

Kelly Air Force Base Restoration Advisory Board
8 May 1996, 6:00 p.m.
Dwight Middle School

Members/Alternates present:

Mr. Juan Solis, RAB Community Co-Chair
Mr. Allan Hagelthorn
Dr. Gene Lene
Mr. Sam Sanchez
Mr. Nicholas Rodriguez, Jr.
Mr. Edward Weinstein
Mr. Paul Roberson
Mr. Richard Ehrhart (future member)
Mr. Thomas Moore

Mr. Larry Bailey, RAB Base Co-Chair
Mr. Tom Culbertson
Mr. Nicholas Rodriguez
Mr. Sam Murrah
Mr. Armando Quintanilla
Mr. Thomas Smith
Mr. Gary Beyer
Mrs Yolanda Johnson
Mr. George Rice

Members absent without Alternate:

Mr. Roy Gill
Ms. Annalisa Peace
Mr. Carl Mixon

Kelly Air Force Base Staff present:

Mr. Michael Estrada
Mr. Mike Patterson
Capt. Ed Von Dran
Mr. Byron Cotton
Mr. Glenn Whiton
Mr. Dennis Guadarrama
Mr. Ray Rivas

Mr. Dick Walters
Mr. Stan Pehl
Ms. Adrienne Williams
Maj. Dewey Ford
Mr. Dan Medina
Ms. Sonia Gallegos
Mr. Jason Lenio

Item I: Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m., with Mr. Larry Bailey, Air Force co-chair, conducting the proceedings. He welcomed all RAB members and members of the community in attendance.

A. RAB Member Introductions

Mr. Rick Ehrhart, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, was introduced as a future new RAB member. RAB members introduced themselves.

B. Conflict of Interest—Disclosure/Reminder

Two members, Mr. George Rice and Mr. Armando Quintanilla, indicated they may have a conflict of interest due to pending or future litigation in connection with the cleanup at Kelly AFB.

C. New Members/Removal of Members

Bailey indicated no one had missed two consecutive meetings. No new members were voted upon.

Item II: Discussion/Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the March 18 meeting were approved without change.

Item III: Remarks by Hon. Sherri W. Goodman

A. Remarks by Ms. Goodman

Ms. Sherri Goodman, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Environmental Security, visiting San Antonio with the Defense Environmental Response Task Force, was introduced as the first speaker. She said that, as the person responsible for all DOD environmental programs, she wants to ensure the public is meaningfully involved early in the decision-making process. She said the RABs were formed for this purpose.

She explained the Defense Environmental Response Task Force was chartered by Congress as a “super RAB” to find out what is happening in the communities of closing or realigning bases and to ensure environmental cleanups are progressing as they should. After having the task force members introduce themselves, she noted Kelly has an impressive record for quality action and is a leader in pollution prevention having won DOD’s Pollution Prevention in Acquisition Award.

She concluded by making several points:

- DOD and the Air Force are fully committed to cleaning up Kelly AFB.
- DOD is fully committed to cleaning up in cooperation with state and federal regulatory agencies.
- The community and the RAB are an important part of the process.

She then introduced Mr. Tad McCall, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Environment, Safety and Health, who briefly commented that he was pleased to see the attendance and interest in the RAB.

B. Questions and Comments

Quintanilla asked Goodman if the Air Force is committed to cleaning both the on-base and off-base areas of contamination. She said yes.

Item IV: Installation Restoration Program—Zone 3

A. Update on Zone 3.

An update on the cleanup efforts at Zone 3 was presented by Capt. Ed Von Dran. A copy of his slides are attached to the minutes. He emphasized that remedial actions are currently interim and we are still looking for better solutions. He also commented current results indicated the contaminants are not moving very fast and the interim actions are working.

B. Questions and Answers

Following the presentation, concerns were raised concerning the length of time required for clean up. It was expressed that 30 years is too long. Bailey responded that actual cleanup time is more like 10-20 years, with the remainder attributed to long-term monitoring of the site. He added that a team of people, contractors, and regulators has been asked to reexamine the issues and see if there are any other new technologies or techniques that could be applied at the site to achieve cleanup faster.

Rice asked if the RAB could participate on this team. He was told yes, but after the 35 percent design was completed. Rice said that was too late and that the members should be given an opportunity to comment sooner.

When asked how long the plan will take to develop, Bailey responded that it would take about 90 days. Mr. Gary Beyer, Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, said this plan would be part of a post-closure permit to be issued by the state.

A member of the public asked if there was a plan to reimburse people for reduced property values. Bailey asked people who have not been able to sell their houses because of contamination to contact the base legal office. Concerning the North Kelly Gardens area, according to recent discoveries, Kelly may not be the only source of contamination. The possibility is under investigation at present. He couldn't say more as there is litigation on this subject.

A concern was raised about the origin of the arsenic in Zone 3. Arsenic was said to come from an old plating operation on base.

A member of the public asked if the Air Force was planning to do a health study in the area. Bailey said that Kelly AFB is not the correct agency for performing this health study, but other local, state and federal government agencies are and can.

A member of the public expressed concern that the soil on her property is contaminated and wanted someone to test the soil and to give her more information. Von Dran reported the soil had been sampled along with water samples and that she was welcome to all the information available.

A member of the public, speaking on behalf of children living in the area, asked if Kelly had taken soil samples for lead and arsenic. If so, had the data been released? The only data she said she could find was outdated information. She was also concerned, that due to the drought, the plumes would become disjointed and that the treatment systems would be rendered ineffective.

Bailey indicated the latest soil sampling data available is from 1994 and that 1995 data would be available in July. He said he believed the proposed treatment systems will work as designed.

A member of the public asked if the houses will sink as a result of the groundwater extraction. She said she had heard it had happened before at another military base. Bailey responded that all geologic studies say that the groundwater extraction will not cause the houses to sink. In addition, natural conditions in the San Antonio area may contribute to some foundations cracking. However, money has been requested in the 1997 budget to perform a study.

Item V: Break

Bailey announced a break at 7:05. He encouraged people to review the posters set up in the room. The meeting resumed at 7:24.

Item VI: Subcommittee Reports

A. Technical Review Subcommittee Report: Rice. His slides are attached to the minutes.

Rice, a member of the Technical Review subcommittee, presented an alternate plan for cleaning up Zone 3. He began by stating he is not suing the Air Force, but he is helping people who may choose to sue the Air Force at a later time.

Rice said that after 30 years the result of the Air Force's cleanup plan vs. doing nothing will have an essentially similar effect on the off-base contamination. The only difference is the Air Force plan will cost \$30-40 million and doing nothing will cost nothing.

He then proposed an alternate plan that he said will clean up 80% of the site in 5-10 years using a combination of extraction and injection wells. He said the Air Force has refused to sit down with the RAB and develop a plan together.

He cited four main worries as it concerns the length of time the Air Force would take to clean up the site. They are as follows:

- Health issues in regard to carcinogens in the groundwater.
- Reduced property values.
- Water as a resource.
- Potential liability for future contractors using Kelly facilities.

B. Questions and Comments

Mr. Tom Moore asked how much this plan would cost. Rice said his plan would only clean up 80 percent of the contamination and that he had not done a cost analysis. He believes it would cost roughly the same as the Air Force's 30-year plan. The capital costs are higher, but doing it faster saves operational costs.

Mr. Alan Haglethorn said the following issues were addressed in the Technical Review subcommittee meeting regarding Rice's plan.

- The problem is not remedied as the neighborhood is not completely cleaned up.
- The plan is more expensive than the Air Force's plan.
- The technology is not proven in these soil types.
- Considering current drought conditions, there may not be sufficient water to "flush" the soil

Several members of the public thanked Rice for his efforts and asked Kelly to revisit his approach.

Bailey said that Rice has presented this option before. Several evaluations performed by engineering contractors have found the "soil washing" technique he proposes to be infeasible in this area. He also apologized for delays in responding to community comments and said they are not ignored.

Mr. Tom Culbertson commented that other projects such as one involving Salado Creek had 5 agencies working together to solve a problem and the RAB needs to do the same thing and develop a good cost benefit analysis.

A community member asked why it had taken so long to fix a well cover. The response was it had taken time to work with our contractor on a redesign for a permanent solution.

A concern was raised that the public's involvement was too late to have any real effect on the outcome. It was perceived that the Air Force brings a completed plan for approval. Goodman responded that the Air Force's intention is to give the public, through the RAB, the opportunity to comment on proposals early in the process, before they are complete. McCall added that the public should be involved sooner than the 35 percent design, citing an example in Massachusetts, where a lot of work was wasted on a project the community did not want. A suggestion by a community member there turned out to be a better idea. If input had been received sooner, a lot

of time wasted in redesigning the project would have been saved. He suggested the RAB be given the opportunity to comment sooner on the project.

Quintanilla said the Technical Review subcommittee's purpose is to find the best solution for everyone.

Item VII: New Business

A. On-base Leak

A leak was reported in one of the collection systems. A 6-inch high density polyethylene pipe carrying contaminated groundwater released approximately 3,000 gallons into the soil. The pipe was not a double-walled pipe. The regulators have been notified of the spill and a press release was sent to notify the press, as is Kelly's standard practice.

No other new business was reported.

Item VIII: Summary and Closing

At the suggestion of Mr. Sam Sanchez, the next meeting location was agreed to be in the vicinity of North Kelly Gardens. Zone 5 will be the topic of discussion. Rice asked that soil sampling results for Zone 5 be presented at the next meeting. Bailey said Kelly would also report the progress of pump test results in the area. The meeting date was set for June 17 at 6 p.m. The RAB will be notified when a suitable location is found and secured.

A reminder of the public meeting with the Defense Environmental Restoration Task Force was announced. Citizens were encouraged to attend and make comments regarding base closure and cleanup issues. The meeting was announced for May 9 at 6:30 at the Sheraton Fiesta Hotel.

Mr. David Wong, California EPA and a member of the DERTF, asked the board to consider a case at a California army depot where a cleanup effort resulted in the drilling of hundreds of wells. When the cleanup was complete, the wells had to be filled with concrete or other fill, virtually making much of the land unusable. He asked the board to consider this when evaluating plans, especially since wells will be placed on both public and private properties.

Beyer reported a routine letter had been sent to the local county judge and health official indicating changing groundwater conditions. Quintanilla asked what the judge would do. Beyer responded that if it was deemed an immediate threat, the residents would be notified; however, Kelly has already notified residents of the contamination, so no further action will likely be taken by the judge.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Attachments

1. Agenda
2. Presentation slides of Zone 3 Update by Capt. Von Dran
3. Presentation slides of Mr. Rice's presentation