

Minutes from May 18 MCDEC Meeting

The meeting started at 6:30 PM with some socializing. At 6:35, the meeting began. Attendees included Marty Baum, Hank Bonner, Gayle Ryan, Sam Hay, Liz Piel, Dave Cross, Bridgit Kirouac, CeCe Scofield and Carol Ann Leonard.

Announcements: The DEC is having Docktails this year. There will be a Silent Auction again, run by Patty Koff. Please think if you have anything to donate or know someone who would donate item(s). I will send her contact information out to the caucus.

Representative Anna V. Eskamani is very good. Write her at Annaforflorida.com with your thoughts on bills.

Thanks, Liz, for inviting us to the Great Mountain Forest Lecture by Tamara Muruetagiena.

Guest Speaker: Carol Ann took notes as best she could. Sec. Barbara and her husband were on vacation.

Carol Ann introduced CeCe Scofield. Carol Ann remembered hearing her speak about LNG (Liquified Natural Gas), a few years ago, at Paul Laura's Treasure Coast Democratic Environmental Caucus, now disbanded. I knew she had been working on the issue for many years.

CeCe said she had been working on the LNG Facilities for the past 20 years and on the rail issues for 7 years.

She explained that Natural Gas after being processed into Liquified Natural Gas, has to be kept at minus 259 degrees Fahrenheit in order to keep the volume reduced. If it is exposed to air, the liquid boils and makes vapor gas that can ignite. It can be blown by the wind to other ignition sources. It's very explosive. The boiling liquid expanding into vapors creates pressure on the container that it's in, which then explodes. This creates a more massive amount of explosion and fire. Static electricity can also ignite the vapors. Water can't extinguish the fire. If the leaking gas falls into water it goes back into liquid rapidly.

Accidents have already happened. She mentioned two.

In Cleveland it leaked into a sewer. 130 people in one square mile were killed by the explosion.

The Fortress Investment Group had an explosion in the Hialeah RR yard. A valve came apart and the LNG leaked out, forming a gas which exploded in forty-foot flames.

The state of Florida doesn't regulate LNG.

She said the US Dept. of Energy says it OK to go to ports such as those in Miami, Hialeah, Palm Beach, Canaveral, Jacksonville and one other. She mentioned Port St

Joe and the Crystal River but I don't know what for! Carol Ann said there was an LNG facility in Puerto Rico.

The Dept. of Energy says its OK to export 8 billion gallons (cubic feet?) for export.

LNG has to be in ISO containers to export internationally as part of free trade but not to free trade countries.

There are already LNG tanker ships transporting it abroad.

Carol Ann said she had contacted Carnival Cruise Lines and Norwegian Cruise Lines after the two Ch. 12 LNG broadcasts saying cruise lines were using it. Norwegian wouldn't answer her. Carnival said they did use it on their ships. They said it was good for the environment and an economical (I think was the term or good) fuel. CeCe said the refrigerants needed to cool the LNG were Ozone depleting. She mentioned Sulphur Dioxide and methane. She compared the emissions to coal. Carol Ann remembered reading on Earth Justice's website that the fuels used to transport the LNG negated any environmental benefit of LNG.

Trump authorized the PHMSA (Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration) to be able to haul LNG in 30,000-gallon tank cars.

CeCe said the tanker cars weren't built yet. They will haul 30,000 gal. They have to have certain specifications. The valve can't leak. They have to keep burping vapor from time to time or the valve can come apart. (FYI, Ben Lovelace at our Board 6/8 meeting found out some info on the number of times in a time span for the burping. More info on that to come, on Senate bills HR2, in 2020 regarding LNG, that remain unpassed and more).

CeCe said we can't let passenger trains and trains hauling tanker cars run on the same track.

Other agencies she mentioned are:

Federal Regulatory Commission (for safety?)

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

FRA

EPA

Office of Fossil Fuels

Department of Fossil Energy

Department of Energy

There have been some successes with this issue.

On Oct.12, 2020 The Floridian Natural Gas Facility was to have been built in Indiantown. David Shaw and Ed Fielding (former BOCC) had stopped it.

There was a Calypso deep water LNG facility to be built off shore of Port Everglades, FL. Gov. Crist at the time, killed it.

Federal regulations say if there is an LNG facility there must be “exclusion zones” around it. No people and no buildings but pipes are OK. Any heat resulting from a fire or explosion can’t burn down things nearby. Vapors have to be contained in some way.

There is a lawyer working with neighborhood groups in Titusville to fight an LNG facility.

I think CeCe said there was a lawsuit against the Department of Transportation, by six nonprofit groups. Earth Justice, Center for Biological Diversity and the Sierra Club were named.

She suggested a public event to express our point of view. She talked about an event called the Blessing of the Bridge. It was meant to save a draw bridge from being torn down to allow LNG ships to pass. We have the RR bridge in Stuart that is one track now. They are going to put double tracks on a new bridge as I understand. CeCe said we shouldn’t have a high-speed train like Brightline running next to a track with tanker cars filled with LNG. Maybe something like the Blessing of the Bridge would work here.

Contact local nonprofits. She mentioned the name Casey Ingram.

We discussed the fact that in 2015 Florida East Coast Railway began to convert their mainline locomotives to use LNG. There is a little tanker car behind the locomotive to fuel it. At this time all their locomotives are using it. They do go through Stuart, but they aren’t hauling tanker cars with LNG. **We need to be sure they don’t!**

Questions and Comments

Dave C-. **By rail is the least dangerous way to move it and highways are the worst.** Run a pipeline to an isolated area then do the conversion there. Avoid rail transport. (FYI- at the Board meeting 6/8 we talked about using a pipeline to take the natural gas to a facility near a port to then make it into LNG).

CeCe says the NE uses the most LNG. Carol Ann read that CT does too.

CeCe said in MA, trucks hauling LNG had certified routes, certain times to drive, not to be near any school buses and on a turnpike or similar highway, they can’t go slower than 45 mph. They can’t have two trucks close together. They can re-route trucks. They cannot go through a tunnel or any other confined area. **Maybe there could be safer regulations.**

She is against LNG but not against Natural Gas. They fought the Hess Co. in Fall River. They would do anything to protect the river. If an LNG tanker was coming other boats had to get out of the water. They would shut the bridges down for vehicle travel over them. “Exclusion zones were needed two miles ahead and two miles astern for the ships hauling LNG on the river.

Marty B.- When LNG hits the air it explodes. The gas spreads and ignites. He suggested watching the movie "Outbreak". The trains hauling the LNG tankers would be bomb trains. Miami Springs would go. The Mikasuki Indians could be affected.

Gayle R.-Who is behind LNG?

CeCe-the railroads own the land, tracks and access to pipelines. They are like a natural gas line on wheels.

Gayle-we need to do research. Why can't we stop them?

Bridgit K.- Homeland Security says they are a target for terrorists.

Carol Ann L.- I found out about a study that was done to see what could happen if terrorists attacked an LNG tanker ship. It ended with horrific results that could also have either disabled the tanker or sunk it. It was sent to Congress in 2012. (CA note-will have to check but I think it was the Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate, Safety Report).

CeCe-Small scale inland plants didn't want regulation. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission works with Homeland Security. The Office of Public Participation is making it possible to have public comments.

The Floridian Facility has a docate. (CA note-I have to ask what that means). At a 2014 Natural Gas Convention, it was stated that Floridian had a rail addition. All Aboard Florida has a parallel infrastructure. (CA note-they aren't going to haul LNG tankers together with passenger trains).

CeCe said she had an attorney she had worked with. (CA note, I will get the name.)

CeCe said she would send Carol Ann more info and letters that have been written. (CA note, she has done so by e-mails. I am trying to coordinate them into one document for info and one for letters).

At this point we decided to continue on with the rest of the meeting.

Minutes: The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the April minutes. There were none. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report: Hank gave us his report. He also told us about the fees we have paid to Act Blue for having it available to receive donations. We felt it was worth the fees to be able to have that option. We can also pay by check and one person did so.

Rivers Coalition: Notes were taken by Sam Hay for the April meeting and sent out already. **Thanks for doing that Sam.**

DECF: The DECF By-Laws Committee has now finished the by-laws. They were passed at the May meeting (precedes our meeting) but can be amended at a later date

if need be. Barbara Klein (Chapter Development Committee) is working with the chapters to coordinate their by-laws with the DECF and the FDP (Florida Democratic Party). Barbara says Marian Williams with the FDP is making a template for all the chapters to follow. Barbara is making all the chapter chairs be on the committee to finalize their by-laws with the template by Marian Williams, who has the final say. I have already compared DECF to ours. I spoke to Barbara about our questions on our by-laws. I will type up our new by-laws and send them to Barbara.

Third party voter registration will be done by all chapter chairs or a designated person. Training will be given. I commented about the Martin County Democrats doing it for many years. I did it when President Obama was running. Yes, training is needed. There's to be no influence on the person registering. They said that there were now 14 days to get the registration to the Supervisor of Elections. I said in Martin County we found more people registering as Republicans so we had backed off a little but were still going to be doing it.

Old Business-none

New Business-none

Adjourn-approximately 8 PM?

Respectfully submitted by Carol Ann Leonard, Chair