

REGIONAL COALITION OF LANL COMMUNITIES

Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2012

Rio Arriba County
County Commission Chambers – Annex Building
1122 North Industrial Park
Española, NM 87532

Meeting called to order at 9:33 a.m.

Commissioner Alfredo Montoya welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

1. Introduction of David Abelson, Crescent Strategies

Los Alamos County Council Chair Sharon Stover introduced Mr. David Abelson, Crescent Strategies. Mr. Abelson worked with the Coalition previously and is back to facilitate as long as the Coalition needs him.

Mr. Abelson thanked everyone and commented that he was glad to be back and looks forward to working with the Coalition once again. Mr. Abelson currently manages a similar group in Colorado.

Mr. Abelson commented that as a coalition we look forward to working with Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) on the challenges that they face such as budget and funding issues. He also commented that it was good to see that the Coalition is up and running, and moving forward.

2. Presentation Regarding Laboratory Funding Outlook

Kevin Smith, Department of Energy (DOE) Los Alamos Site Office Manager, commented that he has also been associated with a similar coalition in Tennessee and he has seen the great work that they can do for a community.

With respect to funding, Mr. Smith commented that LANL is in for some mean economic times. Currently DOE has its FY12 budgets in place, however, they are unaware of what FY13 will bring. Mr. Smith indicated he does not have accurate numbers but they could receive \$350 million less than last year.

Currently, the Defense Program has relatively healthy funding, however, it will be split between LANL and Sandia National Laboratory. Mr. Smith stated he does not know the specifics of the split at this time.

Mr. Smith commented that they were given approval to complete the closing of Area G/TA-54. In addition, the Rad-liquid facility project was given the go ahead for completion.

Mr. Smith continued stating they don't know what exactly these funding issues will ultimately mean. However, LANL has chosen to slow down its procurement, hiring and subcontracting. The FY13 budget is currently being developed and they expect to know something by February 7, 2012.

Representative Jim Hall asked what the impact will mean for local contractors. Mr. Smith answered that most of it will impact funding approval and any work related to the CMRR project.

Rep. Hall continued asking Mr. Smith how his experience in Tennessee could assist the effectiveness of the LANL Coalition. Mr. Smith commented that from the meetings he attended in Tennessee, the speakers brought the audience. Bringing in a Senator or the Governor to speak would help the Coalition.

Taos County Commissioner Andrew Chavez shared with Mr. Smith that the Regional Development Corporation (RDC) is working with local colleges and universities in preparing students for upcoming projects - how is the funding problem going to affect this? Mr. Smith answered that LANL is still going to need skilled workers and that the funding for the schools would not be affected.

Rep. Hall asked Mr. Smith if he could elaborate more on the skills that would be needed. Mr. Smith commented that they need math skills, welding skills, people with Chemical Engineering degrees as well as anything in the Science fields.

As a follow up, Commissioner Chavez asked what the plan is for local high schools. Mr. Smith commented that they would continue supporting the schools in the region.

Mr. Smith thanked everyone for their time.

Mr. Abelson asked all the Coalition members to prioritize their issues and needs as they go back to their individual communities. He continued stating that what he was hearing from Mr. Smith was to brace for more cuts. As a Coalition we must discuss how this impacts our individual communities. Mr. Abelson continued stating the Coalition should consider preparing a letter to be sent to Congress commenting on the funding concerns.

Mayor Coss, Santa Fe, commented that he liked the idea, however, what part of the budget is the coalition supporting? Santa Fe residents continue to express concern for the CMRR project.

Kathy Keith, RDC, commented that there are really two different budgets to discuss, one for LANL operations and one for the CMRR project. One option includes writing a letter discussing LANL's operational budget.

Mr. Abelson indicated that he would draft a letter and get it out before the next meeting.

Mr. Ami, DOE, commented that the efforts of the coalition are strongly supported by DOE/NNSA.

3. Review of the Joint Powers Agreement

Mr. Abelson congratulated everyone for getting the Joint Powers Agreement signed. Chair Sharon Stover pointed out that the JPA is still open for other cities, counties and pueblos to join.

4. Review of Coalition Budget

Mr. Abelson began by stating that the last time he had met with the Coalition it was discussing how much funding each County or City could provide. It is common in Coalitions such as this for each community to provide some level of funding. He continued commenting on two areas related to funding the Coalition:

- **DOE Grant Funding**

Mr. Abelson stated that there are DOE funds that support programs like the Coalition.

Chair Sharon Stover asked what the Coalition must do to get funding. Mr. Abelson suggested scheduling a meeting with the local site office (Mr. Smith) and local Congressional staffers to explain why the funding is necessary. A DC presence supporting the request is also helpful. Los Alamos County has that in Kutak Rock LLP

Mr. Abelson continued stating that a specific request must be developed and discussed with the DOE/NNSA site office.

- **Membership Support**

Discussion then turned to the individual member's support of the Coalition.

Commissioner Chavez asked at what point will the Coalition need access to the funds. Taos County is going to be looking at their budgets in April.

Chair Stover commented that since we the JPA wasn't complete the Coalition didn't follow up on the original funding supported by the various communities.

Mr. Abelson suggested that the County and City reps go back to their entities and discuss their budgets and return to the next meeting prepared to discuss how much support they can give.

Chair Stover commented that each community is going have to see if their involvement in the Coalition is beneficial to their communities.

Councilor Fran Berting, Los Alamos County, asked if the Coalition did get federal if it is a request that must be made each year. Mr. Abelson commented that based on his experience, it usually is a two year grant.

5. Executive Director Recruitment

Los Alamos County Administrator Harry Burgess began this discussion commenting that he wanted to confirm that everyone had a copy of the, "Model Budget" for the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities. It identifies the salary, benefits, etc. for the Executive Director position. Commissioner Chavez commented that he would like to hold back on the recruitment until the various entities come back with their budgets. Councilor Berting commented that it also has to get looked at for the long term.

6. Other Items

N/A

7. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Mayfield motioned for approval of the November 17, 2011 meeting minutes, seconded by Councilor Stover. Motion passed.

8. Next Meeting Date

February 10, 2012, City of Santa Fe to host, meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned 11:46 a.m.