

BOARD OF HEALTH
Special Meeting
Tuesday, August 7, 2012

10:00AM

Health Department Education Room
215 W. Mendenhall

Present: Becky Franks, Berk Knighton, Gretchen Rupp, Buck Taylor, Carson Taylor,

Excused: Robin Cory, Laura Larsson, Bill Murdock, **Steve Custer**

Staff: Matt Kelley, Toni Lucker, Tim Roark

Public: Martha Aveson; Seth Bergan; Beth Kaeding; Jerry Kalur; Nancy Robertson; John Roeber, Faith Rose, Alan Wanderer, MD

Call to Order

Gretchen called the meeting to order at 10:05am

Public Comment on a non-agenda item – none

Regular Agenda

- **Decision to Approve Letter to ACOE**

Public Comment on the ACOE letter

Beth Kaeding, representing Northern Plains Resource Council, appreciates the Board's action of sending a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers regarding the local impacts of the coal train. She stated that she believes the EIS is the best way to address the current situation.

Dr. Wanderer, a physician with an interest in environmental respiratory diseases, stated that he supports the Board's position. He reiterated the mission and the role of the Board to protect the health of the county citizens and eliminate filth in the community. He sees how pollution effects public health with asthma on the rise related to air pollution and diesel fumes as a carcinogen. If we have an increase in air pollution now, we will have to deal with the potential health affects down the road over next 20 years.

He later commented that he read the draft Board letter and it does not talk about specific health effects such as asthma. He feels they should be mentioned with a focus on public health issues.

Faith Rose of Bozeman Community Coal Action group. This group presented the original resolution to the city. She appreciates the Board's action. She added other health impacts to include in the letter: delays of crossing zones and implementing quiet zones.

John Roeber represents boiler makers, coal fire generators and the building trades. He asked for more time before the letter was sent so the public can comment. He feels the EIS will delay Montana projects, like Otter creek, and railroad jobs. He sees 1,700 long-term jobs being impacted by this.

Jerry Kalur addressed the previous argument about the EIS causing delay and costing jobs and profits. He sees this attitude as the classic argument by those engaged in the "extraction" industry. The EIS is supposed to look at this ahead of time so that the impacts are not put upon the public later on.

Gretchen closed the public comment period.

Board Discussion

Gretchen commented that this is not a scoping process which would address the public health issues. She asked for Board comment – do we need more opportunity for public input?

Carson commented that the city held several meetings on this issue and feels the issue was fully debated by the public, including over three hours of public comment. He noted that the job issue was not raised at any of the meetings and understands the health implications. The issue is do we ask the Army Corps of Engineers to expand the EIS to look at local community impacts. If so, more public input and opportunity to be heard will occur. The Board decided by acclamation that there had been enough opportunity for public input, and not to defer sending the letter.

The Issue is what the accumulated impacts on our community are. People who gain profits will mitigate the problems is not a proven argument.

Gretchen commented that both direct and indirect impacts that can reasonably be foreseen should be addressed by the EIS, as per NEPA regulations. This issue relates to the bulleted note in the draft letter citing harmful air pollutants reaching Gallatin County via long-range aerial transport. Gretchen added that Montana fish accumulate mercury from distant coal-fired power plants. Buck supports taking this point out of the letter. He feels it is not germane to this discussion. Carson sees the spirit of the letter as it is all one world – consider what we do has effects and where it goes. However, are we asking them to do more than they would ever consider doing? What are the effects on the US – what are the international implications of all of this? EIS answers the question what is going on. **Ask and demand the direct impacts be studied.** Carson is on the fence about the international part of it, but likes the letter. He prefers to call out pulmonary and cardio-vascular at this point versus asthma.

Becky agrees the international part of the letter may offset the other bulleted items. Question is whether trains through Gallatin are an issue for our health. She is on the fence on this issue.

Berk commented this will not determine if China continues to burn coal. He feels the Army Corps of Engineers will read the international bullet point and move on. He agrees coal is impacting our global climate; acid rain, mercury, radiation...Feels this would be a stronger letter if stay with immediate impacts to our community.

Motion: Buck made a motion to send letter without bullet point #3

Second: Becky seconded the motion

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40am

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date