



April 1994 Meeting Minutes

SRS Citizen's Advisory Board

Members Present

All members were present except Moses Todd and Myra Reece of South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Alternate ex-officio representative Lew Goidell of the Department of Energy (DOE) Savannah River Operations Office replaced Steve Richardson.

Opening

DOE Headquarters was conducting a "town meeting" video teleconference on the DOE Strategic Plan at 11 a.m., but board members voted to adhere to their original agenda. Interim Co-chairs Bob Slay and Mildred McClain opened the meeting. Mildred McClain excused herself shortly after that and Bob Slay presided for the remainder of the day. Co-facilitators were Cheryl Lewis and Mark Musolf of the Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC).

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with no changes.

Agency updates

Camilla Warren of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pointed out that there was supposed to be time on the agenda for agency updates.

FACA update

Lew Goidell of DOE-SR gave a brief update on the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) charter for DOE's site specific advisory boards. He indicated that at that point in time there had been little movement in the approval process. He said that the charter was still under consideration by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and that DOE was "expecting approval imminently."

Future meetings

A lengthy discussion was held about whether or not to continue holding meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month. It was pointed out that the decision had already been made once and several members questioned the wisdom of re-opening it.

Bill Lawless said that the original decision had been made without benefit of experience in meeting on the fourth Tuesday and there might be some merit in re-examining it. Kathryn May stated that holding Monday meetings would allow members to travel more conveniently on their own time on Sundays. Bob Slay countered that several board members had told him they were not willing to give up their weekends.

Beaurine Wilkins cautioned that the board could easily spend another hour debating the issue and should move on. Bob Slay called for a vote and the motion to continue with the fourth Tuesday of the month passed with only three in opposition.

The next topic was where to hold the June meeting. Discussion ensued over whether to hold it on or off-site. Tom Costikyan pointed out that due to the light public attendance at the SRS overview presentation on the previous day, site meetings offered "more bang for the buck." Bob Slay reminded the board the charter states that meetings will be held "in affected communities." Ann Loadholt suggested that every other meeting be held at the site. Bill Lawless recommended that the board meet at the site two times per quarter. A "sense of the board" vote showed a preference for holding every other meeting at the site, rotating the off-site meetings among affected communities.

Andrew Rea argued that the board should meet at the site "when appropriate" but that site meetings should not be a standard part of the meeting location rotation. He said it would be "dangerous to identify ourselves too closely with the site."

Rachel Harper pointed out that meeting at the site every other time would save money, adding that she likes meeting at the site "and being in touch."

Tom Costikyan stated that the board's primary objective is not to save money but to achieve visibility and build credibility with stakeholders. "If we meet at the site, we may be perceived as being controlled by DOE and Westinghouse," he said.

Jo-Ann Nestor said that meeting at the site meant a long, tedious drive for her along dark back roads. She said she feels the board needs to be out in the communities and also to see the site as often as possible. "We won't be put in a bad light if we go to see the site first-hand and get that perspective," she said.

A motion to meet at the site for the next three months was defeated. A vote to meet at the site every other month, rotating the off-site meetings, passed with three votes in opposition.

Another motion to hold the June meeting on site, the July meeting in Beaufort, and the August meeting on site passed. Discussion followed on starting time for the meetings, as well as for the public comment session. It was suggested that an additional public comment portion of the meeting be added from 6-7 p.m. the night before, prior to subcommittee meetings.

Andrew Rea said he favored that approach because it might encourage the public to participate on subcommittees. Budget Subcommittee Chair Tom Greene cautioned that whatever time the board decided on should be adhered to, since it would affect the budget.

A motion to continue with board meetings on the current time schedule, with the public comment session the night before, passed.

Education Subcommittee report

Brian Costner outlined the six issues selected, with agency input, by the Education Subcommittee for the board to review. These include environmental remediation, solid waste management, high-level waste management, decontamination and decommissioning, risk management, and the EM budget. He explained how the Subcommittee arrived at their recommendation and went into detail about each issue. (See attachment A for the visuals.)

Andrew Rea asked how the board might accommodate new projects, such as a new production reactor, which might create new sources of waste. Brian Costner explained that defense production projects and programs are outside the scope of the board's charter.

Bill Lawless suggested adoption of Kamalakar Raut's idea to review one issue at a time per meeting in the sequence that they are listed in the Education Subcommittee's report. He agreed that EPA and SCDHEC, as well as board members, be allowed to comment on the idea before it was voted on.

Camilla Warren of EPA explained that the initial vote on the issues which the subcommittee recommended would be a non-binding vote. She told the group not to worry if they were not technically "up" on the issues. "You can still tell us if we are completely off base in most areas, such as the budget, for example," she said. EPA had recommended that environmental remediation (ER) be given top priority, but she stated that if the board feels that the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) or decontamination and decommissioning is more important, they don't have to accept EPA's recommendation.

Ann Ragan of SCDHEC said she agrees with EPA, explaining that the State had recommended ER and solid waste management as priorities since those topics "are in the decision-making mode now."

Tom Heenan of DOE-SR added that the agencies' recommendations were not intended to limit the board's field of inquiry but merely to provide a near-term focus. He said DOE's top priority is to demonstrate the effectiveness of stakeholder involvement, through the board. The overall waste management program, including high-level waste, is currently the subject of an extensive, on-going public involvement process, which he invited the board members to participate in. "But I do think the issues the Education Subcommittee is recommending should receive priority," he concluded.

Tom Greene asked for examples of environmental remediation topics the board might examine and how "technical" they might be. Camilla Warren named F&H groundwater treatment alternatives, which include pump-and-treat versus fencing off and keeping the area under "institutional control." She further explained that while yes, there are highly technical considerations, the board would not need to acquire heavy expertise to compare the costs and impact of the two alternatives. Tom Heenan concurred with Camilla Warren that the agencies are

seeking input more on the public values aspect than the technical side of the issues, saying that the nature of these decisions is very ripe for stakeholder input.

Tom Greene reported that in his conversations with representatives from the DOE site in Hanford, Washington, they recommended that the SRS CAB take a broad look at the issues, keeping the goals simple, such as "protect the river." Getting involved in the nitty-gritty is a pitfall to avoid which will drown a board in technical detail, he warned.

A question arose about the issue of information access and whether it should be listed as a priority. Brian Costner said that such issues could be dealt with within the context of the six priorities recommended by the Education Subcommittee.

The first two issues recommended in the Subcommittee's report, environmental remediation and solid waste, were discussed next. Many members argued in favor of their receiving top priority. Andrew Rea suggested that the Consolidated Incineration Facility be included when solid waste issues are reviewed.

In the discussion on high-level waste, the third issue recommended in the report, Andrew Rea suggested that transportation to a waste repository be included in the board's review, as well as any other new operations which might produce substantial quantities of waste.

Bill Lawless commented that benzene emissions and vitrified waste canister storage should receive attention during examination of the DWPF process. He added to the list disposition of the site's two "canyons," which process and reprocess nuclear materials when they are in operation. Other topics he suggested are spent fuel, TRU (transuranic) waste, such as plutonium-238 and -239, and high-level waste storage Tank 16.

Decontamination and decommissioning of facilities no longer used, the fourth issue recommended by the Education Subcommittee, was described by Bill Lawless as an issue which has received virtually no money for clean-up. Clay Jones of WSRC was asked to provide information on this program. He explained that in the 1994 budget, the program allocation breaks down (within 10 percent, since he was quoting from memory) as follows:

- Environmental Remediation, \$55 million
- Decontamination & Decommissioning, \$ 8 million
- High-level Waste, \$600-650 million
- Solid Waste, \$ 60 million

Tom Heenan added that there is also about \$50 million to deactivate the reactors.

Bob Slay commented that he has received phone calls from newspaper advertisements of board meetings, many of which express concern over acceptance of spent fuel from outside SRS.

Tom Greene, who attended a recent DOE meeting in Washington, D.C., said that the attitude of DOE-HQ in regard to D&D seems to be that restoring areas to "green grass" isn't practical. The money this would take could be put to better use in containing waste streams, and the

disassembly of contaminated facilities just creates a bigger waste problem than containing and managing them, he reported.

Risk Management is the fifth issue listed in the Subcommittee Report. This complex subject received much discussion. The three agencies do not even agree on which method of ranking sites is best, it was pointed out. Bill Lawless said that the "science" of risk management is full of jargon, subjectivity, and comparing apples to oranges.

Camilla Warren said that EPA has more latitude in its approach to risk management than in regulatory statutes. Tom Costikyan said that risk is the single, most-important word before the board and should be the first thing examined with each issue.

Kamalakar Raut simplified the issue by stating that there are basically only two kinds of risks: acceptable and unacceptable. He pointed out that we take risks every day of our lives, some voluntary and some involuntary, and that we guard against the involuntary.

The need for outside expertise to help the board examine the issues was raised by Thelonius Jones. Brian Costner explained that the Education Subcommittee will try very hard to provide multiple perspectives on the issues the board reviews. Jo-Ann Nestor pointed out that the board cannot hire any technical experts until the FACA charter is granted.

After much consideration of alternative approaches and sequences, it was determined that the Education Subcommittee should meet during lunch and make a recommendation to the board on how to approach reviewing the issues.

The Subcommittee recommended that the next meeting devote three to four hours to presentations on ER issues. They requested that board members provide input on the scope of these presentations. Brian Costner pointed out that if what the board wants to know is what the ER sites are at SRS and details about these sites, then only SRS personnel are knowledgeable enough to make the presentations. Andrew Rea agreed that while obtaining outside technical advice might be premature at this point, it should nonetheless be obtained before the board develops any recommendations.

The board voted unanimously to accept the Subcommittee's recommendation. P.K. Smith said that the Subcommittee also decided that the board should consider a two to three-day retreat for education and team building and that the Subcommittee would develop a proposal for this suggestion.

Subcommittee reports

Budget chair Tom Greene reported that after his discussion with Hanford counterparts, he feels that the SRS board is not getting the same management support that the Hanford board is receiving from its site management. A case in point is the honorarium DOE at one time had pledged to pay board members but which now seems doubtful.

Tom Heenan expressed regret that communications about the honorarium were not made very clearly. He assured the board that Dr. Fiori is "absolutely committed to making this board the best in the country." He added that whatever resources the board needs will be made available.

Brian Costner asked about a DOE issue paper Virginia Gardner had discussed on the subject of compensation and expenses related to site specific advisory boards. Virginia Gardner stated that such compensation is allowed under FACA and she will obtain more information on any position paper or policy DOE is developing on the subject.

Brian Costner asked if CAB members would be allowed to decline an honorarium. Virginia Gardner responded that DOE will take that under consideration.

Bob Slay said that he will ask DOE to address the honorarium issue very quickly.

Rachel Harper, chair of the By-laws Subcommittee, reported that her group could not meet as planned on the previous night because members were attending other subcommittee meetings scheduled at the same time. She requested that board members please provide her with any ideas they may have on by-laws.

Membership Subcommittee chair Beaurine Wilkins reported that her group plans to meet for the first time after this meeting and again before the Savannah meeting.

Bob Slay reminded all chairs that they have the ultimate authority to staff their subcommittees and can add members as they need. Ann Ragan told the chairs to notify her if they would like agency representation at any subcommittee meetings.

Public participation

Bob Slay reminded the board that at the last meeting they received several comments from the public regarding how to achieve more effective public outreach. He explained that the CAB co-chairs' names had been added to the newspaper advertisements and press releases, as well as local CAB members' names for ads in local newspapers. He also said that he would draft letters to SRS management asking them to encourage Site employees to participate.

Brian Costner suggested that the board look at better ways to target the audiences. Mark Musolf of WSRC said that a mailing had been done to targeted zip codes near the Hilton Head and Savannah vicinity prior to this meeting.

How to guarantee confidentiality was discussed, with Brian Costner pointing out that it would be difficult to do in public meetings.

FACA charter

Bob Slay reminded the group that they had previously talked about writing another letter to the OMB if the FACA charter was not received by May 5. The board voted to follow through with

this action. Camilla Warren pledged the help of EPA contacts in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. Brian Costner suggested that the board might also write to appropriate Congressmen.

Technical briefings

A briefing on "Savannah River Basin Water Quality" was presented by David Chestnut of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). (Copies of his visuals were unavailable at the time.)

Jim Heffner of the WSRC Environmental Monitoring Section presented an overview of SRS operations and impact on Savannah River water quality. (See Attachment B for a copy of his visuals.)

A briefing on the SRS 200 Area groundwater issues, which was to have been presented by Brian Looney of the WSRC Savannah River Technology Center, was postponed until the next meeting due to lack of time.

A presentation by SCDHEC on groundwater issues was also postponed.

New business

Andrew Rea reported that DOE funding for the SRS birth defects and cancer registries had been reduced. He also stated that he was dismayed at the SRS Overview presentation on the previous day, that it "still smacks of PR."

P.K. Smith said the matter was discussed the previous night at the Education Subcommittee meeting and a new overview will be developed.

Brian Costner called it a serious oversight that no one from SRS was prepared to answer health-effects questions related to the presentation on tritium in the Savannah River.

Lew Goidell told the board that he would be leaving soon for new employment. He said it had been his pleasure to have been involved with the development of the board almost from the start. Bill Lawless thanked Lew for all his help over the past year and one-half.

Bill Lawless also protested the cut in funding for the registries, saying that one of the best ways to understand the health effects of tritium in the river is conducting studies such as the registries. Brian Costner said that the probable reason for the funding cut is that DOE's overall budget for FY95 has been reduced by 20 percent in the area of environment, safety & health.

Bob Slay reminded the board members that if they speak to the media, they should make it clear to the reporter that they are not speaking for the board but only as an individual.

Camilla Warren discussed the results of sampling done by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR) on fish in the Savannah River. She said she would pass the information

along. She also talked about the outyear schedules in the Federal Facilities Agreement (FFA), which she said are out of date.

Ann Ragan reported that in regard to the FFA negotiations, the agencies were not into dispute resolution at that point but "probably will be soon."

Tom Heenan stated that DOE-SR is in close communications with GDNR and has been for two years. He also said that the work related to the FFA "is being done."

Camilla Warren responded that in her previous comment she had just been pointing out that the schedule had not been rolled over and is out of date.

Virginia Gardner told the board members that the per diem rates on their expense vouchers for this meeting should be \$63 for lodging and \$34 for per diem costs.

Public comments

Dean Moss, Beaufort/Jasper Water Authority

Mr. Moss, who served on the SRS Citizens Advisory Board Working Group and Selection Panel, thanked the board for coming to Hilton Head Island to conduct their meeting and expressed his faith and confidence in the board. He stated that he supports the board one hundred percent. He discussed the board's priorities, suggesting that it look at issues with current impact offsite, such as the Savannah River, as well as issues in the near future with potential offsite impact. He stated that he is always concerned about what happens at the site and that the board should work on what's important first. He called for efforts to get the river clean and eliminate tritium discharges from the site.

George Minot, Hilton Head Island resident

Mr. Minot offered congratulations to the board for resisting bureaucracy and encouraged it to provide factual information, both good and bad. He encouraged the board to raise the level of awareness on each individual topic. He stated because the public has been lied to and misinformed, DOE needs to rebuild trust. He complimented DOE on their recent efforts to make information available. He stated that the public is looking to the board to receive information.

Bob Newman, Fripp Island resident

Mr. Newman commended the CAB for taking on this job. He encouraged the board to demand facts and ask for the basis for these facts. He stated that radiation has been around since God created the universe. The threat caused by the release in 1991 raised emotional and political issues, since the Beaufort/Jasper Water Authority quit pumping river water for 6 days, even though no set standards were exceeded. He stated that he was closer to death two times driving from Fripp Island than from radiation. He told the board to get the facts, set priorities and push them, set quantitative objectives, keep it in context and get to the big problems. He stated that the essence of procrastination is insisting on perfection.

George Keosian, Hilton Head Island resident

Mr. Keosian stated that scientists from all over say that the radiation surrounding us is not a problem, but he does not want an increase from the nuclear beast that man has created. He said that man-made contaminants, such as from Three Mile Island, were supposedly no cause for concern but later became called the worst accident until Chernobyl, with tritium released in terrific amounts.

Charlotte Marsala, Hilton Head Island resident

Ms. Marsala had questions concerning the presentations given during the meeting. She asked if SRS analyzed samples on a daily basis. She also asked for an explanation of composite sampling. She stated she did not care for averages, giving an example of how a child's marks in schools may hide problem areas. She also asked about bacteria in the river downstream versus upstream and if there is a relationship between bacteria and tritium in the river.

Dr. Joe Stocker, Hilton Head Island resident

Dr. Stocker inquired about the health effects of tritium. He asked if cumulative effects are examined, initiating a discussion on the current dose reconstruction study. He also inquired about the behavior of tritium in the body. Dr. Stocker said he had reviewed a paper about a person accidentally ingesting tritium and secreting it 400 days later. He wanted to know if this was possible.

Pat Tousignant, CAB member and Hilton Head Island resident

Pat Tousignant read the biography of nuclear scientist Dr. Karl Z. Morgan and then proceeded to read a letter from him which had been published in *The Island Packet* on April 4, 1993. In this letter, Dr. Morgan takes issue with current industry assumptions and practices related to radiation and health effects.

Handouts

- DOE Strategic Plan
- *Environmental Statues*, 1994 Edition
- *Environmental Law Handbook*, Twelfth Edition
- *Compendium of SuperFund Program Publications*, 1992
- DOE-SR letter inviting CAB to participate in upcoming Site Treatment Plan Focus Group Meeting
- "Proposed SRS CAB Priorities," a report by the CAB Education Subcommittee
- "Response to Comments for 1994 SRS Public Involvement Plan," WSRC Public Involvement