Notes from EJ Task Force Mtg 5/18 (DRAFT writeup 5-19-2016)

Disclaimer – This is not a transcript, but a rough summary in which I paraphrased and condensed.

Summary of concerns:

- Because Tetra Tech falsified samples, we don't trust that we are safe.
- EPA and DTSC should do criminal investigations.
- EPA should collect samples independent of Navy, and they should be underground, not just surface
- Radioactive material could be going to the landfills in Buttonwillow and Kettleman City, both EJ communities
- The Navy should come back to the EJ Task Force Meetings and answer questions
- Treasure Island is related to Hunters Point and the EJ Task Force should also address Treasure Island problems.
- The Navy should bring back the RAB

Details:

Tall thin man (I forgot his name) – Roger, what is DTSC doing about the Shipyard contamination? We can't trust the samples, and people's lives matter.

Michael Dennis – This is criminal, and DTSC should be investigating.

Roger Kintz – I don't believe the DTSC is doing a criminal investigation, but we have a staff person working on the Shipyard with EPA to oversee the Navy

DRAFT

Lily Lee – The Navy is the lead on the cleanup. EPA and DTSC oversee the cleanup. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Navy and other agencies are doing investigations. Enforcement mattes such as this are confidential. But in the mean time, in my role and the role of the DTSC, our priority is making sure that people are not exposed to anything harmful.

The Navy caught the Tetra Tech problem. Tetra Tech went back to dig out the samples that looked like they could have been collected incorrectly while they Navy watched. Then they dug out, did more cleanup, in three areas where contamination was higher that what the results before had shown. The EPA and DTSC, and California Department of Public Health reviewed the corrective actions taken.

In addition, we have been looking at multiple lines of evidence, data collected by people other than Tetra Tech, to see if people are exposed. EPA did a surface scan all over the base, and I gave those results to Marie. I have a copy here too. It showed no levels above the surface that should be a health concern. Also the Water Board looked at groundwater data, after Marie asked about it. They found no levels of radiation that were a health concern, except in one area that has not yet been cleaned up.

Tony Verreos – The Navy said that investigations are happening and they can't tell us anything, and I understand that. But that is very frustrating that it seems as if they're not doing anything in the mean time. I know that the Navy is doing investigation, but I hope you understand that it would make us feel a lot better if we knew that the EPA is doing a criminal investigation and working with the Navy.

Lily Lee – I can neither confirm nor deny whether EPA is doing a criminal investigation or not. I'm sorry I understand that it must be frustrating to you to not get more information. But enforcement matters

are confidential to avoid compromising the integrity of any investigations. Enforcement is a different part of my office. But in my role, I am looking at protecting human health and the environment. So that is why we are looking at multiple lines of evidence.

Marie Harrison – I have asked for and I'm still waiting for the report on EPA's sampling. I don't mean looking at paper documents, I mean digging into the ground. Also, we gave the Navy Dan Hirsch's presentation. When will the Navy meet with us again? That is very important. They need to answer the questions from the students. I'm very concerned about contamination getting to Buttonwillow and Kettleman City. These are small and poor communities where farmworkers may not speak English and they may not be protected.

Lily Lee – The EPA has not collected its own samples. But Tetra Tech did look at 87,360 samples, the Navy checked to see which ones looked like they might have come from the wrong place, and they watched while Tetra Tech went back to collect the samples again at 386 places. And then Tetra Tech cleaned up more. I gave you the report about the scan survey.

Tony Verreos – But if Tetra Tech left contamination buried, your scanning above the ground would not be able to catch that right?

Lily Lee – Yes, you are right. I didn't mean to imply that the surface scan could tell what was left deeper underground. But it is an indicator that if people are walking around above ground, they are not exposed to harmful radiation.

About the students, EPA reviews all of the individual Navy radiation cleanup reports using the latest version of the EPA's risk model. These use the latest science to make sure people are safe. I had explained this to the students in several emails, which I have printed out here if you want to see.

Who? Was it Tony Verreos? – What about those old numbers the students showed?

Lily Lee – The students did show some old numbers, but what I had told them several times is that EPA does use the latest version of our risk models to review every cleanup report. I gave them examples of EPA's reviews. I have a copy here if anyone wants to see it.

Carol Harvey – Wait- I'm confused, did you say the students' results are wrong? Or the Tetra Tech results are wrong?

Lily Lee – Tetra Tech's results were wrong, so they went back to fix it.

Tall thin man – It's people's lives that matter. So many people have cancer. Children have small bodies and can be hurt more. Elderly people also could be hurt more. People's lives matter. That's why I come to these meetings.

Lily Lee – I agree, and that's why our scientist take into account children, seniors, and people with compromised immune systems when making sure the cleanup is done at a level to protect them. And that's why I have come to every single meeting of the EJ Task Force.

Mr. McCarthy – I used to be on the RAB and that was an important way to get into these details and the data. I've been looking at these issues since the 1990's, and I think this problem is coming out now because of what I said back then. The Navy didn't dig deep enough. They did an HRA [Health Risk Assessment]. I don't know if they really cleaned up everything in the HRA. We should bring back the

RAB

Carol Harvey – It was illegal that the Navy dissolved the RAB. They shouldn't have been allowed to do that.

Lily Lee – Mr. McCarthy, I know we've talked a long time about your concerns on the phone before, so I know you know my phone number, and I'm happy to show you the data about the cleanup and how it relates to the HRA.

Carol Harvey – It was illegal to dissolve the RAB. Treasure Island is very important. The problems are related to Hunters Point.

Marie Harrison – In my heart I know that Treasure Island is connected to Hunters Point and I feel for the people there. I think it's very important to connect the concerns of Treasure Island to the concerns of Hunters Point. Both are the Navy. The Navy needs to come back and answer our concerns.

Carol Harvey – Marie, I know you've been wonderfully supportive. I didn't mean to say that you're not. I just wanted to say that the Treasure Island problems are important. This is a great forum to talk about these issues. I think we should talk about Treasure Island here.

Etecia Brown – I need to make a statement, not necessarily ask a question. You don't live here. I live here, and my parents and grandparents lived here. My family members have gotten cancer. I want to raise my children here, and I want my grandchildren to live here. And they should be safe. This is not a personal comment about any individual, but about government in general. You are just coming to these meetings because it's your job. Not because you could possibly know what it feels like to live here. You have to really care about this community. It's our health and our lives.

DRAFT

Marie Harrison - We're running out of time, we need the Navy to come back so we can talk about this some more and they can answer the questions. We've got to end this meeting on time. Are there any topics for the next agenda?

After the Meeting, individual conversations:

Michael Dennis – The landfill fire burned for a long time. They couldn't put it out until they built another cap. It's because of all toxics that are still buried there. This was the biggest national radiation test site in the country. Dead radioactive animals and other things are buried there. The Navy did not take samples in the middle. The Navy told me confidentially that it's because they're afraid of what they might find. You need to dig it all out and take it to Idaho.

Lily Lee – The Navy has already put 4 feet of clean fill and other cover on that section of the landfill. The plan is to add 2 more layers.

Michael Dennis – Earthquakes will tear apart the landfill. You need to dig it all out. The Navy did not want to dig it out because they have secretly estimated the cost and they don't want to pay.

Lily Lee – The landfill is designed to withstand a 8.0 earthquake. The costs are in the public document. The Navy did not want to have to dig all this out and haul the waste through the neighborhood and end up disposing of it in another neighborhood because it just moves the same problem to another place.

Barbara? - I need the contact people for Treasure Island at the EPA. The Navy at Treasure Island is not

really engaging communities. Not like here at the EJ Task Force. This is much better.

Lily Lee and Deldi Reyes – The DTSC is the lead at Treasure Island, not EPA. We'll find the right person for you to contact.

Barbara – If the EPA is in charge at Hunters Pt, why shouldn't it also be in charge at Treasure Island? Isn't Hunters Pt called Treasure Island Annex? I know Nathan Schumacher, is he the person you would give me to contact?

Mr. McCarthy – I want your card.

Lily Lee – Here's my card. I know we talked before. I'm still at the same number, and you can call me any time. Also the Navy has regular community meetings that we advertise at EJ Task Force Meetings. You could come to those meetings are ask all your questions there too.

Mr. McCarthy – Yes, well, I haven't made it to those meetings lately. I've been busy with election work. This election is terrible. . .

Carol Harvey – Thank you for explaining things to us. You were very clear.

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