

Agenda Date: October 15, 2015
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Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

FROM: Dave Van Mullem, Air Pollution Control Officer

CONTACT: Mary Byrd, Community Programs Supervisor (961-8833)

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Agreement to Display an Educational Exhibit on Air at the Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the District Board Chair to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum to display an educational hands-on exhibit on the movement of air and air quality.

DISCUSSION:

The Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving schools, families, and youth groups. Located in downtown Santa Maria, it attracts more than 24,000 children and their families every year.

The District has been working with the Museum to create an educational air exhibit. The Fiscal Year 2015-2016 District Budget adopted by your Board at the June 2015 meeting included budgeting for one-time fund balance expenditures on several projects, including this exhibit.

The highlight of the exhibit will be a display known as A-Mazing Airways, which demonstrates the power and movement of air through a network of pneumatic tubes.

Because air is invisible, it is challenging to design hands-on experiences for children to make air real and tangible. The A-Mazing Airways concept was developed through a National Science Foundation AirWorks for Kids grant. Extensive research was conducted regarding children's understanding of air to identify a dynamic exhibit experience, and one that aligns with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) principles. A-Mazing Airways exhibits are on display at several locations around California and the U.S., including the Sacramento Children's

Museum, and the Gull Wings Children's Museum in Oxnard (a recent installation funded by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District).

As children experiment with choosing, moving, and elevating objects of different colors, types and sizes at various stations within the pneumatic tubes, they will gain a hands-on understanding of the movement and power of air. The District and the Museum have worked together to identify a prominent location for the pneumatic tubes against the windows at the Museum entrance. Murals and displays will be placed in the same area to make the connection from the experience of the movement of air to the importance of clean air.

The attached Agreement reflects the understanding between the District and the Museum that the District will purchase the exhibit, and the Museum will display and maintain it.

ATTACHMENT:

- Memorandum of Agreement between the District and the Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum