

Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2022
1:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

CAP Members Present

Don Curran
Kathy Duncan
Ava Roberts
Jay Saxton
Lucy Cross, E&E

Others Present

Michael Grappé, E&E
Tommy Edgman, E&E

Call to Order

Chairman Jay Saxton called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. Saxton acknowledged the board members Don Curran, Kathy Duncan, and Lucy Cross, who will be acting as the E&E representative. Ava Roberts joined the meeting after the roll call. Cross confirmed the media notification. Cross read the minutes from the previous meeting, December 6, 2021, and the members voted to approve.

Discussion on Act 1092 and Recycling Nuclear Spent Fuel Rods

Michael Grappé, E&E Director of Special Projects, spoke to the members regarding a request for funding. During the Regular Session 2021, Representative Jack Ladyman, District 59, requested a program for recycling nuclear fuels. Act 1092 was passed and a committee was formed to identify and work through taking approximately 1,600 tons of nuclear waste currently located at Energy One, and recycling it in the State of Arkansas to make new fuel, capture rare materials and medical isotopes for cancer research. We have been in contact with the Department of Energy, discussing having a recycling facility in the State of Arkansas, as well as procuring an outreach and education grant for the University of Arkansas, who we're partnering with. We've also been working with the Department of Defense, looking into locations in Arkansas. E&E presents a monthly update to the Public Health and Welfare Committee and in the presentation, requested \$10,000 to do an educational outreach study program, putting in documentation to receive federal grants. We are currently working on a 3 million dollar grant to the U of A for public outreach and community education. The legislatures gave the committee approval to seek the \$10,000 from the Department of Energy & Environment. Because this project deals with recycling, we'd like to discuss with the board members a \$10,000 grant from you for that purpose. Grappé opened the floor for questions.

Curran asked if there would be any accountability, such as a report to inform the board members of status of study. Grappé stated that the monies would go to a report that will be published and submitted to the Department of Energy. Grappé offered to provide a copy of the report to the board members. The report will be produced by Dale Brasuell and Company of Fort Smith.

Saxton asked if the material would be recycled in the State of Arkansas and where. Grappé stated that this was the plan and that they were looking at a facility that would be no bigger than a Dollar General. Depending on how it is approached, they would be looking at recycling 1,600 tons in 1-5 years, which is approximately 40 years-worth of spent rods. The rods are pulled out of the reactor and put in a storage facility in a pod, until they have enough to fill a cask. They are then stored on the facility's parking lot. Casks are the typical storage method for all nuclear facilities in the country. None of the facilities currently or previously operating have a place to send the spent rods for nuclear waste. When the rods are pulled out, they are only spent by approximately 15% – 20%. They're then liquefied and rare minerals are extracted, such as beryllium and platinum. Nuclear materials are also pulled off that we would like to send to UAMS' cancer facility.

Grappé stated that the recycling technology exists. We've been working with Argon Labs, along with the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense. We believe if we had a facility in the State of Arkansas that could manage our nuclear waste, we would have the potential to create new fuel for Nuclear One, as well as other commercial applications, pull the rare metals out of the material and the medical isotopes for cancer research. Argon Labs will license the technology to the University of Arkansas. The state and private entities will come together to build the recycling facility.

Grappé stated that no actual locations have been set for the recycling facility. The study would allow for a closer look at this. There are two prospective sites: Fort Chaffee in Fort Smith and the Pine Bluff Arsenal; both are located on the Arkansas River. We're looking at all the possibilities and the study will help with that. The jobs and economic benefits this would bring to Arkansas would provide a new program in recycling. It's not done anywhere else in the country today. We'd also like to get the U of A to build up their nuclear program and funding from the Department of Energy would provide a new group of nuclear engineering operators and maintenance staff that could be exported from the State of Arkansas to other states.

Saxton asked if the CAP Board had available funding for the request. Cross stated that for FY 2022, there was an available budget of \$28,261.41, with appropriations for Regular Salaries, Operating Expenses, Travel – Conferences, and Professional Fees and Services. Grappé stated that E&E's Fiscal Division informed him that \$7,000 would be taken from Professional Fees and \$3,000 would be taken from one of the other appropriated budgets.

Roberts asked what the timeframe for voting was. Grappé stated that they have an RFI to respond to the Department of Energy in March, 2022, which is what they were attempting to put together in funds.

Saxton asked if the money that was appropriated had already been spent. Grappé stated that it was available and that the board could increase or decrease the amounts that had been appropriated up to a point. The board's treasury held \$190,000.

Saxton asked if they went above the \$28,261.41, would they have to get legislative approval to access more. Grappé stated that that was correct.

Grappé requested a vote for funding so that he could carry the study forward, have the report created and report back to the legislatures in February and meet the deadline to the Department of Energy in March. Roberts moved to accept the proposal. Curran made a second motion to approval. No members opposed.

Office of Air Quality Update

Cross discussed the National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (NSBEAP) website (<https://nationalsbeap.org/>) with the board members and explained the benefits, focusing on air quality guidance and information for small businesses.

Updates

Cross discussed the CAP Board's vacant positions. There are currently four (4) vacancies. Enterprise Services has begun discussing recruiting requirements with E&E Leadership. The hope is to fill the vacancies by the next meeting.

Cross discussed goals for the 2022 year. Roberts requested information regarding the ways the board is able to legally spend funds and a copy of the budget prior to future meetings going forward. Cross will send that information to board members after the meeting.

New Business

The board is required to vote on the stipend. Curran made a motion to approve stipends for members who attended the December 6, 2021, meeting. Duncan made a second motion to approve. No members opposed. Stipends were approved.

The board voted to make Cross the temporary minute taker until new board members are appointed.

The date of the next board meeting was tentatively set for Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. The location was not determined.

There were no public comments.

Saxton adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.