



# **March 1996 Meeting Minutes**

**SRS Citizen's Advisory Board**

**March 26, 1996 8:30 a.m.**

**Savannah River Site, Building 703-41A**

**Aiken, S.C.**

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## Members Present

Members present included Ann Brown, Tom Costikyan, Bill Donaldson, Tom Greene, Theolonious Jones, Bill Lawless, Ann Loadholt, Kathryn May, Larry McKinney, Lane Parker, Kamalakar Raut, Kevin Reed, Bob Slay, P.K. Smith and Vernon Zinnerman. Ex-Officio Representatives present included Tom Heenan, Ann Ragan and Jim Brownlow.

Members absent were June Fogle, Alice Hollingsworth, Walter Jones, Mildred McClain, JoAnn Nestor, Andrew Rea, Pat Tousignant and Beaurine Wilkins. Currently, there are two Board vacancies. Jeff Crane and Camilla Warren of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were not in attendance. The DOE Designated Federal Official present was Tom Heenan.

This meeting was open to the public and posted in the Federal Register in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

J. Walter Joseph of Aiken, S.C., served as the CAB Facilitator.

## **Key Decisions Made by Board**

The Board approved a motion that DOE-SR implement an urgent budget request to treat SRS TRU wastes. It stated that as a baseline, SRS implement the technology decision recommended by an Independent Blue Ribbon Panel, but that the actual technology selected be the best available.

The Board endorsed an interim remedial action of placing a soil cover over the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground to reduce rainwater infiltration and protect groundwater.

The Board approved a Scope of Work for technical assistance for subcommittee work.

The Board unanimously agreed to sponsor and fund a public forum regarding plutonium disposition.

The Board unanimously approved a motion regarding the Fiscal Year 1998 SRS Budget that commends DOE-Savannah River for its prioritization of activities; recommends highest risk be addressed first; and requests that as new missions are brought to SRS, they be accompanied with appropriate funding.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January Board meeting were approved with no changes.

### **Agency Updates**

Ann Ragan stated that SCDHEC would now be implementing the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants program, which is part of the Clean Air Act. This program was formerly overseen by EPA. Ms. Ragan stated input regarding the program is welcome. She also stated that Salley Knowles could be contacted regarding an evaluation to reclassify Upper Three Runs Creek to meet higher water quality standards. She also stated that the agencies were meeting regarding the closure of high-level waste tanks and that current projects were planning to close four tanks by the end of the year.

Tom Heenan of DOE referred to three DOE News Releases (see attached) regarding fiscal year 1997 budget details, workforce restructuring and the startup of the Defense Waste Processing Facility. He also stated that Joel Cote, Manager of DOE Human Resources was available to answer questions regarding workforce restructuring. Mr. Cote addressed a question from Lane Parker regarding preferential rehiring of site people, stating this would be continued as required by Section 3161 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1993. He also noted that DOE had met the CAB's request for providing topics for subcommittee consideration. Ann Ragan noted that SCDHEC concurred with the DOE list of topics.

### **Facilitator Report**

Board Facilitator Walt Joseph discussed a self-evaluation which is to be conducted by each of the site specific advisory boards. He presented guidance for the SRS CAB (see attached) and discussed the purpose and elements of the self-evaluation. He also discussed recommended goals and a proposed program. The SRS CAB self assessment will take place during the June-July timeframe.

### **Public Comments**

Todd Crawford, New Ellenton, S.C.

Mr. Crawford, who worked very closely with the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee on CAB Recommendation No. 8, provided comments on the Department of Energy's response to the recommendation. These comments were provided by Mr. Crawford in writing following the meeting. (See attached letter dated April 2, 1996.)

Mrs. Reed Dulany, Savannah, Ga.

Mrs. Dulany provided her comments concerning radioactive waste disposal in a letter to Mr. Bob Slay, dated March 18, 1996 (see attached). This letter was read by Mr. Slay at both public comment sessions.

### **Implementation of CAB Recommendations**

Walt Joseph presented a Tracking Report for Implementation of SRS CAB Recommendations (see attached). He referred to a chart depicting the evolutionary process and explained how some recommendations had fed into others and how common themes such as institutionalizing independent scientific peer reviews had emerged. He discussed each of the CAB's 16 recommendations individually and noted where gaps occurred between the recommendations and the Agencies responses'. Following are the results: 1) the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health will be asked to present its protocol for a recently issued health study regarding Recommendation No. 7; 2) a joint subcommittee meeting with the agencies will be held to resolve differences regarding Recommendation No. 8; and 3) further discussions regarding Recommendations 12 and 13 will be held in the near future.

### **Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee Report**

Subcommittee Chair Tom Costikyan discussed the subcommittee's intention to provide a recommendation regarding the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), commonly referred to as the Plutonium Disposition PEIS. He stated that Bill Sutcliffe of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory would be able to provide assistance on a loaned assignment, but would not receive compensation due to a perceived conflict of interest by the Department of Energy-Oakland Operations.

He also gave a trip report on an international conference he had attended the previous week regarding plutonium disposition. He stated it was very educational and made it clear just how complex a decision would be regarding disposition. He stated that all decisions would have to focus the threat of plutonium reaching hostile hands. He stated that Western European countries made it clear that plutonium is considered a valuable resource, and they fully intend to use it to generate power. He then discussed the three most viable options of disposing of excess plutonium, including burying it in deep bore holes; vitrification; or transforming it into a mixed oxide form called "mox" fuel for use in reactors.

Mr. Costikyan stated that currently the subcommittee was deciding which issues it should address. Bill Lawless stated that the PEIS is a straight jacket that forces you to choose between three options when a fourth should be considered. He stated that recycling and recovery should also be considered if it is possible to reach a "mox" form without generating additional plutonium. He said non-fertile fuels could be generated and that the French were near reaching this concept.

Dr. Mario Fiori addressed the Board at this time. He stated his personal preference is the mixed oxide option and that he would like to see one repository in this area. He said this does not address the PEIS questions, but storage is necessary until a final solution is identified. He also addressed workforce restructuring and his desire for new missions at SRS. He referred to the Assistant Secretary of Environment, Safety and Health and his comments that SRS has the best safety record. Dr. Fiori attributed this recognition to the fact that SRS has become much more efficient, the startup of the DWPF, an outstanding Citizens Advisory Board and continued community support.

### **Budget Subcommittee Report**

Thelonious Jones presented a review of the CAB's first quarter expenditures in Fiscal Year 1996 (see attached). He also moved that the Board Chairperson and Subcommittee Chairpersons have more leeway in approving expenditure of funds. **Ann Loadholt moved that the Board Chair be able to approve up to \$15,000 and the subcommittee chairs up to \$5,000. Bill Donaldson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the new guidelines.**

### **Subcommittee Participation**

Bob Slay addressed the need to balance the workload of the Board and discussed membership of issues-based subcommittees. He encouraged the public to take part in subcommittee work, but reiterated that only appointed CAB members could vote. Following discussion, it was determined that all subcommittee members would be canvassed to find dates the majority are in agreement with before a subcommittee meeting is scheduled. The Board agreed to look at subcommittee participation again in May to ensure balanced participation.

### **Environmental Remediation & Waste Management (ER & WM) Subcommittee Report**

Subcommittee Co-chair Kathryn May presented the CAB Recommendation No. 4, which called for a Blue Ribbon Panel review of transuranic waste treatment options. She then introduced Dr. William Randall Seeker of the Energy and Environmental Research Corporation, Irvine, CA. who chaired the Blue Ribbon Panel. Dr. Seeker presented the panel's evaluation of organic treatment and stabilization options for transuranic wastes (see attached slides). He first announced the panel members, their affiliation, what they were asked to do, and then defined the problem regarding transuranic wastes at SRS and discussed the production of hydrogen. Dr. Seeker then discussed how the panel went about its evaluation and the criteria used to evaluate technologies. He discussed several treatment options that were evaluated, including acid digestion, incineration and a hybrid plasma induction melter. He then presented the panel's twelve recommendations, which include characterization, segregation of wastes, selective removal of drums, decontamination techniques for treatment of bulk metals and incineration of drums with organic waste content (80%) of inventory.

Kathryn May then read the subcommittee's motion regarding the results of the panel review (see attached). **Lane Parker moved the Board accept the subcommittee's motion that**

**DOE-SR implement an urgent budget request to treat SRS TRU wastes and that as a baseline, SRS implement the technology decision recommended by the Panel with the actual technology selected being the best available. Kamalakar Raut seconded the motion. The motion passed with fourteen members in favor and one opposed.**

Subcommittee Co-Chair Bill Lawless then introduced Brian Hennessey and Bert Crapse of DOE to discuss an Interim Action Proposed Plan for the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground (ORWBG). Brian Hennessey briefly discussed what an interim action is explaining that it is remedial action that is not comprehensive or final and should not hinder characterization. He explained that the Interim Action Proposed Plan for the ORWBG was approved by SCDHEC and EPA and that a 30-day public comment period had concluded on May 2 and included a public meeting.

Bert Crapse then gave a brief presentation as the DOE Project Engineer on the ORWBG (see attached). He discussed the scope of the response action, the burial ground unit and its contaminants, the summary of interim alternatives and the preferred alternative selected, which was to place a low permeability soil cover over the burial ground to reduce rainwater infiltration. Bill Lawless read the subcommittee's motion endorsing the preferred alternative in the Interim Action Proposed Plan. **Tom Greene moved the Board accept the motion and Lane Parker seconded. Ann Loadholt offered an amendment that, if feasible, the DOE should select a final remedy that includes use of the soil cover placed as an interim action. Bill Donaldson seconded the amendment. The amendment passed with 14 members in favor and one abstention. The original motion as amended passed with 13 members in favor, one opposed and one abstention.**

Bill Lawless also presented a draft Scope of Work for Technical Assistance (see attached). The scope includes technical assistance for all subcommittee chairs and all agreed they would like to review proposals received from competitive bidding. **Ann Loadholt moved the Board approve the Scope of Work with minor amendments offered by Bill Lawless regarding the selection of candidates by the appropriate subcommittee. Lane Parker seconded the motion. The Board approved the scope with 14 in favor and one abstention.**

The SRS CAB Home Page initiated by Bill Lawless was demonstrated during the lunch hour.

### **Plutonium Forum Discussion/Motion for Funding**

Education Subcommittee Chair P.K. Smith presented a proposal to sponsor a plutonium disposition forum (see attached). She discussed the goal, which is to provide an educational forum inform the public and openly discuss the various policy choices to prepare excess plutonium from dismantled U.S. nuclear weapons and other sources for final disposal . The objective of the forum is to increase public awareness of plutonium disposition issues and provide expert opinions in an objective and balanced format on the various options being considered in the Plutonium PEIS. She discussed confirmed sponsors, two proposed formats for the forum and a proposed budget not to exceed \$20,000. **Ann Loadholt moved the Board accept the proposal to sponsor a forum with \$20,000 in funding. Lane Parker seconded.**

**Following extensive discussion on maintaining speaker balance during the forum and among its sponsors, the Board unanimously approved the proposal.**

### **Membership Elections**

Elections were held for thirteen Board vacancies to fill expiring two-year terms. The following individuals were re-elected to the Board:

Bill Lawless, Augusta, Ga. Ann Loadholt, Barnwell, S.C. Larry McKinney, Warm Springs, Ga. JoAnn Nestor, Hilton Head, S.C. Andrew Rea, Savannah, Ga. Vernon Zimmerman, Augusta, Ga.

The following seven individuals were newly elected to the Board:

Arthur Belge, Martinez, Ga.  
Aundria Cheever, Augusta, Ga. Brendolyn Jenkins, Elko, S.C.  
Karen Patterson, Aiken, S.C.  
Suzanne Matthews, Aiken, S.C.  
Deborah Simone, Thomson, Ga.  
John Tant, North Charleston, S.C.

### **Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee Report**

Subcommittee Chairperson Vernon Zimmerman presented a motion regarding the Fiscal Year 1998 Budget for the Savannah River Site (see attached). The following amendments were made during discussion:

- 1) The last sentence of no. 1 was deleted.
- 2) "Remediation and Waste" was deleted from no. 2.
- 3) "in accordance with the policy set by DOE-HQ (the highest risk are funded first)" was deleted from no. 3.

Tom Costikyan moved the Board accept the FY98 Budget Motion as amended. Kathryn May seconded. The Board approved the motion by a unanimous vote.

### **Administrative Items**

Bob Slay discussed the need for Board members to cancel hotel reservations in a timely manner if they find they are unable to attend a meeting or seminar. He reminded Board members that reservations would no longer be made for individuals who failed to provide notification of an absence.

Lane Parker announced an impromptu meeting of the Outreach Subcommittee on Monday, April 1 to design materials for a CAB booth at the Aiken Business Expo on April 18-19.

Discussion earlier in the meeting regarding future land use led to the ER&WM and RM&FU

Subcommittees deciding to hold a joint subcommittee meeting with the agencies regarding Recommendations 2 and 8.

## **Handouts**

- SRS Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Agenda, March 26, 1996
- "Guidance for the SAAB Self-Evaluation", Walt Joseph
- "Tracking Report for Implementation of SRS CAB Recommendations", Walt Joseph
- SRS CAB Fiscal Year 1996 Budget Summary
- "An Independent Panel Evaluation of Organic Treatment and Stabilization Options" slides
- "An Independent Panel Evaluation of Organic Treatment and Stabilization Options for Transuranic Wastes at the Savannah River Site"
- Draft Motion: Treatment of Transuranic Wastes at DOE-SRS, Kathryn May
- Agenda, Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground presentation slides, Bert Crapse
- Draft Motion: Interim Action Proposed Plan: Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground at DOE-SRS, Bill Lawless
- Draft Scope of Work for SRS CAB Technical Assistance Support
- Draft Motion: Budget FY 1998
- "Plutonium Disposition Forum: A Proposal", P.K. Smith
- List of DOE Grants and Contractors Interfacing with the SRS CAB
- CAB Recommendations Summary
- DOE News, news releases dated March 23, 1996
- Aiken Standard article dated March 21, 1996
- EIS Citizens Advisory Board Monthly Report
- 1996 SRS CAB Schedule
- SRS Public Involvement Calendar

**Note: Meeting handouts may be obtained by calling the SRS CAB toll free number at 1-800-249-8155.**