

COMMUNITY NEWS

WCVA to hold monthly meeting on Wednesday Board to get update on Buckaroo Hall of Fame

Sun Staff Report

WINNEMUCCA — The Winnemucca Convention & Visitors Authority board will hold their regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday beginning at 4 p.m. in the West Hall of the Winnemucca Convention Center.

The board will review and take action on the Jan. 20 meeting minutes following the call to order, Pledge and Allegiance and the meeting notice report.

General business items include an update on the Buckaroo Hall of Fame from Les Sweeney, an event update and request for funding for the USTRC from Chris Freed, an accommodation 9-month refund request and East Hall repairs, upgrades and grant status.

Staff reports follow. These include financial reports on WCVA events, the purchase of new chairs for the West Hall, a Senior Pro Rodeo proposal, an update on the propane car display and reporting requirements for the 9-month accommodation tax.

Board secretary & counsel items include the monthly report (including compliances), a chamber of commerce report, parking lot rental and the statement of actual revenue and expenditures for the past fiscal year. Also scheduled is a report on wage hour law requirements and other county personnel provisions, a request from Paradise Valley for reimbursement of advertising costs, Porcupine Creek taxes paid, amended room tax rules pamphlets to authorize an alternate outside auditor and the possibility of contacting NDOT regarding confusing turn signage, marking and signals at Melarkey Street and Winnemucca Boulevard.

Board administrator items include the January financial reports, compliance audit reports and discussion of the WCVA's FY 2011 tentative budget.

Other reports include those from the Rural Community Project, the chamber of commerce and the Events Complex/Agricultural District #3.

Regular business includes board member questions, audience comments, questions or complaints, other business, closed personnel meetings (if needed), an agenda and date for the next meeting, public communication, room tax liens and delinquencies, correspondence and the review of time sheets.

Group requests Environmental Impact Statement as additional condition for landfill permit extension

RPC argues it is outside their scope

By Heather Gula
The Humboldt Sun

WINNEMUCCA — Nevadans Against Garbage provided argument in opposition to the landfill proposal of Jungo Land and Investment Inc. during the Feb. 11 Regional Planning Commission meeting. Prior to the board's agenda consideration of a permit extension, NAG argued for denial of the request and RPC support for further environmental study.

Tami Vetter, one of NAG's three founding members, explained that on Jan. 14 the organization sent a letter asking that a number of federal agencies investigate the proposal. Their request was that the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management conduct a full environmental review in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act, the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act prior to the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection issuing permits.

"It is our contention that the federal government has jurisdiction over this site given the proximity to federal land managed by the BLM, the groundwater below and the air quality adjacent to the proposed site," Vetter explained.

Fellow NAG member Annie Drake added to that, asking for support of their request.

"We are requesting that you require a thorough environmental review as a condition of any permit extension," Drake said.

NAG indicated that no agencies have responded to that letter at this time.

The group then asked local resident Jim French to provide a brief of the technical reasoning they had listed in their letter.

He first asserted that environmental concerns exist due to the proximity of groundwater to leachate production and the transport of fugitive dust.

"There is no evidence thus far been offered to suggest compliance feasibility of the air quality permits," he said. "We could see up to 3,200 acre feet of water per year needed not only to wet down this site in order to keep fugitive dust transport from emitting from this site, but also to keep the dust down off access roads as well as any reclamation work that is going to have to be wetted down."



HEATHER GULA • The Humboldt Sun

Left to right, Jim French provides technical assistance to Nevadans Against Garbage founders LeAnn Iroz, Annie Drake and Tami Vetter. Their presentation at the Feb. 11 Regional Planning Commission meeting led to their request for denial of a permit extension and support for an Environmental Impact Statement.

RPC member Bob Edwards later asked Recology Planner Erin Merrill how many acre feet of water rights JLLI had acquired. Merrill explained that she was contractually obligated not to disclose that figure at this time.

"It is what we think is adequate and that is being submitted to NDEP as part of the process and ultimately it will become public record," John Frankovich, the company's legal representative, explained. "We are comfortable that it is adequate, but it is not 3,200 acre feet I assure you."

RPC member Rich Brown stated that he felt French had been misleading on the amount of water he claimed was necessary for dust control.

"If there was such a problem with fugitive dust, Barrick Goldstrike, Newmont and all the rest would be in violation of the fugitive dust requirement with the NDEP," Brown said.

Following discussion on that matter, French then addressed his concern for leachate contamination in groundwater.

In contrast to claims that the basin is static, he stated that the USGS and other studies indicate that the basin is quite active and there is a probability that there would be movement of contaminated water.

He asked that all issues relative to groundwater risk — particularly reduction in buffer — be put off until the results of the Congressionally mandated USGS study.

Edwards asked if JLLI was willing to postpone the project until the USGS study was completed.

Frankovich provided clarification on the USGS study, saying it has not been mandated however funding was allocated for a study.

"Whether or not USGS does it, I don't know when or if that

will happen," Frankovich said. "I don't think we are willing to wait for something that may or may not happen and it may or may not have any impact on the project."

He went on to explain that NDEP has extensive data that they are using to evaluate the groundwater risk of the project.

French then went on to address his concerns regarding wildlife protection. He voiced concerns that the large water usage would create attractive wildlife mortality hazards, an issue he felt had not been addressed at all.

"Normally with a project of this scope and magnitude there would be an entire species list present," French said. "I believe we are still missing a huge piece in this process."

Edwards asked if NDOW had interjected itself into the process. French explained that they were not yet involved in the process.

"NDOW has been invited to the game and NDOW is actually — and this is my opinion — I believe they are taking the approach that they are going to allow this controversial decision to be handed down by NDEP and I believe they are going to come to bear on this whole project on the compliance side of it."

"I think that the opportunity for designs that are going to mitigate the impact to the community and to the wildlife resource out there needs to happen on the front end of this thing not the tail end," he added.

Board member Bob Edwards stated that Golder Associates — the engineering firm hired to do work on the Jungo landfill site — has compiled almost all the data needed to perform an Environmental Impact Statement and asked if JLLI would voluntarily turn that information over to the state of Nevada in the form of an

environmental report. Recology COO George McGrath commented that that is essentially what they are doing in order to obtain the necessary permits through NDEP.

"That is currently what we are doing is turning that information over to the state of Nevada," he said.

Frankovich asserted that JLLI would not be willing to do an EIS. He clarified that an EIS is a very specific government document with requirements regulated by NEPA.

"This project is on private property, it's a private company with private funding," he said.

Further he indicated that they have complied with everything that is required of them in accordance with the conditions of their application and that the state is not requiring anything in addition to what they have provided to NDEP for analysis.

"I don't think we are here to add conditions. If you would like to add conditions we would like to discuss it, because I don't think this is the appropriate forum," he said.

Board member Brown also contested Edwards' request, stating that he disagreed with the line of questioning.

"He is asking for something that is outside of the application," Brown said.

This caused board Chairman Ray Olsen to reaffirm that the narrow scope of the RPC allows for the evaluation of land use and zoning issues alone.

French objected: "I believe that it is within your power and certainly within your responsibilities to request answers to a lot of those questions," he said. "I believe that a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement should be required of this project because of the scope and magnitude of it."

NV Energy fourth-quarter earnings up from 2008

LAS VEGAS (AP) — NV Energy Inc. says higher rates at its Nevada utility helped it post fourth-quarter earnings of \$4.2 million, or 2 cents per share.

Company earnings reported Feb. 8 for the last three months of 2009 compared with a loss of \$2.1 million, or a penny a share, a year ago.

Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters had expected a profit of 7 cents per share, on average.

Revenue for the owner of Nevada Power Co. and Sierra Pacific Power Co. edged up to \$772.9 million from \$766.1 million in the prior-year period.

Full-year earnings fell to \$182.9 million, or 78 cents per share. That compares with \$208.9 million, or 89 cents per share a year ago.

The decrease in 2009 fiscal

year earnings as compared with 2008 was primarily due to costs related to the Higgins Generating Station and the Clark Peaking Units not included in rates prior to July 1, 2009.

"We are satisfied with the results we achieved this year when considering the economic conditions we faced," Michael Yackira, president and chief executive officer of NV Energy, said. "Much of the year over year decline is attributable to expenses related to investment in new generating facilities, which are now accounted for in rates, partially offset by cost discipline throughout the company."

NV Energy, Inc. is a holding company whose principal subsidiaries are Nevada Power Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company.

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