

MINUTES

Eugene Toxics Board
The Atrium Building—99 West 10th Avenue

October 4, 2001
4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Steve Morgan, Steve Johnson, Clyde Carson, Madronna Holden, Brian Allen, members; Glen Potter, Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department; Matthew Hane, guest.

ABSENT: Mary O'Brien, Cathy Verrét, members.

Mr. Morgan called the meeting of the Toxics Board to order at 4:30 p.m.

I. INTERVIEW APPLICANT FOR POSITION 7 ON TOXICS BOARD - (Matthew Hane, Wildlife Biologist)

In response to a question from Mr. Morgan regarding the nature of the applicant's employment, Mr. Hane said that Biota Pacific was an environmental consulting firm that monitored threatened and endangered species. He added that the company was based in Washington state but that he lived and worked out of Eugene since there was a client in the city that required his work exclusively.

In response to a question from Mr. Carson regarding whether his client had anything to do with use of chemicals covered by the Toxics Right-To-Know Law, Mr. Hane said that it did not.

In response to a question from Mr. Morgan regarding how the applicant would handle being the deciding vote for an equally divided issue, Mr. Hane commented that the law itself would dictate how votes should be made but added that, in such a case, he would demonstrate that he understood the perspective on both sides and then would actively seek more data to present to the board before he made his vote. He stressed his desire to have other members understand his vote.

Mr. Carson stressed that the neutral position on the board needed to be fair to both sides. He asked Mr. Hane to explain what he would bring to the position that would allow him to remain neutral on issues.

Mr. Hane replied that, while he was a wildlife biologist, he did not consider himself an

environmentalist. He said that he had demonstrated his fairness by working with the timber industry on endangered species issues and representing their interests to the government while at the same time earning a reputation for fairness. He said that he had no agendas with environmental agencies. He stressed his diverse scientific background and his ability to learn quickly.

In response to a question from Mr. Carson regarding whether he had any experience in manufacturing, Mr. Hane said that he had worked his way through undergraduate school by working in paper mills.

Ms. Holden noted that Mr. Hane had previously applied for a right-to-know position on the board but had later determined that the so-called "neutral" position would fit him better. She asked for his reasoning behind that determination.

Mr. Hane replied that, after interviewing with the City Council for a right-to-know position on the board, he had determined that he was not active enough in advocacy groups to fill that position. He added that he was also not working for any company that was using toxic chemicals.

Mr. Hane said that the "neutral" position was similar to his current employment in that it required mediation skills.

In response to a request for a concrete example of how he used mediation in his position, Mr. Hane cited the spotted owl and his work collecting data to make determinations whether a site deserved protection under the Endangered Species Act. He noted that his client would sometimes have very different ideas as to whether a site should be protected than the government and vice versa, and that it was his job to facilitate communication to come to an agreement.

In response to a question from Mr. Allen regarding his actual knowledge of the Toxics Right-to-Know law, Mr. Hane said that his knowledge consisted of the requirement of yearly reporting of toxic chemicals used by companies in the City. He acknowledged that he had not read the entire law and digested all of the finer points.

In response to a question from Ms. Holden regarding the personal value which motivated his work and whether that same value could be brought to work on the board, Mr. Hane said that his personal motivation for work was studying spotted owls.

In response to a question from Ms. Holden regarding whether he had any previous experience on a citizen board, Mr. Hane replied that he had not.

In response to a question from Mr. Johnson regarding the reason behind his desire to join the Toxics Board, Mr. Hane said that his Master's degree work had been done on the effects of heavy metals. He said that the Toxics Board was the only group he was

aware of that could use his educational experience.

In response to a question from Mr. Johnson regarding whether he would be willing to be on a majority of subcommittees, because of his “neutral” position, and to handle the accompanying work load, Mr. Hane said he had expected the demanding workload and was used to doing high volumes of background work.

Mr. Johnson noted that the person in Position 7 on the board was called upon to be chairperson more often than the other members, and asked if Mr. Hane was ready to assume that role after an appropriate period of acquaintance with board procedure.

Mr. Hane noted that he had not served on a citizen board but said that he had been “Social Chair” for his student council in graduate school.

In response to a question from Ms. Holden regarding what the applicant would enjoy most about the position, Mr. Hane said that his desire was to interact more with the community and the City.

In response to a question from Mr. Carson regarding what he thought of the Toxics Right-To-Know law, Mr. Hane said his initial thought was that it was a good idea. However, he urged Mr. Carson to ask him again after his three-year term was over.

Board members and the applicant engaged in an informal discussion regarding the nature of serving on the board and the approaches of various members to the work and to the program.

Mr. Potter thanked Mr. Hane for interviewing with the board. He said that he would be notified by a letter after the City Council had made a decision on membership.

Ms. Holden thanked Mr. Hane for actually applying twice for a board position.

II. BOARD RECOMMENDATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Members called a short recess to caucus and bring back a recommendation.

There was unanimous consensus to nominate Marylee Bowman for Position 7 on the board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

(Recorded by Joe Sams)

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