



MEETING MINUTES

Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

For the Former Naval Station Roosevelt Roads

Club Cívico La Seyba, Ceiba, Puerto Rico

Meeting No. 10 - November 13, 2008

Note: These minutes are a summary based on informal notes taken at the meeting. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcript and may not have captured everything that was discussed. If comments or additional notes are provided by others who were present at the meeting, within 30 days of distribution of these minutes, those will be added as an attachment to these minutes.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOMING REMARKS

The meeting began at 6:15 p.m. with Susana Struve (CH2M HILL) welcoming everyone and asking RAB members to introduce themselves. Attachment 1 provides the attendance list. David Criswell (Navy) also welcomed attendees and noted that there may be fewer in attendance due to the elections. He stated that nothing in terms of these meetings will change due to the elections.

David Criswell referred to the agenda and said that the transfer of the airfield would be discussed. The airfield was transferred to the Puerto Rico Port Authority who is working with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to meet the requirements necessary to become a municipal airport. The Navy continues with the clean-up of sites and also continues to conduct investigations.

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II. Upcoming Remediation Activities and Recent Sampling Event (Mark Kimes)

Mark Kimes (Baker Environmental) discussed ongoing activities being conducted at the airfield and processes that are followed. There are four sites there:

- SWMU 14 – Fire Training Pit Area
- SWMU 56 – Hangar from Apron 200
- SWMU 68 – Former Fire Training Area
- SWMU 69 – Aircraft Parking Area

Mark clarified (at Susana’s request) that SWMU stands for “solid waste management unit” and that it refers to a contamination site. The first step in the process was to identify the sites. SWMU 14 was identified in 1998. The other sites were identified in 2004, when the Navy conducted an environmental condition of property assessment. The next step was to investigate the sites, when samples were collected and analyzed at the four sites. The RCRA facility investigation was conducted at SWMU 14 and SWMU 68 to determine if there has been a release of contaminants at that site. A Corrective Measures Study investigation was done for SWMU 56 and SWMU 69, to determine extent of contamination when it is known that there had been a release. Draft reports have been produced for all four sites and submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The contaminants found at those sites are metals.

Corrective Measures Study reports have begun for all four sites. This process involves determining the corrective measures to clean up the sites and also determining what needs to be cleaned. To do this, different methodologies are evaluated. A recommendation is made as to the clean up technique and the EPA must approve it, or they can require that another method be used. With the transfer of property to the Port Authority, we are trying to get things done more quickly, so that we do not stop progress at the airport. A Statement of Basis is then developed that summarizes the site, the contamination, and the proposed corrective measures and also describes how the site will be restored. This document is posted for public review and comment. Work plans and design packages are then developed and submitted to the EPA for review. Once approved, the cleanup begins. Once the cleanup is completed, a project closeout report is developed that describes the contractor’s cleanup activities on the site and also specifies long-term monitoring, if necessary

Discussion

Luis Velázquez (RAB member) said they have heard about the airport area activities. He asked how they (RAB) were supposed to serve as observers if they are not allowed into the area. There is an area where the base can be seen from the outside and he observed from there that a mound of soil has been collected. The appearance of the mound coincided with the heavy rains. There are not supposed to be mounds of dirt, because they can be washed away to the water. Could it have caused more contamination?

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David Criswell said that we were planning to talk during this meeting about what happened at SWMU 69, across from the hangar way. The Port Authority did some work in that area. We are doing research to determine exactly what the Port Authority did there. If they have moved any contaminated soil, we are going to find out what happened to it. We will go and sample and clean up the contamination.

When we conduct investigations at these sites, we sample for metals. Some contaminants are harmful to human health, while some are not harmful to human health but can be to ecological resources (such as insects and birds). In the case of SWMU 69, the contaminants need to be cleaned up due to ecological concerns, not human health concerns. A person that works in that area may not be affected because the level of contamination is not high enough to hurt a human or is not a type that may be harmful. Fortunately, that's the situation with SWMU 69.

There is another area that is near SWMU 69 in the southwest corner where the Port did a lot of filling to increase drainage. We were told by the Port that the fill material was brought in from outside of the airport and did not take it from a contaminated area. We are interested in the area inside of SWMU 69. David Criswell will provide more of an update at the next meeting.

John Henry (RAB member) asked who supervises the work of contractors? Who is protecting the community's interests? Can the workers doing the work come to the RAB meetings?

David Criswell said the Navy is in charge of the investigation and cleanup of sites within the airfield. There are cleanup contractors that are working in that area and the Navy conducts inspections and provides oversight of its cleanup contractors. [In terms of the second question, we were told that the LRA is willing to have residents come to their offices here in Ceiba. They will start being here a few days per week.

A community member asked how long is the cleanup scheduled to take? David Criswell answered that the cleanup process will take from one year to 18 months. Reinvestigation will be necessary at SWMU 69, but that should occur within two years.

Ramón D. Figueroa (RAB Co-Chair) suggested that the Navy actively oversee what is going on, especially when there are toxic substances and there could be an accident. He would like follow up related to construction and the methods being taken to oversee environmental cleanup. David Criswell agreed, saying that we are going to be here more often. The Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB) was out at the airport immediately after being notified that the airport authority did that action. They are also providing some oversight.

Agustín Velázquez Santos (RAB member) asked if they can enter the base to see what is going on because they have to verify what they are being told is happening. We want to know the reality, not stories. He said that he feels like they are being played with and things are not being done as they were told. If they are given access to the areas, they can know what is happening for sure. To whom do they go, when the Navy is gone?

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David Criswell said, we took the RAB on a site visit last year. We can have another one in January if there is interest. It might be a good time to do that, because we will have contractors in the field doing sampling. He was not sure he can get the RAB onto the airport itself, but it might be possible to drive by some of the areas where they are doing construction. He will set up a date. This was added as an action item.

John Henry (RAB member) agreed that the RAB definitely needs to do a site visit. He asked when a new contractor starts doing work, do they know what to do when they get there or are they provided with explanations? What happens if they contaminate the area? How does that process work? David Criswell answer, the property owner or Port Authority is notified about sites in the transfer document. We have meetings with them and their prime contractors to discuss the situation. Whether or not that information is passed to subcontractors, we do not know. The contractors know to come to the Navy and report if they see something.

Luis Velázquez (RAB member) said that he was watching activities at the airport from his neighborhood and was wondering what authorities were supervising activities. He said it seemed to be a clandestine activity and happened over one week. Having worked in construction involving contaminated areas, he knows that there are a number of activities that need to be done before working in a contaminated area. He asked whether there were any of the Navy's staff supervising what was going on?

Wilmarie Rivera (EQB) said that when the Navy transfers property, there are a number of land use conditions that the new owner cannot remove. When activities at the airport were reported, EQB staff immediately went to the airport to investigate the next day. When the EQB heard that it was going to open for the public (inauguración - opening), the EQB notified the Port Authority that the airport could not open while remediation work is being done. The EQB hopes that this does not happen again, given conversations we have had with the Navy, Port Authority, and others. They can continue working on areas that are outside of these SWMU areas.

Ramón D. Figueroa (RAB Co-Chair) asked if any fines were imposed? Wilmarie Rivera (EQB) said that per the RCRA program, this was passed to the EPA and the Navy. There are legal implications that the Navy can comment on.

David Criswell confirmed that that is correct. The Port Authority or any property owner that violates land use controls and does any damage in the land use control areas (the cleanup sites) are responsible for monetary payment of those damages. Navy legal counsel is working with Port Authority counsel on this. We do not take this lightly. It has happened before and it damages the Navy's credibility. When those controls break down, it damages the Navy's ability to do the cleanup. It will take some time to resolve, because it is a legal matter.

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Ramón Figueroa said that the truth must be told to the public. There was a big public ordeal about the airport opening (“inauguración” - opening). The airport was not opened. Things must be done right.

Debra McWhirter (RAB member) said that she lives in Ceiba and couldn’t believe the airport sign when she saw it. She hopes there will be a fine involved and wondered who would benefit from a fine. David Criswell said that that was a very good question and that attorneys are working that out, but that likely there will be a payment for damages on additional work.

John Henry (RAB member) asked if a copy of the report prepared by the EQB could be shared with the RAB. Also, he asked if there were other investigations. Wilmarie Rivera noted that sharing this report should be an action item.

Luiz Velázquez (RAB member) asked if anyone can imagine what would have happened if the airport at Fajardo had closed on October 22. David Criswell said that it was a good point and that to the best of his knowledge, the Ceiba airport could not open because it did not meet FAA lighting requirements. The FAA is not going to close one airport before another one is ready. We should be able to resolve it pretty quickly. We’ll continue doing cleanup. He also told meeting attendees that on the last page of the presentation that there are contact numbers for himself and Wilmarie Rivera (EQB). He encouraged community members to contact either of them if they hear rumors or can see something, and that they will try to address it. He also said that the fact sheets provided at the meeting give a summary of the clean up, and the RCRA corrective process is explained and a schedule for property transfer is noted.

III. ACTION ITEMS

David Criswell discussed the status of the following action items, which were carried forward from the September 2008 RAB meeting. Closed action items are shown in the minutes from each RAB meeting, respectively. This table shows ongoing items and those items that were closed at this meeting.

Item	Description	Discussion	Status
#1	Drone activities that were conducted at Cabras Island.	Navy conducting investigation in January.	Ongoing
#2	Information about excavation of historic artifacts on the base.	Navy will research who was involved in the fieldwork (particularly if they were archaeologists from Puerto Rico).	Response Provided
#3	Verify whether the LRA meeting was recorded and what the status of the meeting minutes is.		Ongoing

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Item	Description	Discussion	Status
#4	Community member says that the Bundy area was not maintained and the buildings have been sabotaged and all of the asbestos and other toxic substances were left exposed, and people became sick.	Navy will investigate and verify whether there has been a study conducted at these buildings.	Response Provided

Item 1

About the drones at Cabras Island, the Navy is investigating the canisters and where they might have fallen into the ocean. It is part of an ongoing investigation. If you have an idea as to where they are located, please discuss with Navy staff after the meeting. The Navy will be doing a site reconnaissance in January.

Ismael Velázquez – I was the one who mentioned this issue at the last meeting. The fishermen know where the site with the drones is. We know there is contamination there. But apparently there is a coordination problem among the Navy. I think there will be buoys in place to mark the location. I hope that next time we meet, this issue is solved.

David – we still need to coordinate that. I would be concerned if anyone is removing relics from the ocean that could be contaminated. Like I said, it is still being coordinated. We have contractors on board looking into it. I don't think it is a situation that merits emergency response. They have been in the water 30-40 years, so we are going to take time to be sure that there isn't an impact to the environment.

Item 2

In terms of the archeological site action item, David Criswell said that there are a number of archeological sites on NAPR. Any property that was transferred to the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust was not excavated. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been worked out with the State Historic Preservation Officer that requires the Navy to excavate sites on the property that are being transferred. The Navy is in currently conducting those excavations; archeologists are excavating, cleaning, and cataloging.

The action item involved finding out whether Puerto Rican archeologists were working on this project. We have confirmed that there are at least three Puerto Rican archeologists and a number of archeologists with the Park Service that are also working with the investigators. The Navy contracts out this work and requires that local archeologists be used. Artifacts that have been found have been moved to a major archeological facility in Gainesville, Florida, for study.

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Discussion of Item 2

John Henry (RAB member) asked for a copy of the report produced as a result of the archeological investigations.

Luiz Velázquez (RAB member) commented that parcel number 2 include the rock of Indians and extends 1,000 feet into the water; he wanted to know why this is for sale, as it is a mangrove with an archeological site. What is the point of having a dry forest also for sale in the area when it is the only dry forest in the area? David Criswell said that the Navy is still working on a legal basis to sell some of the mangroves and beach areas and any other parcel with wetland. The attorneys are still working on it and he does not have more information to provide on this but he will report back on it. In terms of natural resources, the LRA is writing a zoning plan. Included in that plan is protection of natural resources. And there are U.S. laws that protect that, as well as Indian artifacts.

Jorge Porto (RAB member) asked that for the next meeting the Navy bring clarification about whether the Navy can or cannot sell the mangroves. The problem is that by the time of the next meeting the parcels will already be on sale. If you could give us an explanation sooner than the next meeting, that would be great. David Criswell said that he does not believe the property will be sold in January and February. The Navy will be able to provide a legal interpretation at the next meeting.

Item 4

This action item involved Building 724 in Bundy. There were some items removed by vandals like air conditioning, etc. and there was a concern that employees investigating the damage were exposed to asbestos. There was a report produced in 2005 that determined that there are several materials in the building that contained asbestos, specifically vinyl floor tile at 5%. The asbestos must be broken into pieces (dust and fibers) and breathed for it to cause damage. In this particular building, the floor has been covered with carpet, plus it does not get broken down in tile form. Some adhesive with asbestos was used to put the tile down. The floor and wall tile has some asbestos (about 6%). The interior and exterior stucco also had some asbestos, but these areas were not damaged.

Item 3

We had an action item from the last meeting about the LRA meeting and generally about wanting to hear more from the LRA. The LRA was invited to this meeting but were not able to make it. They are willing to meet with groups of five to seven people one day per week. Contact information for the group is provided in the newsletter.

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V. ADJOURNMENT

The next RAB meeting is tentatively scheduled for the third week of January 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

VI. NEW AND ONGOING ACTION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT RAB MEETING

The following summarizes the new and ongoing action items that will be carried forward to the next RAB meeting to be held during the third week of January 2009.

Item	Description	Discussion	Status
#1	Port Authority conducted work resulting in a mound of soil at or near SWMU 69 immediately before heavy rains occurring in Puerto Rico.	David Criswell to follow up with the Port Authority to determine nature of activities at or near SWMU 69 and provide update to RAB at next meeting.	New
#2	RAB members requested access to the cleanup area and also asked to meet with the workers conducting work on site	David Criswell to coordinate a site visit to occur in January 2009 for the RAB	New
#3	RAB members requested a copy of the EQB's report of the activities at the airport	Wilmarie Rivera (EQB) to provide the report	New
#4	Community concern about the potential sale of property containing historic and natural resources	David Criswell to provide an explanation of the Navy's legal basis for transfer of this property	New
#5	Drone activities that were conducted at Cabras Island.	Investigations to occur in January. Results to be provided at later meeting.	Ongoing
#6	Information about the report on the excavation of historic artifacts on the base.	David Criswell to provide a copy of the report produced by the archeologists to the RAB	Ongoing

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ATTACHMENT 1 - Meeting Attendees - November 13, 2008

RAB Community Members in Attendance	RAB Community Members Absent
Ramón D. Figueroa, Community Co-Chair	Samuel Caraballo
Ismael Velázquez	Carlos Brown
Luís A. Velázquez Rivera	Jimmy Concepción Robles
Jorge Fernández Porto	Ángel de Jesús Matta
Lirio Márquez D'Acunti	José Díaz
John Henry	Myrna Maldonado
Rafael Montes	William Lourido
Agustín Velázquez Santos	Ramón M. Ríos
Debra McWhirter	Daniel E. González
John Henry (renunció como miembro del RAB)	Noraida Vázquez Arce
	Rogelio Figueroa

Community Members Visiting

José A. C.	Bernadette Feris
Rafael Mirabal	Sonia Roldán
Alejandro Colon	Ramonita Luciano
Antonio Garcia	Yeitza Hernández
Michael Dalton	Luis Raúl Rosado
Marilyn del Manzano	José M. De Jesús
Marc J. Tallmadge	Roberto Hernández
José A. Rosa	Antonio Dávila
Pedro Colón	Daly Dávila
Reinaldo Vega	Jellizaivone Rivera
Manuel P.	César Valentin
Pedro O. Ortiz	Ada Cruz
Emerito Flores	Mr. Diaz

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RAB Agency Representatives in Attendance

David Criswell, Interim Navy Co-Chair	Navy, Deputy Base Closure Manager, Southeast
Antonio Colorado (ausente)	Portal del Futuro (Local Reuse Authority [LRA])
Tim Gordon (ausente)	Agencia de Protección Ambiental, Región 2
Wilmarie Rivera	Junta de Calidad Ambiental de Puerto Rico (JCA)
Gloria M. Toro Agrait	
Neida Pumarejo Cintrón (ausente)	Fideicomiso de Conservación
Santiago Oliver (representante)	
Vicente Quevedo (ausente)	Puerto Rico Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales (DNER)
Elizabeth Padilla (ausente)	Fideicomiso de Conservación

Other Agency Representatives

Freddy de Jesús (ausente)	Portal del Futuro (LRA)
José A. Candelaria (ausente)	Portal del Futuro (LRA)
CDR Daniel Kalal	Actividad Naval Puerto Rico

Support Staff Present

Susana Struve/Leticia Solaun	CH2M HILL, Inc. (facilitadora de la reunión, contratista de la Marina)
Pedro Ruiz	Actividad Naval Puerto Rico
Mark Kimes	Baker Environmental, Inc. (Contratista de la Marina para su Programa de Restauración de la Instalación)

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