

**EPA Updates/ITEP Updates/Ex-Officio Updates –** Pat Childers

1. Build Back Better America –
* Website calendar now out on tribal air website; a central location for upcoming region comment period, deadlines and other items
* Working with Christal on grants course; going well
* First bill bipartisan infrastructure information; there’s a lot of money for water and air issues; 50 billion for drinking water infrastructure; some for diesel for gasoline for electric buses
* The bigger bill is the Build Back Better America which has hit a couple hiccups; could have bigger ramifications on potential grants for tribes; will have an affect on EPA staff as well as potential affect on tribes; more money that EPA is going to have to work with to get out to states, locals, tribes and others; hopefully more monies either specifically for tribes, tribal set asides or tribes can apply for
* Still a lot of things being worked out
* These funds and the growth may not be in the traditional 103/105 grant areas; with regard to section 103/105 grants, the President’s budget had about at 60-65% increase in 103/105
* Pat reported the reason we, Christal and Nashelly are working hard on the grants course with EPA grants staff that will mean that more folks on the EPA side and hopefully more folks on the tribal side will be working 103/105 grants
* At a time where 105 grants are being changed and how they are being implemented; there is a push to get more tribes into PPGs; we are definitely trying to get more tribes to do 105; joining the benefits of 105; showing the benefits of a PPG now that there is zero match in a PPG and showing the need to still pursue TAS
* With the new money that should hopefully be out there in 103/105 and these new changes, we want to make sure folks are aware of them
* A lot of EPA time is going to be grant officers; that may change a lot of the availability for us to do other important work; concerned about spreading resources thin
* Chris asked regarding the issue that Leroy brought up, is there a possibility to utilize additional funding and resources to meet the QA function for the tribes
* Pat hopes it will come with resources for EPA to help oversee the workload of issuing the grants; if not, it is going to stress the already stressed workload; there is potential that would help tribes to develop larger staffs
* This gets back to the issues we have discussed a lot is getting guidance from the steering committee; do we use new money or do we highlight, prioritize to grow existing programs, mature programs, make them more mature, make them more sustainable; a lot of tribal programs are working on a shoestring and they need more funds to be sustainable; or do recognize new tribes, new tribal air programs, not new tribes and create new tribal air programs; need balance
* Some of the resources within 103/105 potentially could be used for its staffing resources within EPA; concerned that a lot of folks will be stressed because they will be performing the role of project officers; hopefully won’t hurt on the technical expertise side; hopefully it addresses that; hopefully within the new funding it will allow tribal environmental programs to grow that already exist, as well as help tribes create new tribal environmental programs
* Region 10 is now taken over for Region 5 as the lead region; looking at direct implementation of EPA programs in Indian Country
* How does EPA do implementation in Indian Country when tribes either don’t or choose not to implement clean air act programs
* State should not be implementing in Indian Country but EPA has a federal responsibility under our trust responsibility to implement if the tribes are not implementing so the question is how do we measure if we are doing it well; open ended question that anybody can call, write or send email for further discussion

**TAMS Center Updates/Business** – Hayden Hardie

1. TAMS VM Learning Center Status –
* No updates on renovation or statement of scope of work for the TAMS Learning Center; status quo
* No update on when facility will be available for trainings or meetings; possibly when agency is open for business
* Agency is still 45 plus days out from opening up for visitors; notice has not been issued yet
* Currently, staff are following agency guidelines to enter facility with regards to vaccination status, etc.
* Mehrdad mentions in terms of the timing aspect for trainings, we need time to have lodging contracts in place with the hotel; lengthy process; keep in mind announcements, travel assistance, etc.; need at least 3 months for planning
* What is SC members position on this and how do we want to support this moving forward?
* SC members will draft letter to agency to request status of facility; Mike Natchees and Vallen will work on draft and get out in next couple weeks; Chris to assist with language on letter; Vallen to send email out to Chris and Mike
1. TAMS Equipment Loan Program –
* Funding; on hold, waiting to get budget
* No purchase of new equipment
* Limited funds to get some equipment out for calibration
* Received approval to move forward with paperwork to hire equipment manager position through NOWCC; working on position description
* Start interviews after first of the new year
* Increased salary to prevent turnover; start pay $15
1. AIAQTP Courses **–** Christal Black, ITEP
* Provided update on 5 day Management course; Pat Childers and Mike Natchees were presenters
* Review of updated AIAQTP training schedule
* Planning to transition two courses at the TAMS Center into in-person courses; Fundamentals of Air Monitoring and IAQ Diagnostic Tools; tentatively slated for late April, early May; internally, need to make decision by January to allow time for planning hotel contract, announcement, etc.
* James reported that a tribe expressed interest in dispersion model training; potential webinar training; AirMod; can provide classroom training or an overview; continue discussion at next meeting

**Workgroup/Subcommittee Updates** – Chris Lee

* Review of draft support letter on issue regarding Gila River Indian Community; send to Peter Tsirigotis and Connie Thoma
* SC to review and provide comments via email for final draft by next month’s meeting
* SC agrees to get out sooner; send comment to Chris; Chris to email updates
* Tentative deadline within next couple weeks; after Thanksgiving

**TAMS SC Vacant Position** – Vallen Cook

* No new nominations
* Sent email out last week to NTAA for assistance; waiting for response
* Reached out to TACs in eastern regions; requesting SC members to assist
* Pat will bring up in Management course; Region 3 will be beneficial
* Mike Natchees to reach out to new person, Katie Pollack in Region 3, Monacan Indian Nation

Submitted by:

Darlene Santos