

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD
to the
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
on the
LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY
1002 North Oñate Street
Española, New Mexico 87532
505-753-8970

Minutes of Work Session

April 8, 1997

Present:

Ian Aeby
Sarah Atencio
Loyda Martinez
Carlotta McInteer
Dolores Salazar
Kathy Sanchez
Corrine Sanchez
Manny Trujillo
Chuck Montañó
Antonio Delgado
Elmer Torres
Carl Tsosie
Nick Salazar

Absent:

Hank Daneman
Orlando Arellano

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Herman Le-Doux, DOE/LAAO
Tom Todd, DOE/LAAO
Carmen Rodriguez represented Tom Baca

Staff:

Ann DuBois, Scientech, Inc.

The meeting was not official because several members exceeded the number of meetings allowable by the bylaws to be missed in a six month period. Kathy Sanchez, Chuck Montañó and Carlotta McInteer have not yet been confirmed by DOE in Washington.

The Board discussed several options about how to proceed. Nick felt that the NNM CAB could define a quorum based on the membership being less than eighteen members. Sarah wanted the Board to be more focused. She felt that DOE keeps the Board from going where Board wants to go.



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General

Dolores felt sad about DOE trying to disband the Board when the Board has been in operation such a short time. Dolores has put a lot of personal time and effort into the Board to help it succeed. The Board has helped to restore confidence between the communities in Northern New Mexico and the Lab. Dolores brought issues to the Board which were concerns of her constituency. DOE needs to listen to the public. The Board's recommendations have value to community even though the Board has not immediately focused on environmental cleanups. She was concerned that DOE had not confirmed Board members which means that the Board cannot have a quorum. Seven months is a long time not to confirm these Board members. Dolores felt upset that DOE/LAAO contacted Peña's office to abolish the Board before coming to the Board and asking what can DOE do to help the Board succeed.

Kathy expressed her frustration starting with her election in September. She felt bewildered about being judged by DOE's standards and not being given the tools and resources to succeed. The bylaws are not carved in stone and the Board has been working on them. It is important to honor and support the heart, mind and spirit of the Board. The joint workshops with Sandia have been helpful. It has been good to see the working relationship between DOE and Sandia. Their Board received technical assistance when they requested it from DOE. The NNM CAB lacked technical support from DOE. DOE/LAAO has said that the Board has not added value. Kathy wondered whose and what standards have been applied to the Board. The Board has been cautious advising DOE about cleanups because the Board needs more information.

Carl said that the Board is the pick of the people and we are here to represent people. There is mistrust for federal and state governments. The assimilation process has divided us. There is a learning process we have to go through.

Carlotta is a retired scientist and said that the government is us. People need to serve on the Board and accomplish something together.

Manny said that the environment is the people and the community, the people are the environment. The Board is doing something by allowing people to come and vent their feelings. This is how action can be started. He felt that there had been no truth, no outreach, no compassion from DOE and this has been the attitude of the lab for fifty years. He said the University of California contract, land transfer and the search for the new LANL Director are important so share the truth and compassion with people.

Antonio said that raising consciousness is first step in communication. Other values have been a spring board for the Board. He acknowledged that the Board has not delivered on ER issues. During the retreat, the Board said it was going to deliver on ER issues. He felt that there was no excuse for holding a meeting which was not official. This message needed to be delivered in advance.

Chuck said that the NNM CAB has a spirit which DOE wants to break. This spirit is in the individuals and communities which the Board represents. CABs were created when DOE

wanted community buy in for what were already disasters. This Board wanted community buy in and has become an advocate for the prevention of environmental damage. The amount of money needed for clean up was considerable and then it was not available for scientists. The commitment for restoration was short lived. The NNM CAB was supposed to buy in on what sites to pick and choose between different projects and address priorities when funding is being cut. The behavior desired by DOE was to demonstrate community buy in and agree with DOE. This Board has not measured up to DOE's expectation. Success has been achieved because the CAB focussed on the root issues such as the University of California contract, the LANL corporate culture which is not accountable, and land transfer which were preferable to environmental restoration issues. The University of California contract needed to be addressed as it was being negotiated at the time. Enforcement language was needed in the contract and stop LANL from having access to tax dollars for litigating all violations and liabilities. The search for the Director was important as this person will set the direction and the LANL culture. He felt that the Board has been too effective in providing public input. The Board needs to provide an opportunity for the public to express feelings. Moving the operation from Rocky Flats to LANL changes LANL's mission to an operating facility not research. Stockpile Stewardship is a significant issue and the Board can't ignore that LANL will be creating bigger messes as a result of changes in the mission. There needs to be an EIS on moving the operations from Rocky Flats and on the Stockpile Stewardship issues.

Corrine asked what value does LANL impart to my life? LANL took away what her ancestors gave her and returned a destroyed environment and energy. LANL is a value that she can live without. She gives her volunteer time and it is wrong to say that this Board is waste of time. Corrine has attended many risk assessment workshops. She represents people and asked about their concerns. Her perception of the environment is different from DOE's and LANL's. Worker safety is part of the environment. People have to do their own healing first and then find their voice. The Board is the only place for people to come and share their voices. The NNM CAB has been the only place which is run by citizens. The Board is fostering leadership here and in our communities. The Board needed more empowerment and support from DOE to nurture what is coming from the communities. She doesn't support LANL in her backyard. LANL does not have its ears open and it still operated by fear. She wanted her tax dollars spent for education and health and not defense. Governments create war and fear and we don't need to create more technology to kill people. LANL is destroying the land which is the basis of her culture.

Elmer expressed his dissatisfaction. He thought that this Board was going to be powerful. He felt that the Board has run into brick walls from DOE and LANL. The Board is losing respect and trust. This can be a good Board as it is diverse and respects the environment in its own way. He would like to see the Board get information from DOE/LAAO like the Sandia Board receives. He said that Board members are scattered throughout Northern New Mexico and are dedicated to travel such far distances and attend meetings. Board members should be taken seriously. He wants the Board to express its feelings and concerns directly to Washington. The Board has to take seriously issues like the University of California contract, health and safety. The Board

can't easily catch up with what has happened over fifty years. DOE needs to share information with the Board in order to catch up. The Board needs to establish better working relationship recommendations with DOE. LANL needs to work with the communities and not expect the communities to work with them. Damaged ancestral land, water, and air can wipe out communities. LANL can move away but we can't move out.

Ian said that we have to recognize that the other measuring stick used with other Boards will not work in Northern New Mexico. LANL is the only operating plant and is unique. DOE is asking us the wrong questions. The Board wants to focus on the bigger picture rather than focus on details.

Tom asked about how to put the Board back together and move on. How can we build mutual trust and respect? DOE expects all Federal Advisory Boards which expend money to give something to the Department. The Board has a responsibility to the Department to say what it thinks about the cleanup levels. The Board hasn't been delivering in a manner that the DOE can recognize.

Herman asked about what do we need to do to be successful? The Board can be a big success by adding value but we have to deal with LANL's mission as it is. The Board needs to focus within its scope of influence. The Board has to know how the system works and make recommendations concerning opportunities for improvement. He asked that the Board allow DOE to help you do what you want to do.

Loyda said that the community has to come first. Secretary Peña will be in New Mexico sometime this month. The Board could have a chance to talk with him. Dolores suggested that the Board put together a white paper for Peña describing how the Board's recommendations add value and show what the Board has done. Ian wants to assist in the drafting of this white paper.

The Board decided to hold a regular business meeting with a quorum. The meeting will be on April 22 at 6:30 P.M.. The agenda will include: amend the bylaws, elect the chairpersons, fill vacancies and approve the budget. Chuck suggested that the videotaping and the Española office be eliminated. The Board requested clarification on how much rent would the Board be charged. The Board asked DOE to expedite the confirmation of the new members. Herman will work with Ann on the budget.

The Work Session adjourned at 9:35 P.M..