



Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board held on February 9, 2023, 6 p.m. at the Gerlach Community Center, 410 Cottonwood, Gerlach, NV 89412, and via teleconference.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM – Andy Moore, Tina Walters, Brandy Wilbur (alternate), Kristy Evans, Allen Nash. Absent: Russell Bierle (alternate). Elisabeth 'Schatzi' Gambrell was in the audience.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge was recited.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT –

There were no requests for public comment.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF JANUARY 12, 2023 (for possible action) – Andy Moore moved to approve the minutes of January 12, 2023. Kristy Evans seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

~~**5. ORMAT TECHNOLOGIES UPDATE** – A representative from Ormat Technologies, Inc. will provide an update regarding geothermal exploration planning. [non-action item]~~

6. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATE - James Boerigter, Field Manager, Black Rock Field office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), will be available to listen to residents of Gerlach/Empire and provide information and answers regarding the BLM review process, environmental assessment, and decision record pertaining to the Ormat Technology exploratory drilling project. [non-action item]

Andy, Field Manager of Black Rock Field Office, provided an update.

Allen Nash said we had some testimony about some of Ormat's projects in other places. And one of the things that concerned me wasn't the light, the noise, and all the drilling. The map showed that the drill points were all due south of this town's water supply. And I want to know your backup plan, if this drilling you're authorizing causes any damage or even a decline in this town's water supply.

Andy, Field Manager, said so that is the whole point of the water monitoring plan. It is to ensure that the water supply is not impacted, to the best of our ability. So if the drilling takes place, and we find out that there is some sort of an impact, whatever it may be, we'll have to probably cease operations and go back.

Mr. Nash asked what is your plan to supply the town with water? Andy, Field Manager, said that's not our purview that I know of.

Mr. Nash said so if the project causes the water to diminish, you have no plan to be responsible for that?

Andy, Field Manager, said I cannot answer that.

Chair Walters said so what about all other Ormat sites? All are all their springs have dried up. So what's the likelihood of all of our 50 Springs drying up? And the fact that the springs run through the center of town.

Andy, Field Manager, said I don't know that all the springs have dried up in other previous spots. I know that there was one significant issue in one of the other locations. Again, all I can tell you is that we are demanding Ormat to do a water monitoring plan. They will monitor to ensure that their initial exploration drilling which is what we have permitted for now and what the EA has covered. We are taking precautions to ensure that it is not impacted by further exploration.

Andy Moore, said by the way, I am one of the co-plaintiffs in the lawsuit against BLM just so we have that on the table. We weren't getting any answers. So I felt the need to step into that when asked to. With your groundwater monitoring system, if I'm reading this correctly, Ormat is the one responsible for monitoring the water directly without any third party interference or oversight?

Andy, Field Manager, said Ormat will do the monitoring, and do the evaluations. And they will provide the data to us for our monitors to look at and check and make sure that no additional issues are with the current water tables that are around here. We will be providing oversight.

Mr. Moore asked how many Ormat facilities are on BLM property?

Andy, Field Manager, said I don't know that off the top of my head. We have quite a few in our District, but I don't know the total.

Mr. Moore asked do you know of any other ones that are placed this close to a community? Andy, Field Manager, said no, I don't. It doesn't mean that there aren't I just don't know off the top my head.

Mr. Moore asked in your experience with Ormat and BLM, is the process normally started so that the entire process is not being looked at? This feels like segmentation. And then all we're looking at is what they're calling exploratory drilling. And the only point of exploratory drilling is ultimately to get to the other side of it, which is creating power and selling power so that they can make money. In your experience, is this normally how this process goes, where they just look at the exploratory portion first and then talk about the plant later?

Andy, Field Manager, said, to be honest, this is my first geothermal project. And again, I'm just talking from my perspective; common sense would dictate that they would want to see if a resource was available before they went further in the process and setting up a fully operational plant. So they want to see if there's a capability that they can tap into without impacting the surrounding areas. And then, if that resource is viable, they would pursue and we would request that more NEPA be done.

Mr. Moore asked, in your experience, does the BLM look at how far away the project is from an existing property line. Am I correct when I heard that 750 feet is the distance that it's considered not to be a disturbance? Andy, Field Manager, said that I do not know. I can't answer that.

Mr. Moore asked if any chance we can get a follow up on that question? Andy, Field Manager, said I will follow up on that. Mr. Moore said that this is a map right here of the drill sites around the town. And as you can see, we're right here and the entire town is basically being surrounded. These wells are obviously very close to town. And seeing if there is no impact from that is not true given that I believe your report states that it's 120 decibels minimum for these towers, the towers are 150 feet tall, and they're going to be drilling for upwards of three years. I think that's definitely going to have an effect. Wouldn't you agree?

Andy, Field Manager, said I will not deny that. But we are putting in stipulations to mitigate that. So minimal impact.

Kristy Evans said I know you've stepped into this role recently. Why do you think the BLM chose to go with an EA instead of an EIS? Because when I read the EA, I felt it was very inadequate in its analysis of the potential impacts; for example, even just simply the noise section of the EA was so wholly inadequate in evaluating anything that might realistically happen in Gerlach. It was a very generic with 'X-many decibels' and a sound receiver of approximately this. It doesn't consider where the drilling is happening at the base of the mountain, reflecting back to the town and so on. I'm just curious if you can explain why the choice was made to go with an EA instead of an EIS.

Andy, Field Manager, said that was the previous Field Manager. I'm going to take that way out and say that was his call. I don't know what his thoughts were. I assume that he thought it was adequate, previous NEPA to go off of, to do an EA. EIS is much more significant for bigger projects. This is an exploratory project. I can't answer for him why he went this way. But that is my train of thought.

Ms. Evans said Burning Man happens in this town, and they do an EIS. And it just strikes me as inconsistent that there would be an EIS for an event that happens once a year on the surface of the playa, but we may have massive drilling a mile outside of town, and we only have an EA and that's going to be constant for several years, 7,000 feet down. So as a resident, that doesn't feel equal. Burning Man has a huge impact, and I'm glad they do an EIS. It feels crazy to me that they wouldn't do one then for a project that could fundamentally change how we exist in this town. That would be my feedback. Andy, Field Manager, said that's fair.

Ms. Evans said this is the biggest meeting we have ever had. There's a lot of feelings about this project. I think the takeaway for me, for you is, we're very concerned about this, we're concerned because I don't think the EA did anything to make us feel like it's going to be okay - that the noise won't be a problem, that the light won't be a problem, that the traffic won't be a problem and all the things that people who are much smarter than me would understand about water and subsidence, and all of that stuff. Those questions are real and still here because the EA just didn't address that. There's a lot of concern about this town's existence going forward. So if you take something back, I'd love you to take that back.

Andy, Field Manager, said so those were all fair comments and highly understood. I think, my predecessor and the BLM, and me being in the position that he's in now, I understand all that. Obviously, we don't want to come up and disrupt everybody's livelihood and lives. However, the BLM is a multi-use mission. And Ormat being a proponent, has leasing and geothermal rights, and we have to give them a fair shake also. We've done everything we can in the EA to take in all your concerns that were addressed before we sign this thing and ensure there were stipulations and mitigations to minimize the impact on the local community. My predecessor who signed it, and I know we didn't take it lightly. It deals with Gerlach, Burning Man, and Ormat. I'm not going to take it lightly, and I'm assuming the person that comes in after me is not going to take it lightly, either. So once we get some sort of resolution to this legal thing that's going on, and whichever direction this thing goes, I can assure you that the BLM is going to, whatever that outcome may be, if it goes to an EIS or whatever, that we will take all your considerations into account and ensure that you guys aren't just afterthoughts.

Elisabeth 'Schatzi' Gambrell said I understand that you're going to take some of this information back, and I understand the EA has been done. The original plan was submitted in December 2019. And the

original plan from Ormat actually had two parcels that they were going to put a plant on. They had not segmented the plan yet. They came to town, they talked to us several times. Letters were written between December and January to BLM regarding the letter they sent out on December 1, 2020, asking whether or not we were interested, how we felt, and what our comments were. Paragraph three says, 'to generate low-voltage power to the proposed facility'... Further in that paragraph, it goes on to, 'production wells to the power plants, and back to the injection wells.' So, they knew they were building a plant here. When they heard our concerns, which were addressed to the BLM asking for an EIS, because we did not think an EA was adequate here. And I have several letters from the community that were sent to Burning Man and several other entities asking for an EIS. When you say you think your predecessor answered our concerns, I don't feel we were answered because, in the follow-up letters that came out, the questions we asked in our letters were not responded to. And that was in 2020. We are now in 2023, and the plan has changed several times. They came out again on December 10, 2021, regarding this project, which is when they split it. And now they're just talking about exploration; nobody spends \$23 million not to carry on. My problem is that they came on December 14, 2021, and had a non-public, non-recorded meeting with the town members. I have several notes from that meeting where the town members looked at the maps you see back there, and they tried to say this will not affect you; we really might only have to drill three times and not the full 23. And at that time, I was still in the buy-in stage with it because I liked green energy. When I found out that they had separated this project and we're now not talking about the disruption we would have with a full-time power plant that would cover several acres, I realized that I had been sold a really bad used car. I am disturbed. I am disappointed in BLM. Years ago, when they created the NCAs around here, there were a lot of hunters and ranchers out here who did not want that because they wanted their equal, fair share of what we call public lands, and they were denied that. They're having a hard time going over to take care of their wells or get their cattle out there without any automated vehicles. Now we're talking about ton trucks digging and drilling on beautiful lands that hunters use. The visual and the silence out here is just so godly. So do I think our fair share as locals, as tourists, as hunters, anything else was given or addressed? No. That's where I'm at on that one.

Jason Walters said what I have in my hand is a 86-page report on the sustainability of the Gerlach hot spring system for commercial development from UNR. It was published in 2014 and is called the Structural Controls, The Geothermal System in Gerlach. It seems to a layman's eyes to be scientifically detailed, providing not only all the information on we need to develop the geothermal system, but also advocating for doing so. Ormat Technologies has it, the BLM has it, Burning Man has it, and I have it. Its existence tells us the proposed exploratory drilling isn't exploratory. It's preparatory, because everyone already knows what's there. Yet at the same time, the report is oddly inadequate, because it acts like the geothermal system somehow stops half mile outside of town. It does not. The geothermal system at Gerlach underpins the entire town, its buildings, and homes emerging behind our Main Street. And because of this subsidence issues have long plague portions of our town. I have here a second document, which I downloaded from the Bureau of Land Management website. It's called Environmental Aspects of Geothermal Energy Utilization. It was published in 2003 by a University in Iceland, where apparently they have a lot of experience with getting geothermal power wrong. I will now read you some excerpts from this BLM supply document: "fluid withdrawal can cause land subsidence, lowering groundwater and even inducing seismic activity. Subsidence takes place when the fluid withdrawal exceeds the natural inflow. There is evidence in almost every utilized area. Lowering of the groundwater table may cause mixing of fluids between the aquifers and inflows of corrosive water,

and may also cause the disappearance of springs. Chemical pollution of geothermal utilization is a result of the discharge of chemicals into the atmosphere via steam and spent liquid may also contain dissolved chemicals of potential harm to the environment. Disturbance of the natural state of the area can cause phenomena such as geysers, hot springs, or pools to deteriorate or disappear." My favorite quote is, "generally, there is a need for more public involvement in such issues as the construction of power plants to resolve controversies, improve plans, and take mitigation measures." So, to summarize, the proposed geothermal project isn't near Gerlach. It's in Gerlach because the hot springs run under Gerlach. And our water supply is in the same area as the project. If the project isn't constructed and operated exactly, precisely, correctly, forever, we risk our town's buildings, our water supply, and our hot springs. We take all the risks, we get nothing in return, we will not receive the tax revenues. And we've been given no written guarantees by anyone.

Carl Kopec said and furthermore, there's not a whole lot to do out here. But the one thing we do is go out to the rise above town known as 'Passion Point,' which is this slated site of this edifice; this industrial power plant is going to rage nonstop for a time in memorial and shatter the piece around here. And that's not going to be a good thing. That's one of the few places all of us go to enjoy the outdoors. And it's not in the mud of the playa. It's on hardpack. We'll no longer be able to access one of the few places historically accessible to all Gerlach to recreate. That's just a bummer. Nobody's ever asked about that. They just going to take the one place we have to recreate and all along Dooby Lane and that whole business. And I just can't imagine. I can't explain to you the silence out here and how important that is. I'd drive 80-90 miles to the grocery store. All of us do because we like the quiet, the peace, and the serenity. That's going to be shattered and just blown out of the sky by that screaming mimi, and all that construction.

Dave Cooper, said I'm a resident of Gerlach and retired from BLM 14 years ago. I'll just hit some things that struck me. One was that I got no notice. I issued comments during scoping in 2020. And I also did again when they broke it down and said this was just an exploration project. And then I got no notice from BLM that the draft EA was written and out for comment. No notice at all. So I couldn't comment. And I did not get notice of the FONSI when it was issued. I also got no notice of the County Board of Adjustments meeting of January 5 when Ormat went to get their administrative permit and made a lot of misleading statements to get that permit. That is under appeal. I don't know if there's an update on that. But that county permit is under appeal at this point. A couple of things about springs. The geothermal does dry up springs, and a good example of that is Jersey valley down in Pershing County when Ormat fired up their geothermal plant, within four years, the springs were gone. A development near an urban center, they always bring up Steamboat Springs in South Reno. I found out that up until about the mid-1980s, there were something like 20 Geysers at Steamboat Springs, one of the largest geyser fields in the world. And it's all dried up. It's all dried up once Ormat fired up their geothermal plant, and they've built three facilities there now, so they've greatly expanded. The same thing will happen here. I noticed in the EA when the FONSI: the finding of no significant impact was issued, you're supposed to look at cumulative impacts, and you were supposed to look at reasonable foreseeable future projects. And it was stated that the development of power plants was not a reasonably foreseeable future project. I don't get that at all. It doesn't make sense. That should have required an environmental impact statement; you should look at the entire project, not segmented. The other thing is that Gerlach is in the midst of developing a whole lot of tourism. We're dependent on tourism here.

And getting ready to develop a whole lot of projects: an RV park, a community trail, the county art trail, and dark skies are all being developed here, and industrial development is not compatible with any of it.

Bri Konz said I'm visiting Gerlach for work. I just had a question: Have they done any studies with this project regarding the health impacts? Because 120 decibels or more harms people's health, and have any studies or intended studies been done on that at all?

Andy, Field Manager, said many of the baseline studies were done for the EA. Everybody has read or wants to read the EA in the decision record and FONSI; you can find it on E-planning. I don't recall off the top of my head what the paragraph is on hearing and decibels and noise coming from the operation. That's something I can get back to with you and probably give you a cut out of the EA so you can see exactly what we looked at, but yes, a significant number of baseline studies have been done for this EA.

Will Roger said I'm currently on the board of the Burning Man project. I'm the former president of Friends of the Black Rock and former Chairman of the Resource Advisory Council for northern Nevada. Everything that I was going to say was said already. But there is something I'd like to add. There's a uniqueness to this project that's just not appropriate. And that is, it has been pointed out that the resource is under a community. In doing some research and looking at other projects that have been built, none of them have been built this close to a community. I'm all for geothermal, and if it was five miles, 10 miles out of town, I'd fully support it. But putting a well in my backyard doesn't work for me. And I think it's really important that a community's relationship to a large industrial complex that's not wanted needs to be considered. I understand that the federal government, the state, and the county are all trying to increase renewable energy. The state wants to be 50% renewable by 2030. So there's an incredible force pushing this project forward, which is why the EA was chosen instead of an EIS. The path of least resistance. We have a town of 25 houses, maybe 40 houses, and maybe this plan will run the electricity for 50,000 houses. Suddenly, the town of Gerlach looks insignificant in the weight of the force to create renewable energy. We need to gather together as a community and make our voices loud enough that Ormat moves the project out of our town.

Ralph Minetti said I have lived here all my life. I've seen a lot of changes; some good, some not so good. Then you guys come here and give them a permit to do their drilling, which is ridiculous. Did you contact Fish, Game, and Wildlife about what animals live on Dubey Avenue? Probably not. There are bighorn sheep that come down from the mountain; there's deer that come down from the mountain, there's chucker that comes down there; there's quail that's there. And there's the desert rat that's there. And all that stuff's going to be destroyed with your ignorance. Ormat is very ignorant for not being here tonight. They should have been here. They are sitting on us is what they're doing. If they would come up here and talk, they're afraid to. So my question to you is, who is the guy that actually signed that permit to give them the okay to do this? I need to know his name because he's going to be responsible for his action because I'm going to tell you what will happen. Will you pay for my house if they start drilling and my house sinks? Are you guys liable? Don't say Ormat isn't liable because they're liable and Washoe County is liable. So I'm not a happy camper at all with this project.

Andy, Field Manager, said to answer your first question, yes, we did contact NDOW, US Fish and Wildlife, and contacted and collaborated with all kinds of people on this thing. And if you read the EA, you will see all that information there. My predecessor is the one that signed the document. So, however, he signed it for BLM, so BLM was responsible.

Mr. Minetti said they should be, but what will I get out of BLM? Andy, Field Manager, said I don't know what you're going to get out of BLM. Mr. Minetti said nothing. I'll guarantee that you'll get nothing. All these people here sign the letter they send them and you guys didn't answer nothing. Because I've signed many letters we wrote, and never got a reply till it's too late.

Taylor Hubler said I've only lived here for about a year, but I love this community. They've accepted my family. And it's been great. I would hate to see it go. My father was involved in city Civics for a while. So I know my civic duty to be able to stand up here and give my voice. Now, I'm not going to be addressing you. I'm going to be addressing all the people that are going to be wondering, why is our town so upset about this? Why are we so angry? Why can't we just let a plant go in? And my answer is, we're not getting anything out of this. Everything that I've been told; it sounds like we're just going to get all of the bad things. So we're not getting any of the benefits. And this is, in my mind, the best way to frame this to help people understand: we have two people playing Russian roulette and making a lot of money off of it. But pointing the gun at our heads and pulling the trigger. That's just not acceptable. When you have a situation like that, people get angry because you've pointed a gun at them. Even if it doesn't go off, and the bullet doesn't exit the chamber, you still have a dangerous situation. Maybe things won't happen. But we're still unhappy that there is that threat. And so I hope that those people that have that question, why are we so angry? Look at this transcript and hear my answer to that question because this is unacceptable. And I see every reason to be angry. Thank you.

Melissa Adams said I want to thank you for coming here. I know that you're getting all of this thrown at you, and that's a lot. They left you here alone with no support. Everyone's very angry. My question would be, what do you think BLM can help stop this? Or what can BLM do to help the community get to where they need to be, or how can we do something and get the voices heard? What do you think they can do?

Andy, Field Manager, said I understand everybody's concern. I can understand why you're upset about having this. My recommendation would be, depending on what happens, we're in litigation right now, so we don't even know where the litigation is going to go. We don't know if this exploratory will go any further or if it may be cut off here soon. I don't know what's going on. The courts will have to work all that out. Should it go forward. Again, I'm taking away that we are not communicating clearly from the gentleman over here. We need to communicate a little bit more with the people of Gerlach and give you guys a better opportunity to answer and provide comments and feedback. And I don't want you guys to walk away and think we dismiss all this stuff. My predecessor was diligent about considering all your considerations and comments before he just willy-nilly signed things. And I can assure you that BLM will also, and whoever is going to be coming in later will do the same thing. Again, I have some of your concerns here that you guys have that you've raised. And we will try to ensure this through other processes if need be. We've already got certain processes that we go to for comment periods, but maybe we'll reach out just to be sure that the board members have the opportunity to know where to go to make comments. So that's all I can tell you. I can't make promises, but I have heard you. I can try to do some things that will help you guys have the opportunity to make more comments. That's all I have.

(inaudible comments from the public. Andy, Field Manager, said I understand what you're saying. So I misspoke. But I've got you will take your comments into consideration.

Russel Dahl asked if you had ever been in Gerlach when a train rolled by

Andy, Field Manager, said yes, it vibrates the whole town.

Mr. Dahl said that means a huge water table is underneath the town. He asked, do you know what happens if that sinks? The town falls into the ground. It's like a sinkhole. And you want to put the water drilling facility just a mile outside of town. If you cared about our concerns, this would have never been signed off on.

Andy, Field Manager, said I'm not being flippant, but do you understand how the geothermal process works? With regards to the water being (Inaudible discussion from the audience).

Chair Walters said everybody must take their turn on the podium. Nobody on Zoom can hear without a microphone.

Andy, Field Manager, said I've got all that. Water monitoring is in the plans. We are working with Ormat to make sure that incidents like that do not happen.

Mr. Dahl said you're telling me you have a plan in place for if the town sinks into the ground, you will take care of it right after the fact? Are you going to come in and just rebuild the whole town? I'm just curious. I'd really love to hear about this plan. Are you going to pick the buildings up by helicopters? I know there are many trailers out here, but you're telling me your plan is to wait to let the town sink before you take any direct action.

Andy, Field Manager, no, that's not what I'm saying. It's data collection to determine what is if anything is being impacted when they do these geothermal tests.

Mr. Dahl said you're not going to find out until it's impacted until after it's already impacted. It's going to be too late, and the town is going to be gone. And then you're going to get many people that want to take their own direct action.

Stacey Black (zoom) said my role here is let you know that I'm a home homeowner. And I also help run our pre K through 12 school here. The point I wanted to make is about responsibility as a public servant to the greater community. That's something I think about a lot in doing my job is how to serve students, how to serve families, and how to bring a community together to be representative in a good way of a public institution. For me, that's the school. And I want people to feel like they can count on the school, and they belong in the school, and the school belongs to them because they're in a community. And I feel really disappointed right now with how the BLM is carrying its civic responsibility as a partner to this community. Your job is to help manage the lands and make them accessible to people and to reflect the will and input from the community of what we want to see that happen out here. I just can't imagine, despite all the research you're telling me has been done and all of the conversations that you've said your predecessor had, that anyone with a heart and a mind towards civic responsibility would consider it fair and reasonable to permit a giant factory being built right on the edge of a small community that has to fight very hard every day, just to survive in a giant County. I think many of our community members are showing you that they will fight that hard to care for their community. And we need you to be a better partner in listening, standing up for us in our town, and doing the right thing.

Joe Child said I want to reiterate what Stacey said there. We're looking for a partner. We want someone that will advocate for us. You're seeing a lot of anger tonight. But to me, I think it's more fear. We don't know what's going to happen. We hear we hear all kinds of stories about drying up and sinking. We

don't know. We can go out and read, but apparently the EIS would give us more understanding of what is to be, and it will give us some assurances that these things have been looked at. And that's what we want. We want a partner. We want someone that advocates for us. Because we're at risk of losing our town if this goes sideways, it's anger, but it's a fear in my heart that we will go away, and I don't want that to happen.

Mr. Moore said one more last thing here. This map that I'm holding up, the thick black line you see, is the area of interest. If you notice, it just barely skirts the edges of Gerlach. I want to request, possibly in the future, that line be included to cover Gerlach. I'm looking at your final draft EA, you have five issues that are covered in total, and not once is the population or the town or the effect of Gerlach in this EA in any way, shape, or form, and that I'm requesting be changed.

Ms. Evans said that the decision record was signed by Mark Hall. And for the future, what's your role as we move forward? Can you just let us know? Mark Hall was the Field Manager for the Black Rock Field Office, which falls under Winnemucca. And your role currently is?

Andy, Field Manager, said so my current role right now is the acting Field Manager. The BLM is currently in the process of hiring a new Field Manager. I am currently taking on about three roles. My office has 16 people, and right now, I have five. So not only am I doing the Field Manager role, I'm doing the Assistant Field Manager role. And I'm also the Project Manager for Burning Man. So if you guys got any bullets to throw the way towards with that, you guys could shoot my way, too. I'll be back for that. That's where we are. We're in the process of hiring another Field Manager. HR takes forever with government bureaucracy. We're probably looking at somewhere in the neighborhood two months from now before we'll probably even get somebody else on deck.

Ms. Evans asked if it is the Field Manager of the District or of the office to oversee the Ormat project if that goes ahead?

Andy, Field Manager, said the Field Manager is the one who signs the authorization. So ultimately, he is the one that's taking risk. He's liable for it, essentially. And so, just so you guys know, that's why the Field Managers and Assistant Field Managers go out, and we get liability insurance for things like this. It's just the way it is.

Ms. Evans said I really appreciate you giving us update. I appreciate you being here. When the BLM hires someone for that role, how will we find out who that is? Will you come to tell us in person?

Andy, Field Manager, said I could let you guys know when that happens. We should do that. And we'll have the web pages updated. I'll see you guys can see all that.

Ms. Evans said we would love to have you come to our CAB meetings anytime.

Andy, Field Manager, said this is exciting. In my previous job, I was a marine for 24 years. So this is not that hard. I appreciate you letting me be here and trying to answer some of your questions. Thank you.

Carl Kopec said thank you for taking your time to come out here and listen to us. Ormat represented themselves as having to purchase a whole load of water from the GGID to pursue this project. That is not the case. Their plan B was to truck in all the water necessary, which is a phenomenal amount and will necessitate a vast amount of trucks going over the road, which Ralph said would virtually destroy the roads. That also will impact the Burning man traffic; that should be noted and factored into the

whole grand scheme of things. Traffic going back and forth is going over a very thin ribbon of asphalt, and it's going to be destroyed by a massive amount of water going into this project that's not been factored into by the county. That is significant information that impacts everyone using that road, including trucks, interstate traffic, etc. Also, you guys built a nice visitor center out there; it would be a pity to have it just living in the shadow of the power plant.

Andy, Field Manager, said I'm not aware of the water thing and it's kind of like Burning Man, where we hold them responsible for all the traffic and the roads. I don't know all the details that I don't know what their overall plan is, but I appreciate that comment, and we'll definitely look into it.

Russell Byerly said it's my understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong here, that in the case of controversial projects with significant public controversy, an EIS is required as opposed to an EA, is that correct? Andy, Field Manager, said the more complex it is usually, the higher NEPA, so EIS versus EA.

Mr. Byerly asked what the bar for significant controversy is because half of Gerlach's population is here tonight, and most of these people have written letters that are critical of this project.

Andy, Field Manager, said that's a good question. Mainly it's up to the Field Manager, the authorizing officer. He's the one that makes the call. He weighs all the data; he weighs all the controversy. And then he decides if there's some other NEPA or if we need to go full EIS, so it's kind of an objected call by the Field Manager.

Mr. Byerly said you've said a couple times tonight that your predecessor approved the decision to sign for this project. And I don't want to put words in your mouth. But you seem to imply that you don't understand why that decision was made. And if that decision were yours today, would you make the same one? Or would you recommend that an EIS be made instead?

Andy, Field Manager, said that's a good question. Put me right on the spot. I don't know what decision I would make. We can do hypotheticals all night. But he had his reasons for making the decision that he made. I'm sure he told me, but I don't remember if I was more focused on Burning Man for the last year than anything else. That was my top priority. So I don't know. I can't give you a straight answer on that.

Mr. Byerly said let me rephrase the question. If you don't understand why that decision was made. How can you support that decision?

Andy, Field Manager, said that's a very fair question. We just have to go with what we got right now. I mean, it's in litigation. We'll see where this goes and proceeds from there.

Mr. Byerly said thank you very much. And thank you for coming out tonight knowing what you'd be facing. I do appreciate you showing up.

7. COMMISSIONER AND BOARD MEMBER ITEMS —

Commissioner Herlamn said I just wanted to thank you all for being there. I'm so proud of all of you for fighting this and for all ganging up together and forming a strong community like you've always been. I will be going to Washington, DC, in the morning. I will be visiting the BLM while I'm there. I don't know how much I can get done with them. But I do know some folks there. And we'll see what we can do. I will also talk to our congressman and possibly our two senators. I'll do all I can to try and make this go away and fix it somehow. So thank you all for your patience, and don't give up the fight. And thank you,

Mr. Manager, for making it possible to have this meeting the way it was tonight. And keep your chins up, and let's keep fighting. That's all I have to say. I'm proud of you. Thank you very much for being there.

Ms. Evans said I want to thank everyone for coming. This is fantastic that you all showed up. So thank you. Make sure you sign in on our books, so we know that you were here. Our meetings are on the second Thursday of every month.

Chair Walters said if anybody wants to write a comment on the comment cards before they leave, they can too. And I'll submit them as public records.

Ms. Evans said I had one item to follow up on that Schatzi Gambrel brought up. It was a question about Washoe County Animal Services. And I believe the question was, are we allowed to adopt pets? And as part of the Washoe County Leadership Academy, we took a tour of the facility at our last session, and when I asked about fostering or adopting, they said, absolutely, we would love for your help. So there's an answer to your question from a prior meeting.

8. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT –

Rebecca Hamilton said I am your Postmistress. Just so you know, as of today, we can take money orders. We can take debit cards. Please be easy on us tomorrow because I'm still in training and don't know how to take money orders or debit cards yet, but I've got this. But thanks, everybody, for your welcome. I'm glad to be here. And I'm glad to be here as your Postmistress and be of service. Put your PO Box number on your boxes.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.