

SOUTH CAROLINA NUCLEAR ADVISORY COUNCIL

NUCLEAR ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

October 18, 2001, 10:00 AM

Training Center

VC Summer Nuclear Station

Jenksville, South Carolina

Members present: Mr. Steve Byrne, Dr. Carolyn Hudson, Dr. John Stucker, Chairman, Senator Greg Ryberg, Mr. Ben Rusche, Dr. James Navratil, and Ms. Kate Billing.

Staff: Patricia Tangney and D'Juana Wilson

Absent Member(s): Representative Charles Sharpe and Dr. Vincent Van Brunt

I – II: Approval of Agenda/Minutes

The third meeting of the SC Nuclear Advisory Council was held on Thursday, October 18, 2001, at 10:00 AM, in the Training Center, VC Summer Nuclear Station, Jenksville, South Carolina. Dr. John Stucker, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all Council members and staff to introduce themselves to the audience. Dr. Stucker talked briefly about the composition of the Council and representation of the members. He then asked for a motion to approve today's agenda. Mr. Ben Rusche made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Byrne and unanimously approved. Dr. Stucker then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of July 18, 2001. Dr. Carolyn Hudson made the motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ben Rusche and unanimously approved. Chairman Stucker announced that the Council had its last meeting at the Savannah River Site, which was the focus of that agenda, and a number of recommendations came out of that meeting. During the interim the Council has followed up on several of the recommendations. The first issue Chairman Stucker stated is the recommendation from the Secretary of State as to the decision of whether or not the Yucca Mountain facility should proceed with the application process with the NRC. Mr. Rusche wrote a letter to the Governor asking him to write a letter to Secretary of State Abraham regarding this matter. The Council also wrote to the Governor regarding the NGA Task Force and the issue of uranium in the groundwater in Simpsonville, South Carolina.

III – IV: Welcome/Discussion of Nuclear Power Issues

The panel listed below addressed the Council with the following issues:

- Status SC Reactor Facilities
- NRC Operating Licenses
- Spent Fuel Storage
- DOE Spent Fuel Disposal Fee
- Options for Utility Relief
- Future Development Plans
- State and Regional Projections of Power Needs (Baseload and Peaking)
- Utility Capacity Development Plans
- Regional Transmission Organization
- SRS Options
- Energy Park Proposal
- MOX Fuel Fabrication and other issues

Chairman Stucker stated that the focus of today's meeting is nuclear power, and he thanked Mr. Steve Byrne and his staff for arranging the meeting logistics for the day. He then introduced Mr. Steve Byrne to begin the presentation. Mr. Byrne gave a brief overview of the VC Summer Station and its mission. Mr. Byrne began his power point presentation on nuclear power issues.

Mr. Michael Tuckman, Executive Vice President for Duke Energy, and Mr. Joe Donahue, representing CP& L, gave presentations on spent fuel storage. There was a brief discussion after the presentations. In summary, it was stated that an evaluation is under way as to whether or not additional dry fuel storage can be sent to the site in Hartsville. Pending the evaluation, the plan is to ship the waste to the Harris facility. The object is find the least cost option for spent fuel storage. Senator Ryberg asked each entity represented if there were plans under way for the building of any new power plants. Mr. Bill McCall, representing Santee Cooper said that they are planning an additional plant. Mr. Byrne said that there are smaller plants that are being planned throughout the state. Senator Ryberg stated that his concern is the consumer's natural gas bills and he hopes that someone is taking a look at the total natural gas consumption.

Mr. Joe Donahue gave a presentation on license renewals for nuclear power plants.

Mr. Marv Fertel, Senior VP, Nuclear Energy Institute, gave comments regarding why they were in support of gas plants and how these plants, in his opinion, are more viable. He then

talked about the status of the Yucca Mountain Project and related litigation. He said that right now there is 43,000 metric tons of heavy metal spread across our country at the operating plant sites. Some is in spent fuel pools and some is in dry cast storage. He then went into a detailed discussion regarding the issues surrounding Yucca Mountain. Mr. Fertel estimates that the earliest that Yucca Mountain will open is the year 2010. By then there will be 55 sites and 71 units requiring dry storage. He stated that the Yucca Mountain project started in 1983 and gave a brief background on the history of Yucca Mountain and the actions of Congress regarding this site. The study is now in a critical period because the study needs to determine whether or not the site is suitable. He explained that the term suitable means that the President thinks its okay to go forward and file a license application. He emphasized that this does not mean that its okay to put waste there or build, but, it's okay to go forward with the NRC to file a license application. The DOE has been holding public hearings in Nevada and are in the process of collecting comments. He expects that possibly before Christmas the Secretary will make his recommendation to the President as to whether or not to recommend licensing for Yucca Mountain. He did state that the State of Nevada has 30 days to write to the Secretary to give him their final opinion prior to him making the recommendation to the President, but, in Mr. Fertel's opinion, the recommendation to the President will be to proceed with the licensing application process for Yucca Mountain. Mr. Fertel stated that it will possibly be the end of January before the President makes his recommendation to proceed with the licensing process and if he decides in favor of licensing, the State of Nevada has 60 days to disapprove of this action, which they probably will. He said that after this 60 day period, Congress, by a simple majority could vote to override the State of Nevada's disapproval. He emphasized that if the Congress does not override the approval, the waste will stay in the states for at least 50 more years because the whole process starts over again. Mr. Fertel feels that the vote will come out in favor of proceeding with the licensing application for Yucca Mountain. In summary, he said that if everything works out in favor of Yucca Mountain being approved for a license application,

waste would stay in the states until at least the end of this decade. Detailed discussion and questions followed regarding the purpose and current status of the DOE waste fund.

Ms. Mary Kelly, Associate Director, representing the League of Women Voters approached the Council regarding the concerns they have regarding the Savannah River Site and problems associated with plutonium and the MOX fuel fabrication.

Mr. Louis Zeller, representing the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. In Mr. Zeller's opinion, South Carolina has much to lose if the Yucca Mountain precedent for waste is allowed to proceed. He said that there are several issues surrounding this site and presented the following issues to the Council: waste transport across the United States, volcanism and the issue of native Americans rights to the ownership of the land.

Mr. Fred Hume, Director of the Economic Development Partnership, representing Edgefield County and Aiken County addressed the Council. He spoke in favor of Savannah River and its vision for Aiken County. He feels that local and national needs are being met and will continue to be met by SRS. Mr. Humes stated that we need to look at new technologies for generators and advanced reactors; production of isotopes with an accelerator; a university reactor; the transfer of technologies from SRS to the private sector; and the important cost components of nuclear energy, as compared to coal, oil and natural gas, to show that natural gas is an excellent source of electricity. Mr. Humes asked the Council to share their vision in nuclear energy, medical technology with isotopes and the transfer of technologies.

Mr. Henry Porter from DHEC said that South Carolina is one of 32 US Nuclear Regulatory Agreement states. Under that agreement SC can regulate certain types of radioactive materials that are in the state. There are about 335 facilities in the state that have specific licenses for radioactive material. Mr. Porter said that many of the licenses the state issues are for hospitals, universities and industrial uses of radioactive material. He said that DHEC does have authority in the area of transporting radioactive waste materials. DHEC has the authority to inspect the shipments of radioactive waste, and this includes spent fuel shipments. DHEC is also involved in emergency response and emergency planning.

Mr. Randy Watts, representing the Public Service Commission, was also present and Chairman Stucker said that just as with DHEC, the PSC represents the business side.

V. Public Comment on Nuclear Power Issues

There were no visitors signed up for public comment.

Chairman Stucker gave an overview of the comments made from the panel members. He said that the Council has followed up on items from the last meeting and has made specific recommendations. He then highlighted four specific points, beginning with the issue of license renewals and said that this is ongoing and the Council needs to continue to be informed. He said that other than Mr. Humes' proposal relative to the energy park, they have not heard from the industry on specific proposals for new plants and wants to make sure that the diversity of technology and sources are heard. Chairman Stucker said that the Council has endorsed the Governor and the state's position on the MOX issue and that they would be in support of an overall program being put in place to handle the disposition of plutonium. He understands that there are different views relative to energy parks and would like the Council to be able to hear from all sides. Finally, Chairman Stucker said that the issue of spent fuel disposition should be the main topic for the next quarterly meeting. He said that there are advantages and disadvantages with questions such as: moving it or keep it still? and keeping it dispersed or do you concentrate it? Senator Ryberg stated that the energy park issue should be looked at very closely and would like to see it placed at the top of the agenda for the next meeting. He feels that if it is going to be done, there is no better place to do it than at the Savannah River Site. He stated that he is in full support of producing nuclear energy.

VI. Other Business

Chairman Stucker stated that the Council was told when it was organized last spring that the Budget & Control Board issued a RFP for the Barnwell Perpetual Care Fund Study, and as a part of this study, the NAC would perform a peer review of the draft study. Patricia Tangney briefed the Council on information regarding the Perpetual Care Fund and the reason for the study that is being done. Ms. Tangney stated that Bradbourne, Briller and Johnson have been

awarded the contract to perform the study. It will be reviewed by the Budget & Control Board Radioactive Waste Disposal Program, after which they will recommend changes/revisions. Once BB&J have completed the changes, the Nuclear Advisory Council will be given a copy of the study for review. She is proposing that the Council meet on the afternoon of November 15, 2001, to review the report. There was a detailed discussion regarding this study and the timetable for having it complete. Senator Ryberg and Dr. Navratil suggested that they would prefer to receive a copy of the study for review prior to the Council meeting about it. They suggested that it would be more suitable for the Council to receive a copy of the study on November 15, 2001, and then meet on December 6, 2001, to discuss their findings. Following a detailed discussion, the Council agreed that they would meet in the Gressette Building, at 1:00 PM, December 6, 2001. The room will be announced. The topic of this meeting would be to review the Barnwell Perpetual Care Fund Study. They will receive an e-mail copy of the draft report on November 14th, and if there are no major changes, it will be e-mailed prior to the 14th of November. The discussion on energy parks will be on the agenda for the January quarterly meeting, but Dr. Navratil suggested that prior to the January meeting, they could begin discussion on energy parks via e-mail.

VII: Discussion of Agenda and Location for Next Meeting

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17, 2002. This meeting will be held in Columbia at 1:00 PM. The meeting logistics will be finalized during the interim. The Council will re-visit Yucca Mountain and the spent fuel issue, in addition to the discussion on energy parks.

Senator Ryberg made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Dr. Carolyn Hudson and unanimously approved.