

**Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2002
6 to 9:30 p.m.**

Jefferson County Airport Terminal Building, 11755 Airport Way, Broomfield

FACILITATOR: Reed Hodgkin

Jeff Eggleston, the Board's chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Davia, Joe Downey, Jeff Eggleston, Maureen Eldredge, Jim Fabian, Anne Fenerty, Shirley Garcia, Earl Gunia, Victor Holm, Jim Kinsinger, Bill Kossack, Tom Marshall, Mary Mattson, LeRoy Moore, Nancy Peters, Andrew Ross / Joe Legare, Tim Rehder, Mark Sattelberg

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Suzanne Allen, Tom Gallegos, Kip Harward, Henri Jonas / Steve Gunderson, Dean Rundle

PUBLIC / OBSERVERS PRESENT: Roman Kohler (RF Homesteaders); Rob Henneke (EPA); Bill McNeill (Wildlife Refuge TRG); John Richardson (student); Alliyah Mirza (student); Don Owen (DNFSB); Joey Bunch (Denver Post); Alan Trenary (citizen); David Abelson (RFCLoG); John Corsi (KH); Anna Martinez (DOE); Deb French (RFCAB staff); Jerry Henderson (RFCAB staff); Ken Korkia (RFCAB staff); Patricia Rice (RFCAB staff)

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Comment: David Abelson, Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments. David noted that long-term stewardship is listed as a major activity on the Board's work plan for 2003. He stated that the Coalition also has a strong interest in this issue. He advised the two groups to work closely on issues related to long-term stewardship.

Comments: Deb French, RFCAB staff member, reported on public comment received through the Board's comment line, email, and periodic surveys. On October 31, staff officially submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Service all comments received about the wildlife refuge, as well as the results of the Board's survey posted in September. This survey first asked citizens to answer whether or not they believe the public should have access to the site once it becomes a wildlife refuge, and if so, to check off a list of activities they feel are suitable. Survey results are available from staff. Deb then summarized the public comment received by the office.

- A faculty member from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, wrote about the Weldon Spring Superfund site located there. He is with a group of citizens opposed to opening that site to the public. He stated that the wildlife refuge idea at both Weldon Spring and Rocky Flats is irresponsible and inappropriate.

- A writer from Jefferson County sent comments about the site's plan to leave subsurface contamination in place. This person feels lack of characterization is a problem because the risk estimates would then be based on unsubstantiated information. Ecologically based risk levels should also be considered.
- Two students from CU-Boulder wrote to comment on the high levels of contamination that will be left at the site, and to urge the Fish and Wildlife Service not to open the wildlife refuge to the public in the future. They both felt the site would not be safe for public use after it is closed.
- A Westminster resident wrote to comment on cleanup plans. He believes the site should be returned, as closely as possible, to its original condition. He also wants to see continued studies in the future about possible contamination from the plant.

UPDATE ON WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES: Gary Voorheis with Kaiser-Hill talked to the Board about the site's perspective on worker health and safety. He began by mentioning that the working being done now at the site, primarily construction and deconstruction, is more industrial in nature and presents new types of hazards. Because of this, the risk for industrial accidents has increased. Gary noted that last year, about 5,000 individuals were killed at work across the country; about 800 of those were killed from falls. A high number of traffic accidents are also recorded at industrial sites. The risk of traffic accidents is more of a concern now that more Rocky Flats employees work offsite and there is more truck transportation onsite. The site recently hired 16 new industrial safety specialists, and has asked the Steelworkers union to help with industrial issues. Gary said the site now has five major areas of safety focus: 1) falls, 2) electrical problems, 3) hoisting and rigging, 4) heavy equipment operation, and 5) fire. They are not only concerned about the actual occurrences, but also about interpreting how dangerous the occurrences might have become beyond what actually happened. Kaiser-Hill is training 1,800 hourly workers in OSHA standards and conducting other training as well. The site recognizes a need to focus on procedural compliance issues, and is also concerned about subcontractor control.

Next, Don Owen with the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) gave his quarterly update to the Board on Rocky Flats issues. First he talked about the plutonium stabilization and packaging system (PuSPS). The system became operational in June 2001 and although it has been plagued with problems, work has progressed fairly well. To date, 1,100 containers have been packaged, with a total of approximately 1,900 to be completed. So far, the packaging has focused on metals and oxides with a level of plutonium greater than 80 percent. Stabilization and packaging of oxides with less than 80 percent plutonium will begin soon. A new thermal pretreatment step has been added for those oxides that may contain small amounts of organics. Kaiser-Hill has proposed that for 970 kg of low purity oxide, instead of being packaged for long-term storage, those materials be packaged for disposition at WIPP. This would involve setting a new packaging milestone. The revised projected completion date for packaging is now the summer of 2003.

DNFSB continues to follow progress at the site after it expressed concerns last spring about integrated safety management issues. Kaiser-Hill is working on a site-wide mentoring program and has put more emphasis toward on-the-floor experience for mentors. Their new program is nearly ready to put in place. However, DOE-RFFO has had little progress with increasing oversight and review of work planning. DOE is doing assessments now and has committed to providing more oversight.

The Safety Board also is concerned about conduct of operations at the site. Don said it is critical that operations are performed in a formal, disciplined way. A few occurrences in September indicated a lack of adherence to procedures, by either skipping or poorly performing important steps in the process. DNFSB

has discussed these issues with site management, and the site has agreed to place a renewed emphasis on following procedures.

Board members then made comments and asked specific questions, addressing areas such as: concerns about a particular subcontractor with some safety problems; concerns about the policies for testing workers who have been exposed; what determines the maximum allowable dosage on an employee's personal monitor and how determinations are made to increase a dose limit for a given employee; concerns about safety issues when taking down plutonium buildings; impact of delays with the packaging system to the site's closure schedule; whether WIPP has approved new materials to be shipped there; the reasoning behind Kaiser-Hill's new proposal for packaging low purity oxides; and safety issues involved with changing packaging procedures. The Board again requested that the site provide copies of its monthly written reports on safety and the quarterly safety updates given to the site manager.

UPDATE ON SSAB CHAIRS MEETING: The chairs of the Site Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs) at each site in the nuclear weapons complex meet twice yearly. They met last month in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, from October 17 to 19. A tour of the Oak Ridge site was included, along with two days of meetings to discuss issues shared by each of the advisory boards. These meetings rotate among sites. The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (RFCAB) volunteered to host the next meeting, which will be held this spring. Two years ago, RFCAB hosted a stewardship workshop for the SSABs, one of the annual meetings held to discuss specific topics of interest. However, chairs meetings are a much smaller group. The next chairs meeting will be held March 27 to 29, 2003, and will include a site tour of Rocky Flats on Thursday, meetings on Friday and Saturday, and an opening reception hosted by RFCAB on Thursday evening. Staff is looking at a few different locations in the Denver metro area to hold the meetings. Board members were asked to serve on a local planning/host committee to work on details of the meeting.

BOARD OFFICER ELECTIONS: The Board held its annual election of officers. New officers for the year 2003 are: Victor Holm, Chair; Shirley Garcia, Vice Chair; Joe Downey, Secretary; and Dave Davia, Treasurer. These officers will begin their term of service at the December 5 Board meeting.

END-STATE DISCUSSION: The Board considered the first review draft of its end-state recommendation, which is the result of educational sessions and many discussions held by the Board over the past year. The draft provides several sections with individual recommendations in each section, addressing issues such as the trade-offs being proposed by the site, the site's risk-based approach to cleanup, the cleanup budget, remediation decision-making, surface and subsurface soil remediation, surface water regulatory changes, and long-term stewardship. During this first review of the draft recommendation, Board members were asked to look at each recommendation point, determine if they had any problems with what is stated in each point, look at the recommendation for conceptual issues, and provide comments and concerns. Most of the discussion and comments focused on the recommendation points that encompassed issues related specifically to the site's plans for surface and subsurface soil remediation, surface water regulatory changes, and stewardship.

Several Board members came together to form a drafting committee, which developed the first draft of this document. That committee will meet again later in November to work on another draft of the document incorporating comments and concerns expressed

by the Board. Also, a few Board members will contribute additional language and corrections to help prepare the next draft of the document for review at the December Board meeting. Board members were asked to comment on what is in the document no later than November 13. The drafting committee will meet sometime the week of November 18 to continue its work.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Comment: Alan Trenary, citizen. I appreciate the hard work and efforts of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board. I am dismayed with six inches being the limit for surface soil remediation, and sometimes feel frustrated that there is a dollar sign placed on possible actions to be taken at Rocky Flats. It feels as though we are being limited in what can be achieved. An unfortunate aspect is that cleanup is driven by money. We spend a lot of money on studying and arguing about what we should do about problems, but the actual work is secondary. It seems in a subtle way as though it is being decided for us what is going to happen. 50 pCi/gram is still pretty significant contamination to leave behind. I realize there are limitations on what can be done. I appreciate the members of this Board who continue to stand up for certain principles. Also, I would like to state again there are methods of remediation to draw up contamination with organic materials. Maybe this could also be applied to other areas where there is contamination, such as the waste site in Idaho.

RECOMMENDATION ON SOLAR PONDS PROPOSED ACTION MEMORANDUM: The Board's Closure Projects Committee has worked over the past few months on reviewing issues related to the Solar Evaporation Ponds. A draft Proposed Action Memorandum (PAM) has been issued as an environmental restoration decision document for the Solar Ponds area of the site. The public comment period for this PAM is currently underway and extends through November 11. The PAM details the basis for closing the Solar Ponds. Based on a risk assessment specific to the Solar Ponds, it was determined that no further action is necessary. The Board's recommendation presents comments and concerns about the draft PAM and closure of the Solar Ponds. The comments and concerns specifically address characterization, long-term stewardship, segregation of environmental media, consistency with the site's end-state proposal, constituents of concern, hotspot removal, and budget issues. The committee also prepared many detailed comments on the decision document, addressing specific sections within that document. The Board approved the recommendation, with one member abstaining from the vote. A copy of the recommendation with all the details is available from staff and will be posted on the Board's web site.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: The Membership Committee recommended, and the Board approved, the addition of a new member, Alliyah Mirza. Alliyah is currently a student at the University of Colorado-Boulder, studying in the Environmental, Population, and Organismic Biology program. She is the coordinator of the energy program at CU's Environmental Center and president of the Mortar Board Honor Society. She earned an associate degree in Arts and Science at Illinois Central College. Alliyah has a future goal of becoming an environmental lawyer. She is a resident of Boulder, and will serve as an academic institution representative.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- Jerry Henderson evaluation. The Board unanimously approved for Jerry Henderson a \$2,500 merit increase and a \$1,000 increase in scale, for a total \$3,500 per year increase in salary, which makes his salary \$37,500 per year effective November 1, 2002.
- Ken Korkia evaluation. The Board unanimously approved a one-time bonus of \$1,500 and a \$3,500 merit increase for Ken Korkia, which makes his salary \$56,500 per year, retroactive to July 1, 2002.

NEXT MEETING:

Date: December 5, 2002, 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Location: DoubleTree Hotel, 8773 Yates Drive, Westminster

Agenda: Update on site closure progress; review draft end-state recommendation

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:10 p.m. *

(* Taped transcript of full meeting is available in the RFCAB office.)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Shirley Garcia, Secretary
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

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