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Sent: Thursday, June 03, 2010 11:16 AM

To: Bill Cagle

Cc: Supervisor Adam Hill; Supervisor Bruce Gibson; Chairman Frank Meham;
Supervisor Jim Patterson; Supervisor Katcho Achadjian

Subject: **Re: Paavo Ogren Comments April 27th, SLO County Board of Supervisors Meeting**

Board Members

Mr. Cagle has sent you some additional correspondence on the debate of STEP vs. Gravity. On April 7, 2009, your Board, as part of a regularly scheduled agenda item, which was noticed in accordance with the Brown Act, considered whether to direct staff to spend more time, and expend more funds, on the STEP issue. Since that time, the Planning Commission also considered STEP, choosing to approve a gravity collection system instead.

The Coastal Commission, in it's appeal of your Board's project approvals in 2009, did not itself identify any substantial issues with the technology of gravity.

In the recently released Coastal staff report for the de-novo hearing next week, I could not find support for a STEP system. In fact, the staff report was as generally complimentary of the County's project and our efforts - as much as I might have hoped. The following are some quotes from the Coastal staff report (bold language is where emphasis has been added):

“In its January 14, 2010 action, the Commission was generally satisfied with the core elements of the project with respect to treatment plant siting, the gravity collection system, and the project's reuse concept overall.” (Page #1)

“(Commission) staff notes that the project (not even including the prior incarnations raising similar issues) has been discussed and debate through over one hundred public hearings over the last four years, including through a well attended Commission hearing on the matter in January 2010, and it is hard to make a case that public participation has not been maximized in that process.” (Page #3)

“The County embarked on a long and inclusive local process that included evaluation of treatment plant siting, collection system approaches (e.g. STEP versus gravity flow...” (Page #4)

The County's efforts culminated in 2009 with a series of ten County Planning Commission hearings (including two field trips) and multiple County Board of Supervisors' hearings leading to the Board approval...” (Page #4)

“(Commission) staff recommends a series of conditions that help refine and better implement the proposed LOWWP” (Page 7)

As condition, (Commission) staff believes that there is not a feasible, less-environmentally damaging wastewater treatment project, including with respect to plant siting, and with respect to collection and effluent methodologies... as required by the LCP." (Page #7)

“(Commission) Staff Recommendation of Approval. Staff recommends a YES vote." (Page #8) - As a side note, the emphasis on the YES is actually in bold in the Coastal staff report.

In conclusion, I am glad to meet with Board members to discuss the correspondence from Mr. Cagle at a level of detail that you may individually wish to review, including the work of the Technical Advisory Committee, the Water Resource Advisory Committee, the PEER review panel (National Water Research Institute), the Planning Commission, the EIR, the Community Surveys, the criteria from the Virginia Tech study, Measure "B" approved by Los Osos, etc.... all of which in one way or another support your Board's decision of April 7, 2009. Obviously I don't agree with several of Mr. Cagle's statements in his most recent correspondence, which is why it was important to have the STEP issue as a point of focus last year. Hopefully the Coastal Commission will act next week consistent with their staff recommendations. The project that your Board approved, and which is now the jurisdiction of the Commission, is an excellent project for Los Osos, and the time has come to move forward.

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