

Community Advisory Panel – Meeting Minutes July 24, 2003

Members present: Mark Yungeberg, Dave Thomas, Paul Thomas, Ed Rhoades, Bill Schnelle, Jack Tucker, Robert Rathe

Also present: Cliff Gauldin (PSF), Bill Homman (PSF), Glynn Young (facilitator)

Dave Thomas served as chairman of the meeting, and called it to order at 7 p.m. in PSF's Education Center.

Hotline Activity

Cliff Gauldin reviewed calls received on the hotline. There have been four calls since the last panel meeting (6/26/03) – two on odor and two on transportation. For all of 2003 to date, 14 calls have been received on odor (8 from the same household); one call on center-pivot irrigation (the operation came close to a neighbor's property, and has been resolved); and one call on a lagoon cover being afloat (the problem has been fixed). For the two calls on transportation since the last panel meeting, one was a complaint about PSF pickup trucks going too fast and the other about brake lights being out on a PSF truck on I-35.

One member noted that there have been only a couple of odor issues at night at Lake Thunderhead this summer. No odor at all has been noticed from the Burkhiser operation.

Gauldin said that there were no incident reports ready for review, although there had been 2 or 3 incidents since the last meeting. The reports will be available at the meeting in August.

Gauldin was asked if one hotline phone number served operations in both Missouri and North Carolina. Gauldin said that one number is used for both, and that the North Carolina calls are forwarded there for response and resolution.

Goals and Directions for the Panel

The panel discussed at length what its goals and directions have been and could be. The discussion included a number of questions answered by Cliff Gauldin and Bill Homann of PSF.

Q: What does the consent decree require for the advisory panel?

A: The panel was actually started before the decree, but was incorporated into it. The requirements are that PSF have one and that it meet regularly. PSF has tried to broaden the panel's membership to include more critical residents of the area, but has not been successful.

Q: What does PSF want or expect from the panel?

A: Sharing of information, issues and concerns. Learn what questions are out in the community and provide answers to them.

Panel members suggested that the panel should be getting information to the community and help stop and correct rumors. One suggestion was that the community newsletter included a section on the advisory panel.

Q: Does PSF have any surveys on who reads the newsletter?

A: Not with the general public. Some time ago, a public perception survey was done, but it wasn't specific to the newsletter.

Q: Does PSF measure "hits" to the web site?

A: We can get information on that, but don't have it available right now.

Panel members also discussed a range of possible directions, including focusing strictly on environmental and operational issues, taking a project-specific approach; and considering community programs in their broadest context, to include such things as philanthropy. Members agreed on a number of points:

- PSF has to play a big role in the advisory panel's direction for the future.
- The focus of the panel needs to be broader than only environmental.
- The panel might help PSF sort which issues resulted from PSF operations and which did not, and that the panel played a key role in keeping issues and perspectives coming into PSF.
- That what the panel considers could be what the company is considering for its operations over the next 10 years, i.e., a bigger emphasis on contract finishing operations.
- That the panel might identify projects or programs that could help PSF and the community to grow together, i.e., promoting alfalfa production.
- The panel needs to listen to what the community is thinking, and that broader perspectives are needed than only those involved in production agriculture. The panel agreed that more representation is needed from the western side of PSF's operations.
- The panel also wants to create a greater focus on communications with the community, utilizing the PSF web site, community newsletter and information for the local newspapers.

The panel also agreed to have meeting minutes and other information about the panel posted on the PSF web site, after a review by members via email.

Glynn Young will draft a brief purpose statement for the panel for review by email by the members. Once approved, the statement will be posted on the PSF web site, along with meeting minutes and other information as appropriate.

Meeting Frequency

The panel agreed to meet monthly, on the fourth Thursday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for Aug. 28, 2003 at the PSF Education Center.

General Questions and Answers

Panel members made a number of general comments and also asked Bill Homman and Cliff Gauldin a number of questions related to operations.

Comment: I toured one of the sow farms, and noticed that there were no flies inside the building. (Bill Homman noted that flies are more of a problem for chicken and cattle production operations.)

Q: Has there been any trouble lately with pits?

A: No.

Q: What's the status with Crystal Peak?

A: This was recently discussed with the attorney general's office in Jefferson City. The expert panel has recognized the environmental benefits, but has also acknowledged the need for the economics to be there.

Q: Have there been any spills in the last year?

A: We had one Notice of Violation (NOV) last year during a lagoon transfer, but none since then. We have had a number of incidents, but their frequency has steadily diminished in recent years.

Q: How is PSF's relationships with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Attorney General's office?

A: We have seen some really good improvement in these relationships. The DNR has raised expectations for how we operate, and we've improved because of that.

Comment: That's information the community needs to know. Can it be published in the newspaper? (A: Yes, information can be provided.)

Comment: Fertilizer applications today are much, much better than they used to be – applications are much more even.

Comment: We and the community always want to know what PSF is going to do to get to the next level, about what it's doing to constantly improve, like eliminating spills. You never can completely eliminate the odor problem but you can control it better and better.

Comment: A certain percentage of the community, and probably very small, will never be satisfied. Corporate operations of all kinds are more vulnerable than individuals. And even some critics are known to engage in practices that they condemn corporations for.

Q: Is there any place in Putnam County where you buy PSF products?

A: Grocery stores in Milan have PSF products. The company store here in the Education Center sells PSF products (it's open 12:30-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).

Q: How is PSF's water situation?

A: We're in good shape right now.

Q: How are people recruitment and retention going?

A: Retention improved considerably after Sept. 11, 2001. In our farms operations, annual turnover is about 50 percent. We've started holding listening lunches every six weeks or so with 12-15 employees, representing a cross-section of our employee base. At the lunch held yesterday, we discussed retention issues and how they might be addressed.

Q: Has PSF ever used a comment or suggestion box for employees?

A: Some sites have them – this was also brought up at the listening lunch yesterday.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glynn Young