Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority
Board Meeting

Thursday, August 20, 2015 | 10:00 a.m.
VCU East Engineering Hall | Room E3218 | Richmond, VA

Proposed Minutes

The Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority (VNECA) Board meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM on August 20, 2015 in Richmond.

Don Hoffman, Chairman of VNECA, called the meeting to order.

The following members were present: Chairman Don Hoffman, Vice-Chairman Gary Tepper, Bob Bailey, Bill Briscoe, John Capps, Regina Carter, David Christian, Al Christopher, Colleen Deegan, Srinath Ekkad, Mary Alice Hayward, Woody Lawman, Maureen Matsen, Ganapati Myneni, Tim Stuller, and Gary Tepper.

The following members were absent: Matthew Mulherin, Pam Norris, and Mark Troutman.

Board members and staff introduced themselves to the room.

The Board approved the minutes from the May 20, 2015 meeting.

Ali Haghighat, on behalf of the Marshall Cohen and the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium (VNEC), provided an update on the Consortium's activities since the May 20 VNECA Board meeting.

VNEC has been working on finalizing their organizational structure as well as preparing for a news release and website launch. Marshall Cohen has been selected as the new VNEC Executive Director while Ali Haghighat will serve as Chairman of the Board. The VNEC website is nearing completion and will be launched (with an accompanying news release) sometime within the next month.

VNEC has also been focusing on workforce development. The Consortium developed and sent out a workforce development survey and are continued to analyze the findings. The Consortium will provide copies of the VNEC survey to Authority members if they are interested. VNEC also has been in contact with Sara Dunnigan, Executive Director of the Virginia Board of Workforce Development, to ensure that workforce development in the nuclear energy sector is included in their end-of-year report to Governor McAuliffe.

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Finally, VNEC reported that they had begun considering different financial commitment levels for Consortium membership, as some organizations that were interested in joining could not at this point afford the current membership price. There are no definite plans to do so in the future, however.

Chairman Hoffman briefly spoke after the VNEC update. He noted that he would like for VNECA to begin sending out monthly reports to Board Members and asked if VNEC would consider doing the same. Furthermore, Chairman Hoffman stated his goal to enhance and expand the VNECA website to provide more thorough and detailed information on Authority activity.

Dr. Charlie Bowman was given the floor to deliver his presentation "Innovations from Virginia for the Nation's Fuel Cycle." Dr. Bowman presented his ideas for new reactor technologies that Virginia should consider as well as alternative spent fuel storage solutions.

Following Dr. Bowman's presentation, in lieu of a formal presentation, Dr. Ganapati Myneni very briefly touched on several abstracts on topics he would be presenting at future conferences. Finally, Dr. Myneni noted the United States was losing ground on an international level when it came to nuclear technology (and in particular, reactors being built), and encourages VNECA to consider how they can help address this growing disparity.

Chairman Hoffman called for a brief five minute break at 11:00 a.m. before continuing with the rest of the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 11:06 a.m.

Andrew Paterson, a Principal with Environmental Business International, provided a detailed and engaging presentation on "Redefining Leadership in Nuclear Energy." In his presentation, Mr. Paterson explored changing trends in nuclear energy and evolving policy considerations at both a national and international scale. Mr. Paterson addressed the political and market drivers in a shifiting nuclear landscape, focusing on the interplay between the global landscape, national strategies, and local (especially Virginia's) positioning. Mr. Paterson argued that nuclear policy must shift to become more export-oriented, and that it was critical to work with government entities in addressing this going forward. Finally, Paterson noted his recent work with various legislators and encouraged VNECA members to not just follow and but also provide information for current and future federal hearings and legislations, such as Senator Lamar Alexander's (R-TN) recent work.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, Chairman Hoffman briefly opened the floor for questions and discussion with Mr. Paterson.

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Chairman Hoffman provided a brief update on recent energy legislation and its impact on the United States as well as an update on the "Nuclear in the States Committee." In particular, he focused on the recently announced Clean Power Plan and how nuclear energy will fit into this new plan. Chairman Hoffman noted that 31 states produce energy from nuclear, and much fo this power crosses over state lines. Because of this, there is a need for a comprehensive, systematic approach for states to work together. Mr. Hoffman has already spoken with the NASEO President and at the NGA and has been working to speak with all the sitting governors in an effort to see how states will move forward. In particular, Chairman Hoffman spoke with Governor McAuliffe, who is committed to pushing Virginia to be a nuclear leader. The Governor has asked Chairman Hoffman to create a plan to do so, and Chairman Hoffman stated that VNECA should work with VNEC to draft it. The plan will be shared at the next public meeting.

The VNECA Board briefly addressed old business and discussed updating the Asset Inventory for the new VNECA Annual Report. Members were encouraged to work with their organizations to update their own asset inventories and submit the new information to VNECA staff. Members were also encouraged to provide research feedback and updates to staff.

Staff and Chairman initiated a discussion on higher education programs in the Commonwealth. Ali Haghighat stated that while there is a great nuclear industry in Virginia, there needs to be greater investment in education, especially in better facilities. Gary Tepper noted that while Virginia doesn't have the biggest nuclear engineering programs, members should recall that the nuclear industry takes from other engineering programs as well (civil, mechanical, engineering sciences, etc.).

There was brief discussion on the Virginia market for nuclear reactors, though in the interest of time, the Chairman asked members to consider this discussion topic and address it at another time.

Discussion returned once more to Virginia universities, this time concentrating on how they are or can be positioning themselves in the global market. It was suggested that Virginia universityies seek new ways to collaborate internationally, expanding current programs and using existing infrastructure rather than start from scratch. The idea for universities to partner with other nations for safety exchanges was posited, as Dominion used to do so internationally but no longer does.

The Board next considered the upcoming Annual Report. Chairman Hoffman expressed his interest in delivering the report orally to the legislature. Staff said they would work with the relevant committees and see which legislators could help make this a reality. VNECA members

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were asked with their support in this effort, and were once again reminded to update their own portions of the report and send the new info to staff.

Chairman Hoffman reminded members that the next VNECA board meeting will take place at VCU on November 5, 2015. A draft of the Annual Report will be available at this meeting, and the final version is due December 1, 2015. The Chairman noted that he was interested in perhaps expanding VNECA board meetings from four times a year to six times a year, but that they would discuss that at a later date.

Chairman Hoffman opened the meeting to public comment and the Board received comment from Erica Gray, representing the Sierra Club, who opposed expanded nuclear energy due to expressed concerns about the storage of spent nuclear fuel, the safety of existing nuclear generation, and public faith in the nuclear industry.

The meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

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