

CITY OF  
**BENSON** MINNESOTA  
CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

**Minutes**  
**Citizens Advisory Panel**  
**March 26, 2002**

Members present: Allen Saunders, Carolyn Lee, Brian McNeill, Leroy Noreen, Bruce Holgate, Ray Millett, Barry Jungwirth, and Jan Lundebrek  
Members absent: Renee Hayden, Lynette Hofland, Steve Verhelst, and Bill Lee  
Present:  
City: Mayor Paul Kittelson; Council Members Sue Fitz, Lee Westrum, and Bob Claussen; City Manager Rob Wolfington; Finance Director Glen Pederson; Public Works Director Bob Flaws; and Marge Scheffler  
Fibrowatt: Carl Strickler, Anne Donato, and Greg Langmo  
SNC: Nigel Ratledge  
Other: Wayne Poirier

**The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Kittelson.**

City Manager Rob Wolfington introduced Nigel Ratledge, Sr. Vice-President of SNC- Lavalin Group who will be the project director, and Carl Strickler, Vice-President of Fibrominn.

Carl Strickler announced that Fibrominn has entered into a memorandum of understanding with SNC to be the general contractor for the Fibrominn project. SNC is a Canadian based engineering and construction company. Mr. Strickler also informed those present that the air permit is the last permit to obtain and it is proceeding slowly.

**The meeting was opened for questions and comments.**

Mayor Kittelson informed those present that they had met earlier in the day with representatives from the buildings trades. SNC will be subcontracting with contractors who will seek laborers through the building trades. The building trades will try to obtain workers within a close proximity of Benson as possible.

Ray Millett inquired about timing for the air permit approval from the State? (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency). Carl Strickler said Fibrominn is making progress and getting very close to the public comment period.

Allen Saunders asked Nigel Ratledge why SNC is interested in this project? Mr. Ratledge responded that SNC has a lot of experience in coal fired projects and other biomass projects.

# CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

SNC-Lavalin feels that this project is a new challenge as they haven't built a poultry fueled power plant before. They feel there is quite a market for this type of project.

Member Fitz asked how long the project will take from start to finish? Mr. Ratledge said it will take about two years.

Member Fitz asked how many workers will be on the site at any given time? Mr. Ratledge said 300 to 400 construction workers will be working at the project site (at the peak of construction).

Wayne Poirier asked how localized the public comment period for the air permit will be. Carl Strickler said as he understands it they usually put a notice about the air permit into a newspaper of general circulation near the site. He wasn't sure about publication in the metro papers. He assured everyone that Fibrominn has every intent to make sure the community is well informed. The MPCA public hearing for the Fibrominn project will be held in Benson.

Allen Saunders asked if it is necessary for Fibrominn as a group to respond to the comments and questions during the public comment period for the air permit. Carl Strickler said that the comments will go directly to the MPCA for their response. The MPCA may in turn ask Fibrominn for some additional input.

City Manager Rob Wolfington mentioned that he read an editorial from the Duluth News Tribune about Governor Ventura's proposed stadium plan and found a lot of similarities between the financing plan for the stadium and the Fibrominn project.

Ray Millett asked city officials whether the City as a government entity has a buy American requirement for Fibrominn? Mayor Kittelson responded he doesn't believe so. Carl Strickler said that Fibrominn will buy as much locally as is possible, but there are certain specialized technologies and equipment may need to be resourced outside elsewhere.

Bruce Holgate asked Nigel Ratledge how many other projects in Minnesota has SNC done? Mr. Ratledge said this is their first project in Minnesota. (SNC-Lavalin is the largest contractor in Canada, with considerable experience in the U.S. and overseas.)

Finance Director Glen Pederson inquired about whether the delays in the project affect Fibrominn's agreement with Excel? Carl Strickler responded by saying Fibrominn is still comfortably within the contract requirements. Fibrominn has talked with Excel and they understand the situation. He doesn't see a problem with this.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.