FERNALD CITIZENS TASK FORCE

A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Chair:
John S. Applegate

Members:
James Bierer
Marvin Clawson
Lisa Crawford
Pam Dunn
Dr. Constance Fox
Guy Guckenberger
Darryl Huff
Jerry Monahan
Tom B. Rentschler
Robert Tabor
Warren E. Strunk
Thomas Wagner
Dr. Gene Willeke

Alternates:
Russ Beckner
Jackie Embry

Ex Officio:
J. Phillip Hamric
Graham Mitchell
Jim Saric

Minutes from December 8, 1994 Meeting

The Fernald Citizens Task Force met from 5:30 until 7:16 p.m. on December 8, 1994, at the Joint Information Center, 6025 Dixie Highway, Fairfield, Ohio. The meeting, which was advertised in local newspapers, was open to the public; time was reserved for accepting public comments.

Members Present: John Applegate
Jim Bierer
Marvin Clawson
Lisa Crawford
Pam Dunn
Constance Fox
Guy Guckenberger
Darryl Huff
Gene Jablonowski, U.S. EPA
Graham Mitchell, Ohio EPA
Jerry Monahan
Tom Rentschler
Phil Hamric, DOE
Warren Strunk
Bob Tabor
Thomas Wagner

Members Absent: Gene Willeke

Deputy Designated Federal Official Attending: Ken Morgan, DOE Ohio Field Office

Task Force Staff: Doug Sarno, consultant
Sarah Snyder
Judy Armstrong

About 30 spectators, including members of the public and representatives from DOE, the Ohio Department of Health, the Agency for Toxic Substances and

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Disease Registry, FERMCO, the University of Cincinnati Center for Environmental Communication Studies, and other state and federal agencies.

1. Approval of Minutes:

The draft minutes of the November 12, 1994, meeting of the Task Force were approved without amendment.

2. Remarks:

Chair John Applegate updated members on ongoing initiatives, including subcommittees and working groups. The subcommittee on waste disposition, chaired by Darryl Huff, has delivered its report on the various legal drivers for waste disposition, and much of that information will be useful when the full Task Force discusses waste disposition. Applegate also said that the Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which mandates the development of treatment plans for mixed waste within the DOE complex, and the Midwest Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact, which is charged with siting a repository for low-level radioactive wastes for the compact states in Ohio, are two issues that should be monitored. Applegate said these issues have the potential to impact the site, adding that realistically, it is not very likely for this site.

Applegate said DOE also has established a committee to evaluate site-specific advisory boards across the country, and that Constance Fox has agreed to serve as the Fernald member on this committee. Constance Fox reported that the committee already has had a conference call to discuss evaluation criteria. She said other sites apparently have very little public participation at their advisory group meetings, while Fernald is doing very well. She added that the evaluation committee probably will meet in February.

Another group, DOIT, has been formed by the Western Governors Association to address innovative cleanup technologies. Applegate said Gene Willeke has agreed to work with this group.

Although economic development is not yet a major issue at the Fernald site, there is a directive from DOE headquarters to create Community Reuse Organizations (CROs) to facilitate economic development. Applegate said the exact relationship with the Task Force and any CRO for the site is not clear yet, and that he hasn't asked anyone to serve.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is working to develop a health assessment advisory group for Fernald. Applegate said ATSDR officials have sought input from the Task Force, and that the Task Force will be working with the ATSDR on that project as well.

Applegate said Gene Willeke suggested looking into some of the modeling issues that generate the information the Task Force has been getting. He would like to take a look at some of the assumptions used in developing the models, which Applegate said is a good idea for a subcommittee. He said he would be asking for volunteers to serve with Willeke on this subcommittee.

Applegate said the Task Force will need to address membership. The membership is staggered, meaning half of the members' terms expire in 1995, and the rest expire in 1996. He said he would like Task Force members to think about how to deal with the expiration of terms. Members initially were appointed in August 1993, which is probably an inconvenient time to change memberships. However, he said it could be construed that 1995 expiration is at the end of the calendar year. He said the Task Force will need to figure out how to deal with this housekeeping matter.

The chair said the Task Force is getting an office in the Dos Office building, near the site and next to the Alpha and Beta buildings. The Task Force will have 3 offices and use of a conference room, which will give the Task Force an easier place to meet in smaller groups and give Doug Sarno a single location when he is in town. The number is (513) 738-0003. Judy Armstrong and the clerical support will be moving to Dos; while Sarah Snyder will stay in Springdale at her number. The number of the Task Force message line remains the same as well.

Applegate said DOE's Office of Public Accountability wants to hold a meeting with five representatives from the different SSABs from across the complex. Applegate said it is not exactly clear what the purpose of this meeting is, although initially it was supposed to be for training for members to learn how to get along with each other. He asked members to complete a questionnaire from DOE headquarters about the meeting in order to solicit input on what should happen at a national meeting. Applegate said he would have more information later and ask for volunteers; if too many people volunteer, he will have to select a representative group.

Applegate also asked members if they wanted to continue meeting on the second Saturday of the month in 1995. The members agreed to continue meeting from 8:30 a.m. through lunch on the second Saturday of the month.

Applegate said that some issues, such as the possibility of having a waste disposal cell on site, are likely to be very contentious topics. So he suggested holding a public workshop in late January on waste disposal issues to give interested members of the public a chance to see the information that has been presented to the Task Force. A public workshop also would be a good way to get feedback from stakeholders. Applegate said he would try to identify the opinion leaders who should be targeted for this meeting, adding that he would like Task Force members to try to contact these people. Because the issue is so important, Applegate said he wants to make an extra effort for involving stakeholders. He said he would provide additional information to Task Force members.

3. Consortium for Environmental Risk Evaluation (CERE):

Applegate introduced Steve Depoe, a faculty member at the University of Cincinnati, whose Center for Environmental Communication Studies is assisting Xavier University with the inventorying of public concerns that is part of the CERE project. Depoe said the Center for Environmental Communication Studies was asked by CERE to be a university partner in collecting data concerning what the public feels, thinks, and has said about the Fernald site. In addition to holding a public meeting on December 13, 1994, Depoe said researchers would be looking at the public records, including media clips and meeting transcripts, of what has been said. They are categorizing this information and then sending it to Xavier researchers. Then, in January or so, Depoe will be forming focus groups of regulators, employees, environmental groups, and other interested parties. Additionally, he said there will be some focus groups randomly selected. He encouraged members to call him if they had any questions.

4. Proposed 1995 Work Plan:

Applegate said the next item of business was the work plan for 1995. He asked spectators to share their comments during the discussion.

Doug Sarno said a few issues have been raised since the original work plan was put together. One issue is the assumptions behind the modeling and risk assessments for the site. Another issue that perhaps hasn't been given much emphasis is cost, including such questions as "How much has been spent?" "How much have we gotten for that?" "Does it make sense under some circumstances to spend as much as $100 million an acre to clean the site?"

Sarno said the work plan is ambitious, noting that the June meeting is devoted solely to developing the final report. The work plan also lays out the major issues, the first being waste disposition. Some of the concerns to be evaluated include asking what does it mean to have a cell on the site versus going off site.

According to the proposed work plan, the Task Force would finish the future use discussion in March, once members have a recommendation on waste disposition. With those recommendations, the Task Force will then have a pretty good picture of where to go next, which would include addressing cleanup priorities.

Grazing and the issue of transitional uses generated so much interest at the November Task Force meeting that a special session is proposed for February or March.

Bob Tabor suggested that the Task Force read DOE's Baseline Environmental Management Report (BEMR) when it is completed so that its recommendations are integrated into the complex-wide approach DOE is adopting. Pam Dunn said the budget will be a major consideration as well.

Lisa Crawford said the Task Force should look at the draft Site Treatment Plans (STP) for DOE sites across the country as well. She said the BEMR, Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and STPs are tied together and on a fast track. The BEMR is due March 30, 1995. The final Site Treatment Plans come out in February, while the PEIS is due in March.

Sarno said some of the issues that may come up can be deferred, such as design issues.

Graham Mitchell said he had concerns about the BEMR because he said it will be an estimate of total cost for cleaning up the entire DOE complex. He said the sticker shock may prompt Congress not to fund any more cleanup, to just fence off these contaminated sites.

Applegate said there is not an endless source of money for this cleanup, so the Task Force needs to focus on priorities carefully so it doesn't waste what money there is for Fernald. He also said it was important to make sure there was a future use recommendation worth spending money on in order to justify the cost.

Tom Wagner said he would like to have either a 3-4 page document or a presentation, but would like an update on where we are in cleanup activities right now. Crawford said such a summary should be an annual report.

Darryl Huff said he has a mind-block when comes to the money issue because -- to neighbors living 2-3 miles from the site -- dollars are not that high. It upsets me to even think money is an issue. Phil Hamric said he agreed with Darryl, adding that we need to make sure we test the national conscience. There is a way to get the force of all of these sites together and test the national conscience when it comes to cleanup.

Tom Rentschler said the notion of a national conscience could be turned around to say cleanup is a test of national resolve. The Task Force has to look at the whole issue. The key is to be open and discuss all issues on the table, and to educate ourselves, stakeholders, and Congress. The key is to have awareness about national priorities.

Guy Guckenberger said he thought the Task Force could work through these issues and satisfy everyone's concerns. He said the Task Force positioned itself well in its interim report. He said he thinks members do have to be realistic about costs and not to suggest things that don't need to be done. However, he said he thinks members can still do what needs to be done.

5. Opportunity for Public Participation:

Applegate asked for comments on the work plan or other points made.

Dave Young of Ross Township said he was glad to see some open minds on the Task Force. He said money should not matter so much because neighbors did not ask for the site to be located there. He said Nevada has a lot of land where Fernald wastes might go. He said he will be attending more meetings.

Larissa Gilham of the Ohio Department of Health said the Task Force also needs to be aware of the interests other sites have in protecting

themselves from Fernald wastes. She encouraged the Task Force to keep this very much in mind.

Ken Morgan of DOE's Ohio Field Office said he wanted to speak to public involvement. As the Task Force continues to deliberate, there will be more and more people who get on board and say "Whoa! This is a decision, and I don't like it." The deliberative body can become disenfranchised. Apart from Task Force outreach, DOE needs to work on getting out the message on the process. He asked members for permission to mount a more aggressive campaign.

The Task Force accepted the 1995 work plan as proposed.

6. Announcements:

Applegate said he wanted to take the opportunity to thank DOE, EPA, Ohio EPA, and FERMCO staff who have helped support the Task Force.

7. Opportunity for Public Participation:

There were no additional comments; public input was received during the discussion about the work plan.

8. Materials Distributed at Meeting (Attached):

- Fernald Citizens Task Force 1995 Work Plan
- List of Ongoing Initiatives
- Questionnaire on SSAB meeting
- CERE Fact Sheet
- Agenda

9. Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the full Task Force is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on January 14, 1995, at the Joint Information Center in Fairfield.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Approved 1/14/95

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the December 8, 1994, meeting of the Fernald Citizens Task Force.

1/14/95

John S. Applegate, Chair, Date
Fernald Citizens Task Force

1/14/95

Ken Morgan Date
Deputy Designated Federal Official