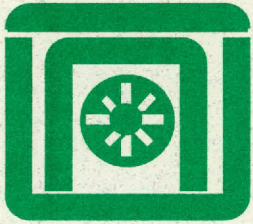


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NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

March 1997



SOAH ISSUES NEW ORDER

New Hearing Schedule Detailed

The State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) has revised the procedural schedule and party alignments for hearings on the Authority's license application for a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility.

A new order (Order No. 14) detailing the revisions was issued on January 30 by SOAH after the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) had previously ruled on certified questions filed by the Authority. In its questions, the Authority objected to its alignment with four other supporting parties in the hearings, and asked whether perceived socio-economic impacts justified party status for some other hearing participants.

In a written response, the TNRCC Commissioners ruled that the Authority's role in the project is specific enough and its interests are "sufficiently distinct" from other parties supporting the project, to justify independent alignment. On the issue of perceived socioeconomic impacts, the Commission said:

Perceptions can have real impacts in some circumstances, and it is a fact question whether a sufficient showing has been made that the perception is real, the interest claimed to be impacted is genuine and a reasonable nexus exists between the perception and the interest sought to be protected.

In accordance with the Commissioners' ruling, SOAH Order No. 14 lists the Authority as an independently aligned party. Texas Utilities Electric Company, Houston Light & Power, Mr. John French, and the Sierra Blanca Community Development Corporation are aligned together in support of the application.

In the order, the date for the applicant to prefile testimony has been changed from January 13 to March 3, 1997. Protestants to the project will now have until October 3, 1997 to prefile direct testimony, instead of the previous deadline of July 25. Evidentiary hearings are now scheduled to begin on January 21, 1998, rather than the previous date of November 3, 1997.

For more information please contact the State Office of Administrative Hearings at (512) 475-4993.



Government Publications
Texas State Documents

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MAY 06 1997

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Dallas Public Library

FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING REPORT

by Mac Marquez

The Authority's Board of Directors held their first meeting of 1997 on Friday, February 14, in Austin. The Board convened at 1:30 p.m. in the Stephen F. Austin State Office Building. Following is a summary of the meeting.

Election of Board officers took place and results were as follows: Dr. Milton Guiberteau was re-elected Chairman; Mr. John Simek was elected Vice-Chairman; and Mr. James Carroll was elected Secretary. Officers will serve in these positions for the next two years.

Next, the Board exited the meeting room to meet in an adjacent room for an Executive Session. Following the Executive Session, the Board approved minutes from the November meeting held in Sierra Blanca.

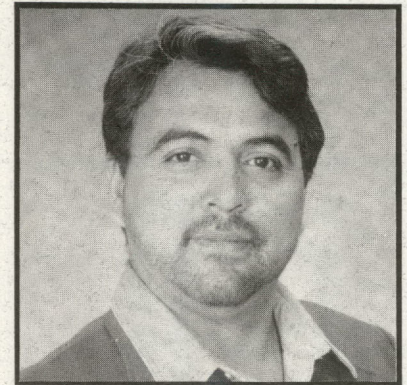
Chairmen of the Public Information and Compensation Committees, Mr. James Carroll and Dr. Milton Guiberteau, respectively, presented brief reports on recently held committee meetings.

Authority Accounting Director Tim Schaffner reported that the overall agency budget is within the expenditures anticipated to date. Printing and Reproduction Services for the Site Development Program exceeded its budget due to the unexpected request for duplication of sixteen sets of the license application. Duplication costs for per set was approximately \$740.

General Manager Rick Jacobi then reported on the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) which has been amended due to a longer public hearing schedule set by the administrative law judges. Mr. Jacobi stated that the LAR has already been presented to the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees.

Lee Mathews, Authority General Counsel, reported that a working group to address bond issuance has been formed. The group has met and is working on an IRS request for a ruling on the tax status of any revenue bonds which may be issued by the Authority. Mr. Mathews proceeded to update the Board on the status of the license application hearings, potential legislation

for the 75th Legislature, and the status of the proposed Texas-Maine-Vermont compact.



Deputy General Manager Bob Avant reported that the excavation portion of the exploratory trench project was completed at the end of January, and that the project has confirmed a lot of the information determined from the site characterization studies. Mr. Avant highlighted some of the most important findings from this project.

Chief Engineer Ruben Alvarado informed the Board that bids for the demonstration cap project were opened on January 24, 1997 at the Sierra Blanca field office and the lowest bidder was Walker Equipment Company of Fort Hancock. Based on that bid, Mr. Avant recommended to the Board that the contract be awarded to Walker Equipment. The contract was approved unanimously.

Ms. Susan Jablonski, Authority Health Physicist, presented an update on the environmental monitoring program. Ms. Jablonski discussed modifications made to the sampling activities in preparation for the transition from the preoperational phase into the operational phase.

Under the "New Business" portion of the agenda, Mr. Mathews recommended approval of proposed rulemaking for 1997 planning and implementation fees, and a proposed amendment to a contract with outside legal counsel. Both items were approved unanimously.

Mr. Jacobi requested approval of a continuation contract with a health care financial consultant who has been contracted to assist in the development of ideas on health care in Hudspeth County. The contract was approved.

No one appeared to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.



TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

By statute, the Authority is committed to hiring and purchasing locally to the maximum extent possible. Although the Authority has not needed to hire any full time employees in the last two years, in 1996 alone we awarded many temporary contracts within Hudspeth County for various types of work.

Every biennium, the agency requests bids for exterior and interior cleanup work at the field office. Throughout the year, work is contracted out for such items as miscellaneous electrical repairs, road blading, carpentry, plumbing, concrete-related construction, painting, etc. Last summer, the Authority hired six students to perform miscellaneous duties such as answering phones at the field office, painting fences at the corrals on the Faskin Ranch, clearing areas around property buildings to create more space, helping with accommodations at the public hearings, etc. Security guards were also hired for service during the public hearings.

Last fall we contracted with a Sierra Blanca resident to provide temporary clerical services at the field office. Recently a second clerical services contract was awarded to another Sierra Blanca resident.

On February 14, a contract for the Authority's "Demonstration Cap Project" was awarded to Walker Equipment of Fort Hancock. Last fall, Walker was also awarded the contract for the "Exploratory Trench Project". Walker Equipment was low bidder on both projects, but was also selected because the company has the equipment and experience to work on large, complex projects like these. The total cost of these two projects is expected to be about \$770,000 for earthwork and mechanical installation.

In October of 1998, we hope to begin construction on the low-level waste disposal facility at Sierra Blanca. This will include construction of the buildings, warehouse facilities, utilities and roads, and an interchange on interstate 10. The total estimated cost of these projects is \$31,620,000. In addition, we will need to purchase or lease another \$2,961, 296 worth of heavy equipment and supplies. During the nine month construction period, an estimated 100 workers will be required.

(continued on page 4)

\$531K CAP PROJECT CONTRACT AWARDED LOCALLY

Walker Equipment Company of Fort Hancock was the low bidder and has been awarded a \$531,914.15 construction contract for the demonstration cap project. At a recent meeting, the TLLRWDA Board of Directors approved the contract unanimously.

Bids for the project were received in January. Bids were opened on January 24, 1997, at the Sierra Blanca field office. The Authority's facility design contractor, Radian International, reviewed the bids and prepared a bid tabulation, prior to recommending Walker Equipment to the Authority.

The purpose of the prototype cap project is to allow the Authority to construct a smaller scale cap, similar to what will be used on the disposal trenches, and monitor its performance over the lifetime of the facility. Construction of the cap project is scheduled to begin on March 3 and be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

March Working Group Meeting

The March Working Group Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11. The meeting will consist of two tours of the proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. One tour will be conducted at 12:20 p.m. and a second tour will be conducted at 5:20 p.m. Each tour is expected to last between 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Due to the limited number of vehicles, each tour is limited to 10 people. Please notify the Authority (369-3391) of your interest in one of these tours by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 7.**

Other opportunities to tour the facility will be scheduled throughout the year; however, a tour may be requested and scheduled in advance at any time.

Temporary Clerical Services Contract Awarded to S.B. Resident

The Authority has awarded a contract for temporary clerical services to Ms. Pat Rose of Sierra Blanca. Ms. Rose was selected out of a group of seven interested parties who responded to flyers posted by the Authority announcing the need for such temporary services.

The Authority's field office is temporarily short handed due to the illness of one employee. "With the activity taking place at the site (exploratory projects being conducted), more office work is being generated," explained Joe Castro, Authority field office supervisor.

A backup pool of three other temporary providers has been formed to ensure that someone is available at the field office from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. throughout the work week. The Authority will use the pool consisting of Ms. Billie Dell French, Ms. Christina Urbina, and Ms. Eileen Bemenderfer, all residents of Sierra Blanca, when necessary.

"The temporary services contract was awarded based on best qualifications of those who applied," stated Rita Hodde, Authority Personnel Director.

The Authority also anticipates awarding one to two temporary security officer contracts in early March.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Joe Castro on his promotion to field office supervisor for the Authority. As of February 1, 1997, Joe has assumed additional responsibilities in decision making and supervision. In summer 1996 he began participating in some public information activities such as site tours and the public hearings.

Authority Personnel Director Rita Hodde stated that the increase in activity at the site brought on by the exploratory trench and prototype cap construction projects has led Authority staff to work twice as hard. Joe was particularly actively involved in all aspects of the trench excavation project. "Joe has demonstrated very good leadership and communication skills during the busiest times at the field office," stated Ms. Hodde. "He worked very hard and non-stop, when needed," she said.

"The promotion came unexpectedly but I feel confident that I can do a good job for the State," said Joe. "I look forward to working more with the public and being responsible for making more decisions for the field office," he said.

Happy
St. Patrick's
Day




TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

(continued from page 3)

The Authority can and wants to offer employment opportunities to residents of Hudspeth County as much as possible. The Authority has a job to do and wants to work with you to complete this project. The successful bid by Walker Equipment shows that Hudspeth County companies can participate in the construction of this major project.

MARCH 1997

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4 Varsity Baseball S.B. vs. Tornillo (Tornillo) 3:30 PM	5 S.B. School Nat. Honor Soc. Mtg. (Library) 2:30 PM	6	7 DEADLINE to sign up for TLLRWDA Site Tours Varsity Baseball S.B. vs. Address (El Paso) 4:00 PM	8
9	10 State C - X Debate Team Competition 2/10 - 2/11 (Austin, TX) Commissioners Court Meeting 9:00 AM	11 TLLRWDA Wrkng. Group Meeting (Tours of Site) 12:20 PM and 5:20 PM	12 S.B. Chamber of Commerce Mtg. 6:00 PM (Library)	13	14 Varsity Baseball S.B. vs. Faith Christ (El Paso) 3:30 PM	15
16	17 St. Patrick's Day 	18 S.B. School Board Mtg. (Lib.) 6:00 PM H.C. Water District Mtg. 5:00 Varsity Baseball S.B. vs. Ft. Hancock (Ft. H.) 3:30 PM	19 S.B. Nat. Jr. Honor Society Mtg. (Library) 2:30 PM	20 Varsity Baseball Tournament (Fabens) time TBA District UIL Academic Meet (Sierra Blanca)	21 S.B. One Act Play Rehearsals	22 District One Act Play Performances (Sierra Blanca)
23 PALM SUNDAY	24 Commissioners Court Meeting 9:00 AM *****	25 *****	26 S.B. Chamber of Commerce Mtg. 6:00 PM (Library) S.B. SPRING BREAK WEEK	27 *****	28 GOOD FRIDAY *****	29
30 EASTER SUNDAY	31					



Easter Greetings

TO ONE AND ALL

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.

Please feel free to visit or contact the Authority at the following addresses and phone/fax numbers:

ATTN: Adriana Rhames TLLRWDA 7701 N. Lamar, Ste. 300 Austin, TX 78752 Phone: (512) 451-5292 Fax: (512) 451-5296	TLLRWDA I-10 E., Mile Marker 112 P.O. Box 361 Sierra Blanca, TX 79851 Phone: (915) 369-3391 Fax: (915) 369-3181
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TELL US ABOUT IT...


We are working hard to provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information pertaining to our project. Please feel free to comment, ask questions and/or make suggestions:

Name/Nombre: _____

Address/Dirección: _____

Phone/Teléfono: _____

Comments/Comentario :

_____ 

 Mail To/Envíe a:

ATTN: Editor
TLLRWDA
7701 N. Lamar, #300
Austin, TX 78752

COMPARTA SU COMENTARIO...

Deseamos ofrecerle la información mas precisa y reciente tocante a nuestro proyecto. Por favor envíenos su comentario perteneciente al proyecto y/o a este boletín de noticias.

**Texas Low-Level Radioactive
Waste Disposal Authority
7701 North Lamar, Ste. 300
Austin, TX 78752**