

# ***SOUTH CAROLINA NUCLEAR ADVISORY COUNCIL***

## **MINUTES**

(Approved June 14, 2007)

March 8, 2007

Room 209 Gressette Building  
Columbia, South Carolina

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Members present: Chairman, Mr. Ben Rusche, The Honorable Robert Perry, Dr. Vincent Van Brunt, Mr. Bill Mottel, Dr. David Peterson, Mr. Steve Byrne and Dr. Carolyn Hudson.

Absent: The Honorable Greg Ryberg

Staff present: Ms. D'Juana Wilson, Mr. Michael Hughes

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### **I. Welcome and Opening Comments**

The Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council convened on March 8, 2007, at 1:30PM. Mr. Ben Rusche, Chairman of the Council, called the meeting to order and welcomed the speakers and guests.

### **II. Approval of Minutes, December 7, 2006, meeting**

Dr. Vincent Van Brunt made a motion that the minutes from the December 7, 2006, meeting be approved. Mr. Bill Mottel seconded the motion. There was one edit given to Ms. Wilson from Mr. Chuck Engle for a change on page 9. Ms. Wilson noted the change and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **III. Savannah River Site Update – Mr. Jeff Allison, DOE**

Mr. Jeffrey M. Allison, Site Manager, Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office, addressed the Council. Mr. Allison began with an update on the fiscal year 2008 budget. He reported on the following:

- Environmental Management Activities;
- Savannah River Site 2008 Priorities; and
- The 2008 Planned Accomplishments.

Mr. Allison said that following his presentation, Mr. Larry Ling will discuss where the site is with the Liquid Waste Disposition Processing Plan. Mr. Rusche thanked Mr. Allison for his presentation and there was no additional discussion.

For a complete copy of Mr. Allison's presentation, please [click here](#).

Mr. Lawrence T. Ling, Director, Salt Processing Division, DOE – Savannah River Operations Office, then addressed the Council. Mr. Ling reported on the interim salt waste processing activities. He said that Mr. Jim McCullough would follow with an update on the Salt Waste Processing Facility project. He reported that March 7, 2007, was a historic day for the site, as they processed salt. He said that original waste from Tank 41 was sent to Saltstone, and the next week they would shut down for maintenance and make sure the lines are cleaned up. He said that interim salt processing activities will keep them going in terms of supporting site activities and emissions until the Salt Waste Processing Facility comes on line in 2011. He reported that they are very pleased with this process.

Mr. Ling then stated that with respect to the Actinide Removal Process (ARP), and the Modular Salt Extraction Unit, construction is complete on both facilities and they are in the process of beginning cold run tests and efficiency runs with both operators. The commitment is to have both facilities on line by September 30, 2007.

Dr. Van Brunt asked if they were about to start the cold-runs and Mr. Ling said that the schedule had to be adjusted and they are looking to schedule cold-runs around September 30, 2007.

Mr. James W. "Jim" McCollough, DOE, Savannah River, then reported on the technical progress. He said they finished the enhanced preliminary design in September

2006 and are now in enhanced final design process. He explained that preliminary design meant that they were about 35% complete and a complete review was done, which led to the final design process. He said that based on the preliminary design package; Parsons began development of the Cost and Schedule Baseline. He mentioned that there were problems with the Cost and Schedule Baseline in the past and those problems have been under review. Mr. McCollough also said that an independent technical review was done and problems were identified. Findings were the types of things that would be found during final design. Mr. McCollough reported on the Cost and Schedule Baseline Development and said that Parsons provided a revised Cost and Schedule Baseline package in January. He said they have contracted with an independent contractor to supplement DOE's review of their package, and are about to wrap that up. In the meantime, some seismic issues will be addressed. Parsons is now looking at the impact of these two things and they expect to get this information in the next week. This will be incorporated in their review and DOE will then be in a position to negotiate with Parsons. There was a brief discussion regarding the DNFSB (Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board) and the inspections they have been conducting at the site. Mr. McCollough noted funding constraints with Congress. There was a brief discussion regarding the design schedule and fiscal impacts of the design phase. Mr. McCollough said that Parsons will be getting back with them on these issues.

Mr. Michael Mikolanis, Director of Engineering, DOE, Waste Disposition Projects, took a moment to address the Council on the relationship between the DNFSB and DOE. He reported that DOE and the Board maintain regular, frequent interactions and expects that a recommendation for final design will be coming soon. Chairman

Rusche emphasized the Council's position that DOE and the Board make a more coordinated effort to deal with the issues and delays. Mr. Mikolanis assured the Chairman that they are working to that end.

There was a brief discussion on seismic issues yet to be resolved.

#### **IV. K-Area Activities**

Mr. Robert Edwards, Acting Assistant, Manager of Nuclear Materials gave an update on the K-Area complex. He reported on the operational background and project activities of K-Area. He said that the facility continues to support the financial responsibility that has ownership of some material within the facility, routine inspections and they will continue to support those inspections. He presented the shipping schedules of various materials. There were a few discussion questions that followed Mr. Edwards' presentation and Chairman Rusche invited him to return in the future to update the Council.

#### **V. Tritium Activities**

Chairman Rusche introduced Mr. Bruce Wilson, Deputy Manager, Savannah River Site Office, National Nuclear Security Administration. Please [click here](#) for a copy of Wilson's presentation. Mr. Wilson discussed the changes since September 2004 reviewed the organizational chart and discussed changes in management. He also reported that little has changed in the DOE-SR side, but, there are some changes in NNSA-SRS. A Memoranda of Agreements are still in place and have been update within the past six months. He showed pictures of the 232 H last extraction and a graph of atmospheric Tritium Releases since 1985. Representative Perry asked a question regarding the 1987 release. Mr. Wilson stated that it was an accident in 232H; but, it was

not like the “atomic cloud” in 1974. Thousands of curies were involved but not a lot disbursed off site. There was further discussion regarding the priorities of NNSA and Tritium extraction. Chairman Rusche thanked Mr. Wilson for his detailed presentation.

## **VI. Mixed Oxide Fuel Project**

Mr. Clay Ramsey, Federal Project Director, MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility, (MFFF) reported to the Council. He said that the MFFF Operating License Application and Integrated Safety Analysis Summary is under review by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He showed before and after pictures of preparations of the Disposition Site over a period of 18 months and discussed the preparation process. The structural subcontractor has been selected and is ready to be awarded. Long lead equipment procurement is underway. Proposals for the concrete batch plant are being evaluated. He reported that they have obtained the large tower crane from the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant Project. The next steps are:

- Prepared to start construction in August 2007 as allowed by language in the FY2007 Continuing Resolution;
- First action would be to award a contract to begin planning and mobilization of non-craft personnel for construction of the MFFF base mat and below ground structure; and
- In the interim, site preparation work continues.

In closing, Mr. Ramsey reported that the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility will be regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He said that information on NRC regulatory activities including meetings, project reviews, etc., can be found on the Commission’s website at: [www.nrc.gov/materials/fuel-cycle-fac/mox/licensing](http://www.nrc.gov/materials/fuel-cycle-fac/mox/licensing); or by contacting Mel Shannon, NRC Resident Inspector 803/952-6105.

There was a brief discussion following the presentation about the MOX facility and funding issues related to MOX.

The Council indicated they would like to hear from DNFSB about the seismic issues. Chairman Rusche suggested that Mr. Kent Fortenberry attend a future meeting and address the Council and he agreed to follow up on this matter.

Chairman Rusche thanked Mr. Ramsey for his comments.

Chairman Rusche then introduced a new member of the SC DHEC staff in the disposal area, Mr. Michael Moore. Mr. Moore is the Program Manager for the Radioactive Waste Disposal Program at DHEC, replacing Mr. Henry Porter. Mr. Moore reported as did Henry Porter at the last meeting, *EnergySolutions* has taken the Chem Nuclear License Appeal to the State Supreme Court for clarification on who should hear the appeal of the Administrative Law Judges' decision. The question is will it be the DHEC Board or the Appeals Court. He said they are currently waiting to hear from the Supreme Court for a date to hear this case.

## **VII. Comments/Questions from Attendees**

Mr. Joe Whetstone, Beaufort County, briefly addressed the Council about drinking water from the Jasper/Beaufort Water Authority. His concern expressed to the Council is that customers in that area consuming tritium in their drinking water. He left copies of the "Science for Democratic Action" Volume 14, Number 4, newsletter with members for information.

Ms. Ruth Thomas, Columbia, SC, addressed the Council to say that she would like time to sit down with the Council, scientist and environmentalist to discuss her various questions and concerns. Ms. Thomas will contact D'Juana Wilson in the

Energy Office with her concerns, and Ms. Wilson will convey this information to the Council members once it is received.

Ms. Leslie Miner, Columbia, SC, addressed the Council and had brief questions regarding MOX funding.

Ms. Susan Corbett, West Columbia, SC, reported to the Council that she took a tour of the Savannah River Site and is curious about banning of the use of grout and wanted to know the Council's position on the situation at Hanford. The Chairman agreed to consider the request.

Mr. Joe Retal, Vice Chair of the Savannah River Citizens Advisory Board introduced himself to the Council. He also said that he could be of assistance in getting the NSSB to meet with the Council.

Representative Robert Perry introduced the new President of the Washington Savannah River Company, Mr. Leo Sain, to everyone and welcomed him to the meeting and congratulated him on his new job. Mr. Sain said he was glad to be there and looked forward to the relationship with the Council.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.