Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting
Valero East – 610 Industrial Way, Benicia, CA
Tuesday February 17th, 2026 - 4:30 PM – 5:40 PM
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

The meeting was conducted in person at Valero East. Dennis Lowry called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. The February 17th agenda & the December 9th CAP Meeting minutes were approved as written. In addition, the 2025 Annual Report was reviewed and approved. The following participants attended the meeting:

CAP Members	
Dennis Lowry	CAP Chairman & Community at Large Member
Patrick Cawley	Benicia Chamber of Commerce
Terry Scott	City of Benicia - Councilmember
Amy Hirsh	Benicia Unified School District, Board Member
Rod Sherry	Benicia Industrial Park Association
Marilyn Bardet	Good Neighbor Steering Committee
Cara Bateman	Community at Large Member
Kristine Passalacqua	Community at Large Member
Valero CAP Representatives	
Lauren Bird	VP and General Manager
Paul Adler	Community Relations & Government Affairs Director
Melissa Manke Fimbres	HSE Director
Valero employees	
Lisa Crowley	Sr Staff Environmental Engineer
Pam Fischer	Executive Administrative Assistant
City of Benicia	
Josh Chadwick	Fire Chief, Benicia Fire Department
Additional Attendees	
Bob Nickeson	Community Member

Refinery Update

- Lauren Bird, Vice President & General Manager
  - Refinery operations are going well as we continue to idle the refinery. Melissa will update the CAP about a few environmental incidents that occurred since our last meeting.
  - The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) was sent to employees regarding the upcoming idling of the refinery. All employees were given the option to transfer to a location within Valero's United States circuit. 57% of current employees accepted the relocation package and the remaining employees are separating from the company or retiring.
  - Lauren provided an explanation of the 3 phases of refinery operations- separation, conversion and blending and the basic process of each phase. As of now, the separation and conversion phases within the refinery have been shut down and the blending phase - the clearing out of products is still occurring. There are over ~600 contractors on site working on this outage. When asked about a refinery restart, Lauren said that he does not believe that will occur due to a lack of operating personnel. The Asphalt plant is also being idled and cleared, but since that product is sold on a seasonal basis, those tanks are pretty full and the product will be sold over the summer.

- Lauren confirmed that the fuels terminal will continue to operate, which is the same process that has taken place for many years. The fuel terminal operation generated multiple questions and Lauren stated that the fuels terminal planning logistics are being worked out and he doesn't have all of the answers at this time.

- Melissa Manke Fimbres, HSE Director

  Melissa shared details of 3 environmental incident and notifications that occurred since our last meeting:
  - A Level 1 incident notification was issued this past weekend when there was a spill of diesel oil. A contractor had not tightened a stainless-steel hose resulting in a spill. A vacuum truck was used to remove the free liquid and the site was scraped into a roll-off box for proper disposal. Dirt and gravel replaced the removed dirt. Clean up was complete by Monday morning.
  - A Level 1 incident notification was issued as a result of flaring when an SO2 exceedance of the 500lb Reportable Quantity occurred. Lauren added that the decision to flare was intentional to avoid a dangerous flameout situation at a boiler.
  - A Level 2 incident notification was issued in December when petroleum coke spilled during the loading a pet coke ship. The refinery submitted to the city a 72 hour report and a Root Cause Analysis (RCA).
  - So far in 2026, we have self-reported 16 Title 5 deviations; we've had 19 agency visits within the last 40 days with 23 requests for information. There have been no issues with safety.
  - Melissa shared that she will be transferring to Houston effective April 1st. She has enjoyed her time with the CAP sharing facts to help to counter balance the news reports or other misinformation that many times is misconstrued. She has been frustrated with the amount of time that it takes to get permits to start on required projects from both the Air District (3 years for one) and the city (for Pathway 4 fenceline Monitoring).

- Paul Adler, Community Relations & Government Affairs Director
  - Paul shared that when he first came to Valero in 2018, he was tasked to reinvigorate the CAP. He felt that the CAP's webpage and the Presentation section is an educational tool that should improve communication for the community to better understand refinery operations.
  - Regarding the fuels terminal, Paul referenced the last CAP meeting presentation about Regulatory Agencies and Jurisdiction Presentation He also pulled up the Community Presentation that provides a Valero map of operations that includes multiple terminals that operate within Valero's circuit.
  - Paul will be relocating to Valero's headquarters in San Antonio, Texas in April.

CAP Member Updates

- Terry Scott – He appreciated the information shared about the fuels terminal. Although he understands that there are many questions about the future of the site - we still don't have answers, so, he made a motion to have an additional March CAP meeting to better understand the fire and safety plans that will be in place for the fuels terminal. Terry's motion passed and an additional CAP meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 10th at 4:30 pm. He also thanked Valero for helping to keep the city safe.
- Patrick Cawley – He extended a thank you to Lauren and feels that he has handled the job beyond reproach. The town will miss Valero's support.
- Cara Bateman – no comment
- Kristine Passalacqua – She extended a thank you for Valero's support.
- Marilyn Bardet – She stressed how important it is for information to be shared and that the community needs to know what is happening with the refinery. She also stated how lucky it is that Lauren is the representative for Valero in his position of plant manager.
- Amy Hirsh – She also extended a thank you to Lauren and stated she was impressed with Lauren's management of the refinery.
- Rod Sherry – The State of the City was well attended. He wanted to thank Paul for the refinery's support with resources after Covid.
- Dennis Lowry- He recapped that a CAP meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10th at 4:30 pm.

The meeting ended at 5:40 pm.

2026 CAP Calendar

- Tuesday, March 10th – 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm @ Valero East
- Tuesday, April 14th – 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm @Valero East