

**Pickering Nuclear Generating Station
Community Advisory Council
Virtual Meeting
Minutes, May 19, 2020
Highlights**

Site Update

Mark Knutson talked about the operating status of the units and plant productivity. He also talked about: preparations for the safe return to the site of employees who had been working from home; employee feedback to a CAC letter expressing appreciation for providing safe and reliable power during the pandemic and assisting people in need in the broader community due to Covid-19; and other matters.

Deep Geologic Repository (DGR)

Fred Kuntz presented an update on the DGR for medium- and low-level nuclear waste. OPG had committed to not proceeding with this project, sited near the Bruce nuclear plant, without the support of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation. With the SON voting against the project this past January, OPG is looking at alternative solutions. Also in the area of nuclear waste, Jason Wight talked about measures to keep employees safe at the Pickering Waste Management Facility (PWMF).

Public and Community Affairs

Analiene St. Aubin talked about how OPG continues community involvement activities safely during the COVID-19 lockdown. She also mentioned: peregrine falcon nesting at the Pickering site; release of salmon fry from the tank at the Pickering Nuclear Information Centre to Duffins Creek; and moving Tuesdays on the Trail to a virtual platform.

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Pickering CAC:

John Earley
Donna Fabbro
Julie Kim
Pat Mattson
Peter Ottensmeyer
Dan Shire

Regrets:

Frank Dempsey
Natalie Harder
Bill Houston
Tim Kellar
Greg Lymer
Tracy MacCharles
Sean McCullough
John Miseresky
Cody Morrison
Zachary Moshonas
Cameron Richardson
Helen Shamsipour
John Stirrat

OPG:

Jennifer Chapin
Mark Knutson
Fred Kuntz
Analiese St. Aubin
Mark Welt
Jason Wight

PDA:

Francis Gillis
Dave Hardy

Topic #1: Introduction

CAC Facilitator Dave Hardy introduced Senior Vice President Mark Knutson to those members who were not present at the April CAC meeting.

Dave expressed condolences to the Council and OPG staff on the recent passing of Ralph Sutton, who was a CAC member from 2015 to 2020.

Topic #2: Review of Minutes

A Council member called for two changes:

- On the Highlights page, under Site Update, regarding OPG/Pickering's reaction regarding COVID-19: in the last sentence of that paragraph, "appreciation to CAC" should be changed to "appreciation for OPG staff," so that the sentence reads: "CAC members expressed appreciation to OPG staff for that contribution and for continuing to provide safe and reliable energy to Ontario."
- Under Topic #2: Site Update, first bullet, fifth line: the meaning of the phrase "at the request of the grid" is not obvious. It should be changed to "at the request of the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)..."

With these changes, the CAC minutes for April 21, 2020 were approved.

Topic #3: Site Update

Senior Vice President Mark Knutson presented a site update:

- All units at the site are operating at full power, except for Unit 1, which is in a planned outage. Units 2 and 3 remain in safe storage.
- The safety of employees is a first priority at Pickering Nuclear, especially as we face the challenges of a pandemic. OPG has partnered with Bellwoods EHN Canada to help employees to develop skills to manage anxiety.
- Currently, 700 employees are working on-site at Pickering Nuclear; 600 are working from home. More essential workers, required to support increased work on site, will start returning to work in early June. The station is preparing work spaces and washrooms, so that physical distance can be maintained as more workers return to the site. Masks are available to all for close contact work and as a comfort for those who want to wear a mask at all times.

- The employees who have been working on-site since the beginning of the lockdown have grown accustomed to physical distance, regular handwashing and other safety measures. OPG will have to accustom those returning to the site to similar measures.
- The CAC's letter of appreciation to OPG staff was included in an email to all site employees. The letter talked about employees' contributions to addressing the COVID-19 challenge in the community and their continuing to provide safe and reliable energy to Ontario. There was a lot of employee feedback to the letter indicating how they felt appreciated by the Council.
- The Unit 1 outage is expected to be completed in June. As part of the Life Cycle Management program, we shifted the position of 160 fuel channels to ensure they remain on their bearing supports past the commercial operation of Pickering. This is expected work, because the fuel channels grow in length due to neutron absorption during normal operation. This work involves loosening the restraint hardware on the reactor face and then pushing the fuel channel to a pre-determined position to allow for further growth. This is some of the critical outage work required for longer term operation of Unit 1.
- Also, during the Unit 1 outage, a crack was found on one of the Low Pressure Turbine's support brackets, which are called trunnions. The turbine's steel casing is supported by four trunnions at each end and side. This crack had to be repaired prior to return to service. Staff created a 3D scan of the turbine which allowed them to perform assessments without taking components apart. This involved significant welding and heat treating which was innovative and world leading.
- A 21-day planned outage for Unit 8 had originally been scheduled for May but, at the request of the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), this outage took place ahead of time, in April, when there was less need for nuclear power due to lots of water bringing extra power to OPG's hydroelectric plants.
- As part of the "Fix the Plant" initiative, Pickering Nuclear continues to improve on its productivity. Since the beginning of 2020, the plant has produced 7.04 terawatt-hours of energy (a terawatt-hour (TWh) = 1 trillion watts for one hour). So the plant is on track for producing 21 TWh by year-end.
- As of May 19, Unit 4 has been in operation for 648 consecutive days, the second highest record in Pickering Nuclear's history. The highest record of continuous operation at the site, held by Unit 7, is 894 days.
- The plant's forced loss rate continues to be industry leading at less than one percent.

Dave Hardy congratulated Pickering Nuclear on its productivity achievements.

Mark responded to Council questions:

- *Is the spring Lake Ontario water level causing any problems?*
We are monitoring that situation. The water level hasn't risen yet. We anticipate that it won't be as high as two years ago.
- *Your report on the site is very positive.*
Inspiration for safe and efficient operation of the plant is building.

Topic #4: Deep Geologic Repository (DGR)

Fred Kuntz presented an update on the DGR for medium- and low-level nuclear waste (Appendix 1).

Fred presented an overview of nuclear waste management and lasting solutions for permanent disposal of nuclear waste.

He talked about OPG's "three pillars" of nuclear waste management: stewardship; lasting solutions; and peace of mind for the public.

He reviewed the three types of nuclear waste: low-level; intermediate level; and high-level. OPG's high-level waste (used fuel) is currently stored at each OPG-owned nuclear stations. Low- and intermediate-level waste (L&ILW) is currently stored at the Western Waste Management Facility, within the Bruce site.

OPG is committed to lasting solutions for nuclear waste:

- Used fuel is destined for a Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) for all of Canada, a plan being developed by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO).
- Up until this year, the plan for OPG's L&ILW was a separate proposed DGR at the Bruce Nuclear site in Kincardine. The proposed site is in the traditional territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON).

After 10 years of OPG engagement with the SON, members of that community voted overwhelmingly on Jan. 31, 2020 not to support OPG's DGR for low- and intermediate-level waste at the Bruce site. OPG is upholding its 2013 commitment not to construct the DGR without SON support.

OPG is now looking at several alternative solutions for L&ILW:

- Consider alternative locations for a DGR elsewhere in Ontario
- Explore developing a near-surface disposal facility for low-level waste only.
- Support an expected review of Canada's radioactive waste policy framework to see whether it identifies alternative solutions.

OPG is continuing its long-term focus on waste minimization, including the Three R's: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle.

COVID-19: PWMF Response

Pickering Nuclear stores used fuel bundles in on-site pools for up to 10 years, after which they are placed in robust concrete and steel Dry Storage Containers (DSCs) and transported to the nearby Pickering Waste Management Facility (PWMF), where the DSC's are processed and stored.

Jason Wight talked about the PWMF response to COVID-19. The PWMF is focusing on supporting the Pickering Nuclear goal of reducing the number of staff entering the protected area while maintaining the safety and reliability of the operating units. Jason noted that, in contrast with the nuclear plant, more of PWMF staff work with hand tools than with computers, which is a factor in organizing work from home measures.

On March 19, the PWMF placed Dry Storage Container processing on hiatus for four weeks, which limited the number of staff on site.

Preventative Maintenance staff completed critical work, even from home.

Other measures:

- Physical distancing
- Hand sanitizing dispensing
- Split crews for Operations and Maintenance – Crew A and B, one week on site / one week work from home
- Maximum of eight staff per shift
- No more than five people per meeting
- Lunch room modifications
- Added plastic screen partitions in the welding control room
- Virtual meetings

Jason quoted from OPG's "I Care" message to staff: "This is a historic time that will be remembered for generations. We are all in it together. Our greatest source of strength and support is sharing with and caring for each other."

Jason, Fred, and Mark Welt responded to Council questions:

- *Do you feel you are maintaining the same productivity within your group as you were before the pandemic?*

Jason: Yes, we are still managing to stay on top of our tasks within our productivity plans during these times.

- *Was the Saugeen Ojibway Nation response to the proposed DGR expected?*

Fred: There was a full spectrum of opinions in the SON community. There were those who objected to digging into Mother Earth. Some members of the

community actually work at the plant; they had a different perspective. We could see in advance that the vote wouldn't necessarily support the project. But whether we could predict or not, we were committed to not going ahead without SON support.

- *Is the NWMO facing similar problems with siting the DGR for high-level waste?*
Mark Welt: The NWMO still have two communities indicating interest in being a site for such a DGR. Those sites are further from the lake than the cancelled DGR for low- and intermediate-level waste in Kincardine. Though the Kincardine site's distance from the lake shouldn't matter, as that rock shield has been dry for millions of years. The success of DGR siting proposals remain to be seen, especially given the involvement of native communities.

Topic #5: Public and Community Affairs

Analièse St. Aubin, Manager of Corporate Relations and Communications at Pickering Nuclear, presented an update on OPG involvement in community affairs:

- Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, OPG/Pickering hasn't been able to run the usual community programs. However, the station has been able to provide emergency COVID funding to Windreach Farm, Carea Community Health Centre, Herizon House and Community Care Durham. Pickering Nuclear employee charity campaigns continue to help various organizations in the community, including a donation of 100 prepackaged meals from Milo's Greek Restaurant to Orchard Villa Retirement Residence. As well, Pickering Nuclear has delivered 6,000 masks to the Northumberland Hills Hospital for distribution to health care organizations in that region; 3,000 more masks remain to be delivered.
- Peregrine falcons have been nesting at the Pickering site since 2013. If the nesting pair is observed this year, OPG will implement strategies to protect the nest.
- As part of the Bring Back the Salmon program, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters picked up 97 salmon fry from the tank at the Pickering Information Centre and released them into Duffins Creek. Darlington also had a successful program, with 99 fry being released into the creek.
- OPG is working with community partners to move Tuesdays on the Trail to a virtual platform.

During Analièse's update, two Council members sent text comments:

- “I got a letter from Ontario Tech University talking about the joint project they have been working on with OPG for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) manufacturing.”
- “Yes! (as a student) I've been getting updates on the use of the 3D printers on campus for face-shield making as well. And a ventilator prototype made of 3D printed parts.”

Topic #6: CNSC News

For selected news items from the CNSC, please see Appendix 2.

**Next Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2020
(whether virtual or in person TBA)**