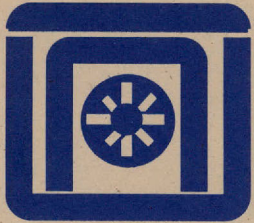


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NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

January 1998



1997 CAME & WENT Year Brought Progress

In 1997, Sierra Blanca residents witnessed the culmination of several public projects funded with monies paid to Hudspeth County by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority).

"Last year was a pretty active year. Well over \$1 million was spent on public projects and quite a few have been completed," said Manny Lujan, Hudspeth County community development coordinator.

"Last year was a pretty active year. Well over \$1 million was spent on public projects..."


*Manny Lujan, Hudspeth County
Community Development Coordinator*

Funds paid to the county totaled \$741,489.26 this past fiscal year. These funds are authorized by statute to be paid to the county hosting the State's proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. These funds equal 10% of what the Authority collects from Texas low-level radioactive waste generators as "planning and implementation fees" (P&I) to cover siting costs for the disposal facility.

Sierra Blanca's improved community park was completed late in December at a cost of \$435,140. It now is a fully equipped facility offering lighted tennis courts, a covered pavilion and cabana, a quarter mile walking/jogging trail, a playground, picnic area, and a volleyball court. The park is also wheelchair accessible and is equipped with its own irrigation system.

The Sierra Blanca Independent School District (S.B.I.S.D.) held ribbon cutting ceremonies in November to celebrate the grand opening of a new cafeteria building. The project was completed late last summer but only recently became fully operational. The school had been using a former study hall/office building as a cafeteria. "It sure is nice to have a facility that is built to be a cafeteria rather than having to work with a makeshift building," stated school district superintendent Lewis Rogers. To date, the S.B.I.S.D. has been allocated \$256,206 of P&I monies to be used for various projects.

Sierra Blancans will soon witness physical progress on the town's sewer system project. In 1997, the county obtained the wastewater discharge permit for the three-

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BOARD MEETING REPORT

by Mac Marquez

On November 13, 1997, the Authority's Board of Directors held its quarterly meeting in Sierra Blanca. This meeting is designated by law to allow local public officials to attend and confer with the Board on matters of concern. Several officials and representatives of political subdivisions attended the meeting.

The Board then went into executive session to receive advice from the Authority's general counsel concerning contemplated litigation relating to the pending license application.

Following approval of the minutes of the August 15, 1997 meeting, the Board was briefed by Tim Schaffner, Director of Finance, on year-to-date financial matters. Mr. Schaffner reported that expenditures so far this fiscal year are on schedule. Mr. Schaffner also discussed the status of the county's three master plans for local public projects. These master plans contain the proposed projects that are eligible for funding by a portion of the Authority's planning and implementation fees.

Under the Legal portion of the agenda, Lee Mathews, General Counsel, discussed the status of licensing hearings currently proposed to begin on January 21, 1998. The Authority and the other parties to the hearing are involved in discovery proceedings. Hearings will initially be held in Sierra Blanca and then will move to El Paso and then to Austin.

Mr. Mathews reported that other states and compacts continue to make little progress in siting new facilities.

Rick Jacobi, General Manager, discussed the status of the demonstration cap project at the site. The project is expected to be fully operational by early January, 1998. Mr. Jacobi also reported on the status of the Authority's contracts.

Mr. Jacobi reported on community development programs in Hudspeth County. He discussed the



park project, the museum project, the new school cafeteria, and other projects. He noted that the Hudspeth County Commissioners Court has passed a resolution in support of the construction of a new interchange east of Sierra Blanca on I.H. 10 at its intersection with F.M. 1111.

With regard to the Authority's public information program, Mr. Jacobi noted that additions and improvements had recently been made to the agency's informational materials. Site tour requests from the media have increased.

The Board approved a contract with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission under which the Authority pays the TNRCC's costs associated with the ongoing license hearings. The contract is in the amount of \$734,001 for fiscal year 1998. The Board also approved an amendment to the Rogers and Associates engineering contract to change the labor rates under the contract.

Mr. Mathews discussed the need for the Authority to acquire directors and officers liability insurance. The Board instructed the general counsel to investigate the matter further and bring a proposal back to the Board at its next meeting.

Finally, the Board approved amendments to the Sierra Blanca Master Plans to provide funds for acquisition of land for future recreational use; allocate remaining unallocated funds for the payment of the public library's utilities; and set aside funds for renovation of the railroad depot and additional work on the public park. ☺

TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

Well, the long awaited hearings on the application for a license to operate the low-level radioactive waste site are scheduled to begin on January 21 in Sierra Blanca. They will be held in the library and the public is invited to attend. The hearings will continue for three days until January 23 in Sierra Blanca and then reconvene at the El Paso Courthouse on January 26.

The purpose of the hearings is to hear from both opponents and supporters of the facility. Testimony will be under oath before judges from the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Every detail of the design, construction and operation of the facility will be discussed in detail. The party opponents, who have made many unsupported claims about the safety of the project, will now be required to prove those claims. Personally, I am looking forward to "having my day in court."

If you are undecided about this project, ambivalent or just plain curious to watch the proceedings, drop by and enjoy the fun.

Publications Schedule Changes

In order to provide you with more timely information during the upcoming evidentiary hearings, the bi-monthly *Community Calendar* and *Neighbor To Neighbor* newsletter will be temporarily replaced with the *Project Update*. The *Project Update* is the single sheet publication which we release on a quarterly basis. *Neighbor To Neighbor* will resume its regular schedule in July 1998. The *Community Calendar* will resume its regular schedule in August.

Should there be any changes in the hearings schedule, adjustments would be made to our publications schedule. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

'97 County-Wide Public Projects

(continued from page 1)

phase project and construction contracts were awarded. Pending approval of some additional funding for part of the project, construction is expected to begin within the next couple of months.

In December, bid packages for construction of a community resource center were in the process of being prepared. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars of P&I fees have been allocated for the 3,200 square foot facility which is to be located just southeast of the Sierra Blanca Catholic Church. Construction is expected to begin sometime this year, as soon as contracts have been awarded.

County-wide projects included upgrading and repairing Dell City's water and wastewater systems - a \$43,376 project; repairing the Hueco Volunteer Fire Department's fire trucks (\$17,450), renovation of its departmental building, and the purchase of fire-fighting equipment; construction of a municipal building to house the sheriff's department, Department of Public Safety officers, justice of the peace and a secretary in Fort Hancock (\$214,247); and allocation of \$170,000 to contract out emergency medical services for the county. Other county-wide projects included upgrading of solid waste disposal facilities to be in compliance with State rules and regulations (\$325,000); renovating the historical railroad depot (\$5,000); and refurbishing of the Dell Valley fair grounds (\$14,000). In November, the county also purchased a new van (\$27,250) for the purpose of providing non-emergency medical transportation to those in need.

Funding has also been allocated for future projects such as renovation of the Hudspeth County Courthouse (\$238,650), and additional emergency medical services (\$40,000).

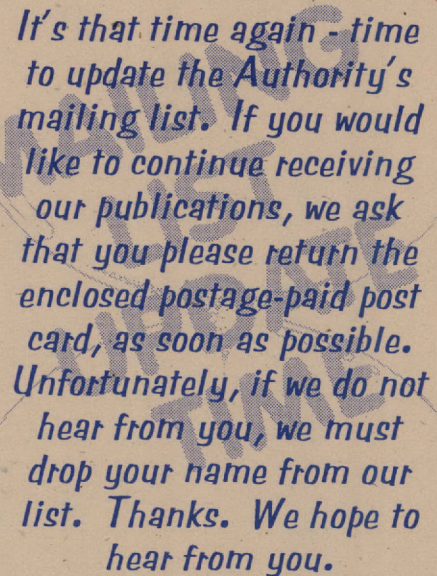
Since 1994, the Authority has paid \$3,346,315 to Hudspeth County. All funds must be used for public projects within the county. The Authority's statute limited 1994-1995 funds to local public projects located within 10 miles of the disposal site. ☺

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION: Transportation of Radioactive Materials

Sierra Blanca is invited to a community discussion on the issue of transportation of radioactive materials in Texas scheduled for Tuesday, January 6, 1998. The meeting will begin at 6:45 p.m at the Sierra Blanca Courthouse.

Mr. **Richard A. Ratliff**, Chief of the Bureau of Radiation Control (BRC) at the Texas Department of Health will be the guest speaker. Mr. Ratliff has worked at the Health Department for the past 25 years. His work experience includes hands-on involvement with all aspects of radiation control including directing programs responsible for inspections of all radioactive materials licenses and X-ray registrations in Texas, investigations of all radiological incidents, and emergency response planning. Mr. Ratliff holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering Technology from Western New Mexico University, and a Master of Environmental Science degree from the University of Oklahoma. He is also a registered professional engineer and a licensed medical physicist.

Refreshments will be provided by Advocates For Responsible Disposal in Texas. We hope you can join us.



It's that time again - time to update the Authority's mailing list. If you would like to continue receiving our publications, we ask that you please return the enclosed postage-paid post card, as soon as possible. Unfortunately, if we do not hear from you, we must drop your name from our list. Thanks. We hope to hear from you.

Congratulations to Authority Health Physicist Susan Jablonski for recently earning her Master of Health Physics degree from The University of Texas at Austin.

-TLLRWDA Staff

Proposed LLRW Disposal Facility Evidentiary Hearings Schedule

January 21-23, 1998 (Community Library, Sierra Blanca, TX)

Week of January 26, 1998 and week of February 2, 1998 (El Paso County Courthouse, El Paso, TX)

* The parties anticipate that after the second week of hearings in El Paso, the hearings will return to Austin. At some later date, hearings will return to the West Texas area.

(Source: SOAH Docket No. 582-96-1042/TNRCC Docket No. 96-1206-RAW)

JANUARY 1998

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3
4	5 S.B. School, 2nd Semester School Year Begins S.B. School Staff Meeting	6 TLLRWDA Community Mtg. 6:45 PM (S.B. Courthouse)	7 S.B. Beta Sigma Phi Mtg. S.B. School Open House, 6-7:30 PM S.B. School Report Card Day	8	9 S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl. vs. Ft. Hck. 6:00 PM (S.B.)	10
11	12 Hudspeth County Commiss. Cr. Mtg. 9:00 AM	13 S.B. School Board Meeting, 6:00 PM S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl. vs. Balmorh. 5:00 PM (S.B.)	14 S.B. Chamber of Commerce Mtg. 6:00 PM S.B. School Nat'l. Honor Mtg. (TBA)	15 S.B. School Jr. H. Bsktbl. vs. Ft. Hnck. 5:00 PM (There)	16 S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl. vs. Marannatha, 6 PM (S.B.)	17 S.B. Jr. H. Girls Bktbl. Tournery S.B. H.S. UIL Competition
18 S.B. Jr. H. S. Bsktbl. @ Dell City 5:00 PM (on 1/19)	19 <i>Confederate Heroes Day</i> (State Holiday) S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl. (Balmorhea) 5:30 PM S.B. Schl. Staff Mtg.	20 (on 1/21/98) S.B. School Future Farmers of America Mtg., TBA	21 S.B. Beta Sigma Phi Mtg. H.C. Water District Brd. Mtg., 5:00 PM TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. Begin	22 TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (S.B.)	23 TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (S.B.) S.B. School Varsity Bsktbl., 6:00 PM (Jesus Chapel)	24 S.B. Jr. H. School Boys Bsktbl. Tournament
25	26 Hudspeth County Commiss. Cr. Mtg. 9:00 AM TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (El Paso)	27 TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (El Paso)	28 S.B. School Report Card Day S.B. Chamber Mtg., 6:00 PM TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (El Paso)	29 TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (El Paso) S.B. Jr. H.S. Bsktbl. vs. Dell City 6:00 PM, (S.B.) (PARENTS NIGHT)	30 TLLRWDA Project Evidentiary Hrngs. (El Paso)	31 Hudspeth County Livestock Show



Neighbor To Neighbor is published monthly by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority). The Authority is the State agency responsible for siting, constructing, operating and eventually closing a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility for the State. The Authority is headquartered in Austin, Texas and also has a field office in Sierra Blanca, Texas.

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