

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAR FALLS
MINUTES of the Nuclear Waste Community Committee

Ear Falls Royal Canadian Legion
September 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser, Ron Bergmann, Dave Wilson, Frank Ray, Nuclear Waste Administrative Assistant Haley Gushue, Clerk Treasurer Administrator Kimberly Ballance and 23 members of the public.

3. DELEGATION & PRESENTATION

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser presented a brief summary of the history of the Nuclear Waste Community Committee (NWCC) including the mandate, an introduction of the NWCC members and the Nuclear Waste Administrative Assistant Haley Gushue and her office hours. Information on the NWCC Newsletter and the NWCC website was also presented.

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser advised that the meeting was going to be recorded on video by the NWCC and as an audio file by the Northern Sun News. There will be a question and answer period at the end of the session, but feel free to raise questions throughout the presentations. If you would prefer not to speak publically, there are question sheets at the back of the room

3.1. Presentation by Len Simpson and Greg Kuzyk

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser introduced Len Simpson. Len's background is from Pinawa, Manitoba. His educational background includes a Bachelor of Science (Physics), Masters of Metallurgy (University of BC), and a PhD in Metallurgy (University of Wales). His work history includes Senior Research Officer at Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd (AECL) Fracture Mechanics Material Science, Branch Manager, Materials and Mechanics, AECL, Division Direction of Reactor Safety Research, AECL. He was also a member of the Canadian Nuclear Society and the previous Mayor of Pinawa.

Len Simpson presented general information on his reasons for accepting the NWCC's offer to present and indicated that he was not attempting to sell anyone on moving forward or opting out of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) Adaptive Phased Management (APM) process. He indicated that both he and Greg Kuzyk were interested in presenting their opinions based on their personal experiences in Pinawa, Manitoba. Len Simpson briefly introduced Greg Kuyzk.

Len Simpson provided an overview of Pinawa's experience as a nuclear community and the positive impacts that the industry has had over time in the community including funding for community infrastructure and the provision of jobs locally. He indicated that there was a large influx of people that came to Pinawa at the outset of AECL's operation in Pinawa. They were intricately involved in the development of expanded housing in the community. He provided a brief overview of the locations of nuclear power plants in Ontario and Quebec and an overview of how a nuclear reactor works.

Len presented information on the history of the nuclear industry in Manitoba, and in particular the development of the AECL in Pinawa in 1963 with major programs in Nuclear Waste Management and Reactor Safety Research. He indicated that the development of AECL's nuclear operations in Pinawa led to the community receiving many perks from the Federal Government, including the development of their own school board with board members from the community. This provided an opportunity for the community to control their own curriculum.

AECL made the decision to close the plant in the late 1990s. Len indicated that he retired from AECL in the late 1990s and became the Mayor for the Local Government District (LGD) of Pinawa. He worked with Council to force the company to decommission the plant. Now, there is a decommissioning plan that is being implemented and this process continues to provide around 300 jobs that will be around for many years. The site will remain under a Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission licence for the rest of the century.

Pinawa is a small community of about 1400 (down from 2200 during the full operation of the AECL plant) but is well serviced by a lot of infrastructure that was built by AECL, including a golf course, curling club, swimming pool. This infrastructure is now operated independently by the LGD of Pinawa. An overview of the AECL plant infrastructure was presented.

Len indicated that Pinawa isn't able to enter into the NWMO's APM process due to provincial government legislation prohibiting it. To understand this legislation, you have to recognize that Manitoba utilizes hydroelectricity and has ample supply therefore there is not a demand for nuclear power.

Len indicated that he sees a lot of advantages for Ear Falls to participate in the NWMO's APM process because it is a billion dollar industry that could bring new tax and tertiary revenue to the community. It also has the potential to bring in long-term, high quality employment that would likely increase the community's population. Len indicated that the nuclear industry is very focused on safety.

Len advised that Canada has a plan to deal with nuclear waste materials which is why the NWMO has been tasked with finding a location for housing the material. There are no technical reasons for not proceeding in this manner and there are potential recycling options available. While anti-nuclear activists will try and convince the public that there is no such thing as a safe level of radiation exposure, there hasn't been any reliable evidence of cancer near over 400 operating power reactors or in areas with high natural exposures. The average exposure by a citizen is about 2.7 mSv (millisievert) and the

Canadian Nuclear Safety Authority (CNSC) limits the exposure level at plant boundaries to 1 mSv. In addition, nuclear plant operators often prescribe that workers cannot be exposed to more than 0.01 mSv. There is no data that shows an increase in cancers for exposures up to 100 mSv.

More information on this topic can be found on the websites of the following organizations:

- Canadian Nuclear Association (CNA)
- Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC)
- Canadian Nuclear Society (CNS)

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser introduced Greg Kuzyk. Greg holds a Bachelors of Science (Mining Engineering) (University of Kingston), is a licenced professional engineer (P.Eng.) in Ontario, Manitoba, Member of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, Member of the Canadian Nuclear Society, Director of the Mines Accident Prevention Association in Manitoba. He has 26 years of experience in the management of used nuclear fuel and 15 years of experience in the mining industry.

Greg Kuzyk provided an overview of his work history and ties to the Ear Falls and Red Lake Area, including his contact with the mining industry in the area.

Greg also provided a brief overview of the research work that has been completed at the Underground Research Laboratory (URL). The URL was designed to carry out the research for the Canadian Nuclear Fuel Waste Management Program including research on rock mass in response to used fuel placement. A total of 32 experiments were completed on this, and related topics. The URL was a world class facility and drew international researchers.

In 1996 an Environmental Impact Study was completed and resulted in the report and recommendations made by the Seaborn Panel. One result of this report was the creation of the NWMO and their subsequent development of the Adaptive Phased Management process. This process was approved by the Federal Government in 2007, and will take many years to select a site that will be appropriate for this purpose. The NWMO is focused on working with interested communities to make sure that the selected site is socially acceptable to the community. This is a multi-generational project and is very long-term in scope.

Greg indicated that he believed that Ear Falls' participation in NWMO's project would have an impact on the community.

Greg indicated that he'd be open to taking questions on this issue from the public.

Leone Loman – Where was the Underground Research Lab?

Greg – It was in in Lac du Bonnet, close to Pinawa, Manitoba. It initially had a negative public response it became integral to the local economy.

Greg advised that sitting on the fence on this issue wouldn't be a bad thing.

Jan Loman – What is happening to the town of Pinawa now?

Greg – It's becoming a retirement community due to the hard work of the municipal Council. They have a focus on economic development.

Len – They have been focused on economic development. Some of the facilities that were built in the prime days of AECL's operation have transitioned into new uses. For example, a school building has become an office building. The community continues to focus on AECL's decommissioning.

Rodger Mineault – If this project is so safe, why are there so many incentives from the government to take the project on? Also, what about the impact of drastically expanding infrastructure in the community when the population will later shrink making it unsustainable to fund in the future?

Greg / Len – The peak of AECL's operation was from about 1963 to the late 1990s. During this time there were very good spinoffs to the community because of the presence of the industry. The big concern was actually housing prices. When AECL came, and later closed the plant, housing prices fluctuated greatly. After they left, over 50% of the workers remained in the community and have proven to be quite entrepreneurial. There was a housing bust, but this was softened by AECL providing funding to workers who moved away from the community.

Dave Wilson – What ground conditions are being investigated for the DGR?

Greg – Granitic or Sedimentary with little or no economic value. The NWMO doesn't want there to be potential for future mining activity, and are looking for stable rock conditions. The NWMO's initial site screening report for Ear Falls didn't exclude it based on the ground conditions, whereas the report completed to the municipality of Red Rock did exclude that community from continuing in the process.

Martha Hammond – Is there a buffer planned for around the DGR?

Greg – Yes, but it would be defined by site conditions and tied to safety regulations. There is ongoing research into all aspects of the DGR, including a lot of international research.

Len – How do "They" know that copper containers will be safe for a million years?

Greg – Studies of naturally occurring copper mines and long term corrosion studies have been completed. There has also been a lot of research on bentonite clay's impermeability and use as a buffer material. This research relies on naturally occurring materials that can be looked at in as far as how they have reacted and lasted over time.

Rob Eady – In regard to the copper container and the safety of such a container for a million years, what about the materials that are to be used to weld or stick the lid on?

Greg – There is ongoing research internationally on container safety and concerns about materials have resulted in the preference for a multi-barrier approach.

Martha Hammond – If new technology comes to light later in the process, how will the NWMO adapt the plan for the facility, containers etc.?

Greg – They’ll try to adapt to use the best, safest technology available, even if it means modifying the plan part way through. Again, the focus is on the safety case. It’s a lot to consider and there is some reliance needed on the efforts being made to continue the research and development of technology but there’s not real harm in becoming increasingly educated on the project.

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser reminded the audience that the NWMO would be holding an Open House on October 15 and 16, 2012 at the Legion. More information should be available regarding the buffer zone question, as this is a question that the Committee and the Nuclear Waste Administrative Assistant has received a number of questions on this topic. She also indicated that if additional questions do come to mind after the meeting, the public is welcome to contact Haley at the Municipal Office.

Len provided a brief synopsis about a situation in Gabon, Africa due that the public may be interested in that demonstrates the lack of movement of plutonium in the area.

Acting Chair Ursula DeKeyser advised that the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission would be attending an upcoming meeting of the committee, reminded the public to attend their regular monthly meetings and watch for the NWCC newsletters. She also advised that the NWCC would be providing additional public meetings with independent experts to assist the community in understanding this very complex topic. She thanked the Len Simpson and Greg Kuyzk for their presentations, the audience for their attendance, the Legion and the Legion Ladies Auxiliary for their service.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Chair

NWAA