

WEST VALLEY CITIZEN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION REPORT FOR NEW MEMBER

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BACKGROUND

The West Valley Citizen Task Force [CTF] was formed in 1997 by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) with participation from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), to provide advice on the completion of the West Valley Demonstration Project and cleanup, closure and/or long-term management of the facilities at the site. The objectives of forming the Task Force are to:

- provide a forum for open discussion of related issues by community representatives;
- identify and understand the various interests of the community and other interested parties;
- increase the flow of information between DOE, NYSERDA and the Task Force Members ("Members") (and their constituencies);
- expand areas of agreement, clarify differences, and explore ways to establish mutually agreed upon recommendations among the Task Force Members;
- enhance public involvement in the decision-making process; and
- coordinate with regulators.

Task Force member Reverend Larry Smith resigned in 2001 and the Task Force, NYSERDA and DOE asked Task Force Facilitator, Melinda Holland to conduct a search for candidates to fill the vacancy. Under its ground rules, the Task Force membership is limited to a total of 16 stakeholders which are to represent key interests affected by or interested in the West Valley Demonstration Project site. Ms. Holland was asked to identify and interview candidates, and make a recommendation for a replacement CTF member.

SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED INTERESTS AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

In the initial convening of the Task Force in 1996, the convener identified seven interest or stakeholder categories which should be represented on the CTF. Those interest categories included:

- Business/commerce
- Citizens at large
- County and local government and municipal services
- Environmental justice
- Environmental organizations
- Medical community
- The West Valley Demonstration Project management and labor

Those interest categories remain viable today. To initiate the search for a new CTF member, Ms. Holland reviewed the interests represented by the current Task Force membership to see which categories were under represented. She and the Task Force members agreed that the primary missing interest/stakeholder elements include the West Valley Central School, local clergy, and environmental justice. As Reverend

Smith was a resident of West Valley, locating a new member who is also a West Valley resident was a priority as well. The current composition of the Task Force is eleven men and four women, thus achieving better gender balance was also a consideration.

CANDIDATE EVALUATION PROCESS

To identify an initial list of candidates, Ms. Holland interviewed several West Valley residents who are CTF members, site employees, and local citizens on the CTF mailing list. She contacted candidates by phone to find out if they were interested in being interviewed. Many people declined an interview saying that they already had too many commitments to consider membership in the Task Force. Ms. Holland asked many of those she spoke to for suggestions on additional people she should speak to.

Ms. Holland interviewed nine candidates. Candidates interviewed included clergy, school teachers, school administrators, municipal officials, and local residents. In the process of conducting the interviews Ms. Holland spoke to people about how long they had lived in West Valley, their involvement in community organizations, whether they would have time to devote to the Task Force, their current level of knowledge about the site and the CTF, their work and educational background, and any ideas they had about future use options for the site. Ms. Holland also provided them with copies of the CTF's recommendations report and gave them an overview of the Task Force's activities and goals. All those interviewed expressed an interest in being added to the CTF mailing list. Two candidates withdrew from consideration after the interview due to concerns about the time commitment.

The names of candidates who were not recommended are not included in this report. All candidates interviewed would have made excellent Task Force members. The candidate who is recommended below was selected because she most closely fits the characteristics needed and desired by the CTF for this vacancy.

RECOMMENDATION

Michelle Enser is recommended to fill the CTF vacancy created by Larry Smith's resignation. Mrs. Enser grew up in West Valley, attended college in Buffalo then returned to teach first grade in the West Valley Central School. She is vice president of the teachers union and teaches Sunday school. She is knowledgeable about the West Valley Demonstration project and its history.

While committed to attending all CTF meetings, Mrs. Enser expressed an interest in having an alternate. She also stated that due to her commitment to their three children and her many civic activities that she did not at this time have time to become a member of the Future Use Workgroup. Thus she [and Ms. Holland] recommend Chuck Rinaldi, the Superintendent of the West Valley Central School, as her alternate. While Mr. Rinaldi is not a West Valley resident, he is very interested in the future of the West Valley Demonstration Project site and its impact on the community and the school. Mr.

Rinaldi is knowledgeable about the site and attended the November 8th Future Use Workgroup meeting. As Mrs. Enser's alternate, he would be interested in joining the Workgroup and has a number of good ideas about future use options.

The remaining five candidates who are interested in involvement with the CTF would make excellent alternates for those existing Task Force members who would like to have an alternate. Involving some of these people as alternates would have several benefits. Alternates can be selected to replace members who resign and would already be familiar with CTF activities and the site. Alternates could participate on CTF Workgroups providing more 'workers' and involving more members of the community in the Task Force's activities. If any current CTF members are interested in speaking with one of these people about becoming an alternate, Ms. Holland will facilitate that interaction.