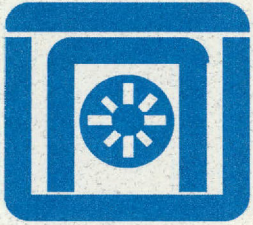


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NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

June, 1996



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In This Issue

*LLRW Project Public
Hearing Process ---pg. 1

* Board Meeting Report
---pg. 2

* TO THE POINT ---pg. 3

* Authority Earns Award
---pg. 3

* Community Bits ---pg. 4

* Working Group Meeting
Changes ---pg. 5

* Community Calendar
---pg. 5



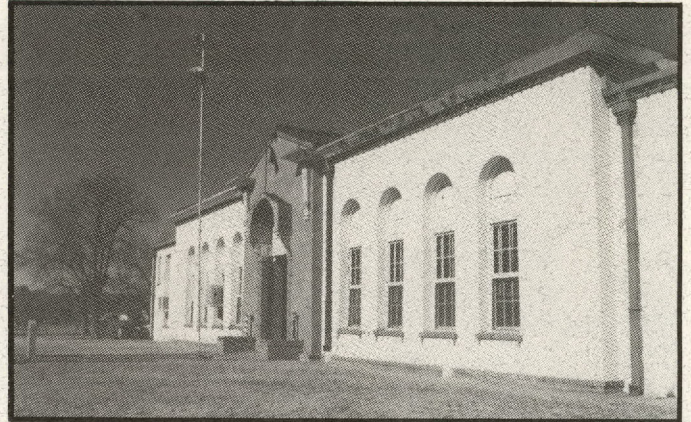
NEXT STEP FOR LLRW PROJECT

Over 500 letters were received by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission's Chief Clerk's office in response to the 31-day comment period for the proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. The letters were listed under four main categories: "request for hearing", "letters of concern", "letters of protest", and "letters of comment". Most of the letters were requests for a hearing.

The next step for the low-level waste project will originate in the TNRCC's chief clerk's office. By law, the chief clerk's office must provide copies of all requests received by her office to TNRCC Executive Director Dan Pearson, the public interest counsel and the Authority. Once the executive director has filed a statement declaring that technical review of the application is complete, the chief clerk's office shall:

1. refer the request and application to an alternative dispute resolution director whose responsibility is to try to resolve the differences between the Authority and person/party requesting the hearing, and

2. schedule the requests for a hearing at a commissioners' meeting if at all possible within 30 days of the comment period deadline (May 13) or the date after the executive director's statement that technical review is complete.



The preliminary hearing on the proposed LLRW disposal site is expected to take place at the Hudspeth County Courthouse in Sierra Blanca, TX.

The Authority, the executive director, and the public interest counsel have an opportunity to respond to hearing requests by submitting a response to the chief clerk's office no later than 15 days before the commissioners meeting at which the hearing requests will be evaluated. Persons who requested a hearing may also file a written response to the chief clerk's office no later than five days of the scheduled commissioners' hearing. The Authority, the TNRCC executive director and commissioners also have an opportunity to request that hearing requests be referred directly to the State Officer of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). If such a request is made, the commissioners' meeting scheduled for evaluation of the request is automatically canceled.

(continued on page 3)

MAY BOARD MEETING REPORT

by Mac Marquez

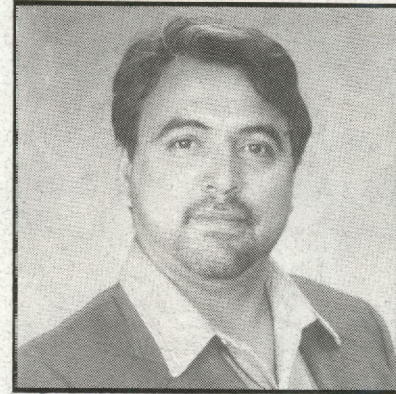
The Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority's (the Authority) Board of Directors held their quarterly board meeting on Thursday, May 9, 1996, at 8:30 a.m., in the Stephen F. Austin State Office Building in Austin. A Board workshop was held on Wednesday, May 8, to discuss the environmental and safety analysis issued by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) on the license application for the proposed low-level waste project. Following are highlights of the Board meeting.

Tim Schaffner, Director of Accounting for the Authority, briefed the Board on the agency's budget which, overall, is within anticipated expenditures. Mr. Schaffner also mentioned that budget adjustments would be proposed to the Board at the August quarterly Board meeting. A total of \$1,039,000 was refunded to State of Texas low-level waste generators from surcharges by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Authority General Manager Rick Jacobi informed the Board that due to the delay in the TNRCC's review of the license application, funds would need to be transferred among the Authority's appropriated "strategies" in FY 1996 and FY 1997. Mr. Jacobi also told the Board that the Legislative Budget Board would soon ask for a recommendation for funding in fiscal years 1998 and 1999.

Bob Avant, Deputy General Manager for Technical Operations, discussed the updated strategic plan. Mr. Avant stated that the update includes new topics such as the new projected license issuance date of September 1997 and facility financing scenarios. Mr. Avant said the plan is due to the Governor's office by June 15, 1996.

Authority General Counsel Lee Mathews briefed the Board on the several license applications the Authority has pending with the TNRCC and provided an update on the status of the proposed compact. Mr. Mathews mentioned that the most significant matter pending is the requested license for operation of a low-level waste disposal facility. The Authority has also applied for a storm water discharge permit to release water from one of the retention ponds at the site, and



for a standard exemption registration under the air quality rules for the operation of a mobile concrete batch plant at the site.

Mr. Mathews added that the compact bill is "still alive" and that it might be voted on in the U.S. House of Representatives before Memorial Day.

Mr. Avant discussed the status of the Interstate Highway site access. Mr. Avant stated that construction plans for the interchange are 95% complete and requested authorization to begin negotiations with the Texas Department of Transportation on a phased construction concept. (Board approval was later granted.)

Mr. Avant also mentioned that plans and bid documents for the exploratory trench project are being prepared and that contractor bids would be requested in June. Authority staff anticipates a recommendation to the Board for a construction contractor by the August Board meeting. Cap project construction plans will be prepared and bid in the fall. Authority staff anticipates submitting the cap contract to the Board for approval at the November Board meeting.

The Board authorized the formation of a committee to consider financial advisor proposals and other issues related to the possibility of a bond issuance. The Board also approved an amendment to the Authority's contract for continued outside legal counsel and an amendment for continued contracting with a community development contractor for assistance in training and housing in Sierra Blanca.

No members of the public registered to speak during the public comment portion of this Board meeting. ☺

TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

On May 14 our Chief Engineer Ruben Alvarado was in Sierra Blanca for his scheduled working group meeting presentation on the proposed operating license for the waste disposal facility. He arrived at the courthouse for the 7:00 p.m. meeting and waited until about 8:00 p.m., but no one showed up.

I am curious as to why attendance has dropped so much. Have we saturated the community with information? Is the time or day of the week inconvenient? Is the location inconvenient? Are we having meetings too often? Should we have the meetings every other month and perhaps hold them at a different location(s) such as the site itself, someone's home or even El Paso?

We've had guest speakers in the past. Would the community like to see speakers other than Authority staff members? Who should we invite? How about someone from a nuclear power plant, a hospital, or one of the universities? Would the community be interested in a speaker from one of the generators of low-level waste?

I'd like to know and I invite you to express your comments and suggestions in writing on the back page of this newsletter. Mail them to the listed address. If you'd like, you may call me personally at (512) 451-5292, or call or visit the Sierra Blanca office. Personally, I'd like to hear from you and find out what you'd like to see at YOUR meetings.

happy
father's
day 

Authority Recognized for Saving \$\$\$

[This article is being reprinted (in part) with permission from the Texas Incentive and Productivity Commission (TIPC). This article was originally published in the March issue of TIPC's The Incentive.]

TIPC (recognized) the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority as the first agency to submit their Productivity Plan for fiscal year 1996! This year will mark the fifth consecutive year that the small agency with the big esprit de corps participates in the Productivity Bonus Program. Since 1992, the Authority has saved \$79,384 through the PBP. The Authority received the prestigious "PBP Creativity and Innovation" award for their FY 1993 participation.

The TIPC acknowledged the Authority staff's outstanding participation led by Finance Director Tim Schaffner on behalf of General Manager Rick Jacobi. Mr. Schaffner was awarded the "Outstanding Productivity Bonus Contact" award for 1995.

Public Hearing

(continued from page 1)

In the event that a commissioners' hearing is scheduled, the commissioners may take any of the following actions:

1. approve or deny the license application after determining that the hearing requests do not meet the requirements of its rules concerning who may request hearings;
2. after determining that the requests meet the hearing request requirements, direct the chief clerk to refer the request to the SOAH for hearing; or
3. require the chief clerk to refer the case to SOAH with possible directives to that SOAH should prepare a recommendation on the "sole question" of whether the requests meet the requirements of its rules.

A list of issues and/or areas needing to be addressed in a hearing will be provided to SOAH by the commissioners once the case is referred to SOAH. Any additional issues or areas needing to be addressed may be provided to SOAH by the commissioners at any time.

COMMUNITY BITS

SB School Honorees

Sierra Blanca School graduation ceremonies were held on May 30 and 31 for the eighth grade and Senior classes of 1996, respectively. Class of 1996 valedictorians and salutatorians for both grade levels were as follows:

8th Grade Class of 1996

Patricia Cantrell: Valedictorian
Mandi Whiteaker: Salutatorian

Senior Class of 1996

Vayle Scarbrough: Valedictorian
Joe Elder: Salutatorian

Congratulations to these students and all other graduates.



Counselor's Report

Career Day was held on May 8. Speaker presentations were well received by all students and staff attending these sessions. In the morning, students had the option of participating in any of six presentations. Presenters emphasized the importance of staying in school, career exploration/awareness, and remaining drug-free. After lunch, students had two opportunities to visit with a college or vocational trade school representative. Participating organizations included the Federal Bureau of Investigation, BKM Architects & Planning, MERCO Joint Venture, the Texas Department of Public Safety, Sierra Blanca Medical Clinic (Dr. Barrajon), the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Computer Graphics & Advertising, the U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Army, Hudspeth County Sheriff Department, Texas A&M University, Texas State Technical Institute (Sweetwater), Western Technical Institute, El Paso Community College, Sul Ross State University and The University of Texas at El Paso.

The Elementary Texas Education Agency Counselors Conference in Austin was a rewarding and worthwhile experience. The new guidance curriculum's emphasis is to help prepare students for the 21st Century. The new trend in counseling is toward improving students' academic and career decision-making skills as well as personal-social skills.

SCHOOL'S OUT

TAAS Exit Level Test Results

Texas Assessment of Academic Skills Exit Level				
SUBJECTS	(Percent Mastery)			
	1993	1994	1995	1996
Writing	73	90	88	83
Reading	36	70	78	75
Mathematics	45	30	67	67
TOTAL Average	27	30	75	67

(**All 10th grade level students tested)



CAT Preliminary Reports

The California Achievement Test (CAT) was administered to all students from grades kindergarten through twelfth. Preliminary reports indicated steady growth in proficiency in the majority of the students and grade levels. Test scores for the CAT and TAAS will be mailed out by the first part of June.

JUNE 1996

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Commissioners Court Meeting 9:00 AM	11 School Board Meeting 6:00 PM	12 Chamber of Commerce Meeting 6:00 PM	13	14	15
16 Father's Day	17	18	19 Emancipation Day (State Holiday)	20	21	22
23 30	24 Commissioners Court Meeting 9:00 AM	25	26 Chamber of Commerce Meeting 6:00 PM	27	28	29

NO June Working Group Meeting

There will be no working group meeting scheduled for the month of June. Beginning in July, the Authority will begin holding working group meetings every other month.

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

