

Crofton Community Advisory Forum Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2020 – Teleconference
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Forum participants:

Catalyst: Brian Houle, Steve Bird, Lana Wilhelm

Crofton and area Residents: Pat Hawkes, Garth Mihalcheon

Our mandate is to review and make recommendations to address concerns regarding environment, health, safety and other issues relevant to Crofton Mill operations and the surrounding communities that may be brought before us, and by so doing to build and maintain a solid relationship between Catalyst Paper Crofton Division and its neighbours.

Special welcome provided for our newest CAF member, Garth Mihalcheon. CAF participation by residents of local community is low after 2 members (Anette and Keith) moved away from the area. New members are welcome at this time.

1) Agenda Approval:

Due to teleconference style meeting, agenda was accepted without meeting attendees having it in front of them.

2) Minutes Approval:

August 2020 minutes for approval – minutes approved

Notation by participant related to the minutes not including all points raised during the meeting. Future minutes will be provided added review to ensure the meeting is accurately presented in the minutes.

Minutes are posted online at following link:

<http://www.catalystpaper.com/page/community-advisory-forum>

3) Mill general update: (Steve Bird)

- With ownership by Paper Excellence approaching 2 years, integration of the two companies has progressed very well.

- Challenges of 2020 included Covid and the Malware attack on company computing systems.
- Major maintenance outages have taken place in 2020 with major half kraft mill 2 week outage just ending and just prior to that the major maintenance program on Power Boiler #4 (hog boiler). During every major outage of these large boilers, the emission control equipment is provided service to ensure continued high efficiency operation – minimum releases of air borne particulates and other pollutants is sustained with this ongoing service.
- Managing Covid protocols has been a key focus and with the major maintenance outages, even more important as we had many contractors and tradesmen at the mill to perform the required maintenance.
- The mill has experienced a single Covid case where an employee contracted the illness. That employee fully recovered and there have been no other infections.
- Early this year and in response to the Malware attack, the mill shut down both paper machines. The older technology in use in the kraft mill allowed that mill area to continue to operate. The subsequent arrival of Covid impacted operations with continued shut down of both Paper machines. Paper machine #2 was initially restarted for a week a month as orders arrived. Recent success with bag and packaging grades eventually resulted in #2 machine running full and now, in December, conditions continue to improve and a plan to restart #3 paper machine in January 2021 is in place.
- Mill is actively hiring new employees to cover the many jobs that restarting Paper Machine #3 brings.

4) Mill Environmental update: (Brian Houle)

- **Swallowfield Landfill review in progress**
On October 1 Catalyst met with provincial ministry of environment, local First Nations and Indigenous Services Canada and included review of the reports on conditions at Swallowfield landfill. No specific human health concerns or environmental issues have been found with initial round of monitoring. One issue for landfill is the structure of the monitoring program. Following from this meeting the mill was guided to have the Qualified Professional recommend an appropriate ongoing monitoring program for the Swallowfield Landfill. The current monitoring program does not provide insight into possible impacts the landfill could be having.
- **Cowichan Lake and River**
2020 conditions at Cowichan Lake allowed the higher and ideal river flows to be sustained throughout 2020. On Sept 22 with lake nearly full, control season ended. The new draft guidance model for river flows was not needed in 2020. The model is likely to be needed in 2021 dry season as this past

summer was unusual in comparison to the previous 10. I am expecting a more challenging dry season next year while hoping for a wet summer.

- **Mill Environmental Performance**

No issues to report regarding mill environmental performance. Effluent treatment is running very well and achieving excellent quality treated effluent. Emissions from mill boilers are in very good order. Annual outages of the large boilers at the mill have allowed maintenance to ensure pollution control equipment are in top condition. Particulate emissions from the mill are very low in recent years and related to the ongoing service and operation of the emission control equipment.

- **Kraft Mill Bleach Plant Chlorine Dioxide emissions**

Earlier in 2020 the mill initiated a permit amendment to address the long standing and ongoing issue related to the concentration of Chlorine Dioxide (ClO₂) in the emissions from both A and B Bleach Plants in the Kraft Mill. In 2007 the province revised the air permit on basis of the existing continuous emission monitors (CEMs) for ClO₂ which had indicated a maximum daily average concentration of 2 ppm prior to the air permit amendment. The permit update specified maximum 10 ppm and that was an acceptable level given the history of CEMs monitoring at Crofton. Within a month of the new permit being issued to the mill, the mill experienced issues with the existing CEMs equipment and new monitors were purchased and installed. Upon calibration of the new sensors for ClO₂, without any other change to the mill, the indication of concentration of ClO₂ in the stack showed much higher levels than the previous CEMs equipment indicated – and most days showed >10 ppm daily average and a permit compliance issue. The use of CEMs for regulatory monitoring of ClO₂ emissions has been problematic from day 1 of this permit revision.

Many years later the mill had learned of the issues related to the use of CEMs for monitoring ClO₂ and most importantly, that the provincial government guidance document, the B.C. Field Sampling Guide, does not recommend the use of CEMs for measuring ClO₂ emissions. In addition, the B.C. Air Audit team that is charged by the province with certifying emissions sensors for emissions like odour and Sulphur Dioxide is not able to certify the emissions sensors for ClO₂. When there is no acceptable technology available to monitor an emission continuously, the guidance from province has tended to be to use manual methods for measurement. For example, for particulate emissions, the boiler is equipped with CEMs measuring opacity but the permit specifies manual gravimetric method for regulatory purposes due to the lack of certification for the opacity meter. The Crofton air permit

should never have specified the use of CEMs for ClO₂ monitoring and regulating and we now understand more clearly why the use of CEMs is not recommended..

The mill has initiated an air permit amendment to address the ClO₂ monitoring and compliance issue. The amendment includes request to revert to the recommended Environmental Protection Agency wet chemistry method for measuring how much ClO₂ is being released from both the A and B Bleach Plant stacks. The long history of questionable data from the CEMs system should be discarded due to the evidence that the sensor reports in error higher levels of ClO₂ than are present.

5) Environmental Emergency (E2) program (Brian Houle)

In response to federal government updates to the environmental emergency program, the Crofton mill has produced a helpful guide for residents near the mill. The guide was shared with every resident in Crofton (through Canada Post) and has also been shared electronically through posting of the notice on the Catalyst Paper .com public access website. CAF has posted a link to the community web site to allow residents to access the notice more easily.

6) 2019 Ambient Air Report

Brian Houle

With teleconference style meeting, the air report was discussed in general and was not reviewed page by page. Attendees have copies to review and no specific issue highlighted for the annual report on ambient air quality.

Discussion brought focus to the lack of data in the ambient air report relating to the emissions of pollutants from the mill. Discussion of this point highlighted that at a future CAF meeting, to add agenda item to discuss the quarterly air report. The mill provides the province with details of the emissions of pollutants once each quarter and as prescribed in the air permit.

7)Public Questions/Comments:

- During review of the ambient air report, the lack of benchmarking was noted – on basis it is easier to understand conditions if

comparison to other similar situations and if possible, bring industry benchmarks to compare to.

- Response, the “state of the air” province wide air report brings province wide comparison of ambient air quality and from independent source. The mill will ensure to consider benchmark levels when reporting parameters that are otherwise not easy to understand.
- The Cowichan Valley through leadership of CVRD is continuing to pursue improved ambient air quality. Discussion of local air quality is the key agenda item for “Cowichan Airshed Roundtable”. Catalyst participates in this committee and great to hear the newest member of CAF, Garth, is also a member of this committee.
- Municipality of North Cowichan is currently seeking membership in their newly to be established environment committee and another opportunity to be more engaged in the improvement of our local environment.
- While introductions took place at beginning of meeting, it is important to highlight the new role at Catalyst Paper / Paper Excellence that Lana Wilhelm holds. Lana is in role to improve relationships with local First Nations at the many industrial facilities that Paper Excellence operates. Lana is based at the Crofton mill and will provide this service to all of Paper Excellence operations.
- While not discussed at meeting, at the time of writing these minutes the new public access web site for Paper Excellence went live and can be viewed by anyone at the following link:
 - [Take a look—and learn all about Paper Excellence](#)

8)- Agenda Items for future meetings:

- Cycle 8 EEM (environmental effects monitoring) summary slide deck presentation by Hatfield
- BCMOECC to present the state of air report for most recent year issued
- 2020 ambient air report – deadline for submission to province is in June, 2021.
- Quarterly Air report review
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9) Meeting schedule for 2021

It is expected that Covid restrictions will continue into 2021 and in that case, no plans for open house in 2021 and teleconference meeting style to be followed until Covid restrictions are ended.

April 13 - Q1 meeting
June 15 - Q2 meeting
September 7 - Q3 meeting
December 14 - Q4 meeting

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Adjourned at 7:50 PM

Minutes prepared by Brian Houle