

To: Citizen Task Force
From: Melinda Holland, Holland & Associates
Subject: Summary of April 7, 1999, Task Force Meeting
Date: April 15, 1999

Next Meeting:

The next Citizen Task Force (CTF) meeting is not yet scheduled. A meeting announcement and draft agenda for the next meeting will be circulated before that meeting. If you have questions or comments regarding the upcoming meeting or about this summary, please contact Melinda Holland at (864) 457-4202 or Tom Attridge at (716) 942-2453.

CTF Attendees:

Attending were:, Ray Vaughan, Nevella McNeil, Barbara Mazurowski, John Pfeffer, Lea Lambert, Paul Piciulo, Rich Tobe, Bridget Wilson, Larry Smith, Bill King, and Joe Patti. Not attending were: Tim Siepel, Pete Scherer, Warren Schmidt, Eric Wohlers, Murray Regan, Pete Cooney.

Regulatory Agency Attendees

There were no regulatory agency attendees.

April 7 Meeting Summary:

Tom Attridge and Melinda Holland opened the meeting by reviewing administrative issues and the agenda.

Barbara Mazurowski began the meeting by announcing that Secretary of Energy Richardson and other DOE officials would be visiting the site briefly on May 4. The visit is expected to last approximately two hours and a tentative agenda includes meetings with DOE employees, site tour, press conference, and possibly a very brief meeting with local stakeholders, including CTF members.

In response to a CTF member question, Barbara Mazurowski explained that meetings with senior DOE management have been underway to work on the potential preferred alternative, schedule and cost estimates. Paul Piciulo summarized meetings with Congressional staff which he attended with DOE to explain issues related to the site closure and budget needs. In response to a CTF member question he commented that Congressional staff seemed to expect that 10 to 15 more years of funding would be needed. He also mentioned that they explained by way of background some of the issues which need resolution between DOE and NYSERDA.

Some CTF members expressed concern regarding DOE's vision for cleanup of the site, as described by Jim Turi at the March 17, 1999, CTF meeting. The first concern was that the actions described in DOE's vision should be called decontamination and *stabilization*--not

decontamination and *decommissioning*. Some CTF members felt that DOE should not be calling this stabilization process *decommissioning* if site DOE is proposing to leave wastes stored on site.

Some CTF members expressed concern that DOE's vision didn't match the CTF's recommendations and they have not heard why the site cannot do what the CTF recommended. A site representative responded that, although DOE's vision wasn't provided "in writing," she felt that DOE had provided the CTF with feedback in the form of Jim Turi's remarks at the March 17 meeting.

One Task Force member stated that Mr. Turi had basically presented alternative three for the tanks and process building. It was recommended that an alternative which encompasses the CTF's recommendations should be evaluated in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The argument was that if the CTF's "alternative" is not evaluated in the SEIS, DOE and NYSERDA would not be able to "choose" it. Another member said that if a CTF alternative is not included in the SEIS, there may be the perception that the CTF has endorsed an alternative by default.

Due to CTF concerns that grouting the High-Level Waste Tanks may make it harder to retrieve the wastes, members also asked site representatives to evaluate a "grout-free" alternative for the tanks and process building. Site representatives agreed to look into the feasibility of that and get back to the Task Force. The site also responded that the ROD will address long-term operation and maintenance with triggers specified for removal of wastes if monitoring shows that is needed or when technology is available to make it feasible.

Other CTF members cautioned that the Task Force should wait to see what official response is given to the CTF's recommendations in the draft preferred alternative. Site representatives stated that they will explain to the CTF where the CTF's recommendations can be accommodated and where it will be difficult to do so. A site representative assured the CTF they will be given opportunity to comment on the **draft preferred alternative** and that the **preferred alternative** will clearly state what actions are chosen and why, and why other approaches were not chosen.

A CTF member reminded the site representatives that rubblizing the building and closing the tanks in place is creation of a new on-site disposal facility which will need some type of license or approval. He feels that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) agrees with this and urges the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to decide on the license issue.

When asked if the draft preferred alternative will be ready this summer, site representatives responded that they expect to meet that schedule if the negotiations between NYSERDA and DOE proceed as planned. A CTF member commented that the erosion modeling should be considered in the decision-making on the **preferred alternative** and that information should be shared with the CTF. A site representative agreed that information on the erosion model would be presented to the CTF as soon as the peer review and validation process is complete. A DOE representative also mentioned that they have more than 95 percent of the waste removed from the tank and will share the results of the tank closure performance assessment with the CTF when it is available.

A CTF member spoke with an NRC representative, who said there was still time to submit comments. The next step in the NRC decision-making process, after the current voting is complete, is to prepare a Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM). Then the Commissioners review the SRM and have the opportunity to change their votes in the final approval process.

Westinghouse was bought in a joint venture by Morrison and Knudsen (MK) and British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL). The sale will have no effect on operations at the site. The WVNS contract is valid through 2000 with an option for a one-year extension.

To prepare for Secretary Richardson's visit, the CTF agreed to meet via conference call on Monday, April 26 at 7 p.m. A DOE representative cautioned the CTF that the Secretary would only have about five minutes to meet with stakeholders.

Observer Comments

An observer asked about the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) petition on the incidental waste rule and mentioned that he had not seen the supporting documents. A site representative gave him copies of the NRDC petition to NRC and of NRDC's comments on the NRC's West Valley Commission Paper. A CTF member responded that she was heartened by NRDC's petition and its comments on the West Valley NRC paper.

Another observer stated that she does not believe that the vision Jim Turi outlined can be considered retrievable - it should be considered a new waste disposal facility. She stated that if the technology exists to excavate contaminated grout, it should be possible to excavate the burial grounds. She also stated that she feels the site is not including the CTF's recommendations as an option.

Another observer stated his concern that NRC should have prescribed criteria before the Draft EIS was completed and asked if the CTF understood that. A CTF member responded that they did understand that fact and that the CTF was created after the DEIS was released. The observer asked if there would be a six-month comment period for the SEIS. A CTF member responded that the length of the review period is an issue between the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes and DOE that hasn't been decided yet.

Next Steps

- ▶ The CTF will meet by conference call on April 26 at 7 p.m. An 800 number will be provided for the call.
- ▶ The next meeting date will be set during the April 26 conference call.