NAS Jacksonville Town Meeting, taken on Tuesday, August 8, 1996, commencing from 7 p.m. to 7:40 p.m., at the Orange Park Holiday Inn Hotel, Orange Park, Florida, before Marlene M. Thompson, Registered Professional Reporter, Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large.

SPEAKERS:

WILLIAM DOUGHERTY, Installation Restoration Public Affairs Officer.

CAPTAIN ROBERT D. WHITMIRE, Commanding Officer, NAS Jacksonville.

DIANE LANCASTER, Installation Restoration Program Manager.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

August 8, 1996 7 p.m.

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MR. DOUGHERTY: Good evening. My name is Bill Dougherty. I'm the Installation Restoration Public Affairs Officer. That's a big mouthful, but what I do is I am involved in community relations and helping out with areas such as public meetings and making sure we do what we can to help you, the public, understand and get the information about our cleanup activities at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

I want to welcome you all to our public meeting tonight. Our meeting is on the record. We will have a transcript of everything discussed this evening, and that transcript will be available at our Information Repository, which is at the Webb Wesconnett Branch Library of the Jacksonville Public Library on 103rd Street. Look for that in approximately four weeks.

We have some handouts for you tonight. The first is our agenda and you should have that on your chair, and it tells you what we're going to be talking about tonight. And then on the back

of that is a map. That map will show you the location. The shaded area down on the bottom here is OU1, okay, and you will see the markings of all the other sites on the installation.

Another handout that you have is an acronym sheet. Now, we'll try not to use too many acronyms tonight, but in the environmental business that's something that we have to deal with on a regular basis, and so that's why we have this acronym sheet for you to refer to to help you understand the technical terms that we're using.

On the back is a little place for you to take notes. That's what I'd like to recommend you do. Go ahead and jot down notes for yourself as we go through the evening so that you'll have those notes available to you when we reach the comment period.

Our fact sheet gives you a breakdown of what the proposed plan is about. The alternatives that we looked at, the preferred alternative, it has a lot of good information in there regarding the cleanup of OU1. I recommend you all pick one up so you can take that with you, okay, and to refer to at your leisure.

We also have comment forms tonight. Because this is a public meeting, we are in a public comment period. This is your opportunity as a community to go ahead and comment on the proposed plan and on the cleanup alternative that we have chosen. It's a very simple form. You can go ahead and just put in your comments in there. On the back, all you have to do is fold it and put a stamp on it, if you want to mail it, or you can drop it off to us tonight, if you want to fill it out and leave it with us tonight. Any way you'd like to do that, we're more than happy to receive your comments.

Our presentation tonight is going to be about 20 to 25 minutes, and then we're going to go into the public comment period. Just a few notes before we get started. Like I said, please go ahead and take those notes while we're going through the presentation. We would like you to hold your comments until the comment period. Once we get done with the presentation then we'll open everything up.

And during that comment period, if I could ask you to please raise your hand, we'll call on you, we will go around the room, and I ask that

if you have a comment, you make one comment, one follow-up comment, and then if there are no other folks after that, we'll come back to you and make sure we get around the room. We should have plenty of time since our comment period is going to be almost 90 minutes long. We can get back to you and let you have additional comments if you need to.

Our meeting will run from now until 9 p.m., and as I said, you can submit those written comments, and we will take those written comments until 3 p.m. on Saturday, September the 7th, which is the end of the public comment period.

Okay. Are we all in agreement with tonight's guidelines for our meeting? All right. Thank you very much.

At this time I would like to introduce Captain Robert D. Whitmire. He is our commanding officer. He is a graduate of the Naval Academy and is very familiar with the Jacksonville area. As a naval aviator, he has flown with three Jacksonville squadrons and returned to the First Coast to assume his current position. Captain Whitmire.

CAPT. WHITMIRE: Thanks, Bill, and good evening to everybody. I'm Captain Bob Whitmire. I am the Commanding Officer at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, and I'd like to add my welcome to this public meeting this evening. I want to tell you that we're excited about the progress we've made so far in cleaning up and making plans to clean up Operable Unit One, which is commonly referred to as OU1 at the Naval Air Station.

There are some posters out on the back that are available that you should look at before you leave this evening that show the restoration process and the steps that we have taken to get where we are today.

Before I go any further, I would like to recognize a few people who have been key so far to the steps we have taken, and they'll provide points of contact for you if you have any questions about the cleanup activity we have at NAS Jacksonville.

I am going to ask you to stand when I call you so everybody can recognize who you are. First, Diane Lancaster. Diane is the Installation Restoration Manager at NAS

Jacksonville, and she is also the co-chair for our Restoration Advisory Board, which, as many of you know, is the board that meets monthly to go over these issues.

Margo Latham. Thanks, Margo. Margo is the community co-chair. She is the other side representing the community. And while I've got Margo here, I'd like to ask, without embarrassing anybody, the members in the room that are members of the RAB, the Restoration Advisory Board, if you'd stand just so people can see who you are in case they have any questions. Curtis, you can stand.

Those are some of the members of the Restoration Advisory Board that meet monthly and I attend those meetings as well, and they are very familiar with the program we have going tonight. And if you have any questions about the Restoration Advisory Board, I would like you to direct them to Margo Latham, and she can assist you in answering questions and maybe even solicit your participation in the Restoration Advisory Board after tonight's meeting.

Next, Dana Gaskins. Dana is from Southern Division, Naval Engineering Facilities Command

up in Charleston. He is a representative down here, and he is a focal point for anything that has anything to do with contracts or money. An important guy to have with us.

Jorge Caspary. He didn't make it tonight? Okay. Jorge is from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection over in Tallahassee, and he has been working closely with the RAB.

Martha Berry? Martha is from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV, up in Atlanta, Georgia. Thanks for being here, Martha.

And then Bill Dougherty you have already met. Bill is important because he is our public affairs officer and deals with all the community relations, and he is the guy that can put you in contact with whoever you need to know. So if you have a question that you're not sure where it goes, speak to Bill, he can find out how to do it. And he is right there in our public affairs office.

Okay. Now that the amenities are complete, I'd like to go ahead and proceed and get on with the reason we're here tonight and that's the topic of Operable Unit One, which we'll refer to

as OU1.

These people that I just introduced, along with two companies, ABB Environmental Services and Bechtel Environmental, make up the partnership that's been formed that's going to produce this plan that we're going to use to clean up the site, and from my vantage point they have done a great job, put in a lot of effort and everything and it's really a tremendous effort they have put forth, so my hat's off to those folks.

This has been a rewarding experience for me because after this process is completed, I'll get to sign what they call a Record of Decision, first one for NAS Jacksonville, and that's going to take us from the period where we've been studying it and analyzing it and arguing about which is the best way to go, and we'll actually put a design into effect and come up with a plan of action. We'll actually start doing some cleanup and any actual work that needs to be done on the site at OU1. So this is a really important thing to get this Record of Decision signed.

And I want to tell you that I live right on

the base with my wife and children, and I'm going to be here for a couple more years. I am one year into a three-year tour, and I have a personal interest in making sure that this is done properly. I follow it very closely, which is why I go to a lot of these meetings and why I'm out here tonight. I think this is a really important step forward. I think it's going to be a great success story for the Navy to do this properly.

You, the community, plays an important role throughout this process and you're represented by the Restoration Advisory Board members. They are the ones that represent you. I'd encourage you, if you have an interest in this, to come participate. Not only do you get to get involved in the decisions, but you really learn a lot about things that most of us don't get exposed to. So there is some good things to learn. These people play an important role, and I want to encourage you to ask them questions, if you have anything, up through the end of this comment period which ends on September 7th at 3 p.m., which is a Saturday, and Bill has already addressed that.

Tonight the whole purpose of this meeting is to give you a presentation to describe where we are, but the real purpose is to solicit your input and to get your comments. We really are very open and receptive to anything you have to say because we want to make sure that this is a team effort and do this thing properly. The meeting is for you. Your opinion counts.

And the other thing that I have a personal concern with is that we're going to spend a lot of money to do this and it's a lot of tax dollars. Just like you, even though I'm in uniform, I am a taxpayer. I pay a lot of taxes and I don't like to see taxes wasted any more than you do. And I spend all my days -- there are 20,000 people at that base, and I spend all day long trying to find ways to do things more efficiently to save money, because I don't like paying taxes any more than you do. And here is another opportunity to do things smart and get the most bang for the buck. I think that's important to keep in mind because we want everybody to benefit from this.

Please feel free to ask questions at the end of the presentation. We have a lot of

technical experts here that can answer your questions. If they're not clear, keep asking. We'll get you an answer and put it into terms that you can understand. And I'm one of those people that has to ask a question a lot of times because some of this stuff is a little more technical than I'm used to dealing with. I'm a pilot. I'm used to pulling back and the ground gets smaller, pushing forward and the ground gets bigger. I got that down, but some of this stuff gets pretty technical when you start talking parts per million and parts per billion, so don't be embarrassed if you have questions because I guarantee they've all been asked before and you need to understand it.

So I'm really glad you joined us tonight. I really want to thank you personally for being here. At this time I am going to sit down. That's the best part of my speech. And I'm going to turn it over to Diane, and Diane Lancaster will proceed with the meat of the presentation.

MS. LANCASTER: Thank you, Captain. Good evening, and thank you for being here. As Captain Whitmire, Bill Dougherty already said,

the purpose of this evening's meeting is to allow you an opportunity to comment on the proposed alternative to Operable Unit One or commonly known as the Child Street Landfill.

The key points that I am going to present tonight are four. The Installation Restoration program, a brief history of OU1, the preferred alternative, and the benefits of the preferred alternative we selected.

The Installation Restoration program follows the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act, otherwise known as CERCLA or Superfund. The team works together under the Federal Facilities Agreement, and this team is composed of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, FDEP, and the Navy.

The overview of the program is, a preliminary assessment is conducted doing a records review and interviews to determine any sites that may have had anything disposed on them. A site inspection is conducted to determine whether further investigation is needed. Remedial investigation is collecting

samples and determining what, where and how much contamination is present at the site. And then a risk assessment is conducted to define the risk to humans and animals in the environment.

A feasibility study evaluates methods for cleaning up the site, and a proposed plan describes alternatives considered and outlines the preferred alternative.

A public comment period, which is where we currently are, allows you, the public, to review and provide comments about the results of studies, and a Record of Decision documents the selected cleanup method to be implemented, while the remedial design and remedial action design and build the selected cleanup alternative.

The history of Operable Unit One. It's composed of two potential sources of contamination or PSCs. PSC 26 is the Old Main Registered Landfill or disposal area. It's about 40 acres, and it was used for the disposal of discarded vehicles, household and sanitary wastes. Liquid industrial wastes were disposed in the pits that are outlined on the overhead. Demolition and construction debris and low level radioactive waste such as radium 226 and 228

were also disposed in this landfill. It was closed in 1978 when light nonaqueous-phase liquid, or LNAPL, was discovered floating in the water. LNAPL is a mixture of oils that basically float on water, and that's a common acronym that we use frequently in this program.

PSC 27 is the former transformer storage area. It's less than one acre, and due to vandalism in 1978, transformer oil containing polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs were spilled in this area. The transformers in the contaminated soil were excavated or dug up and disposed off site, and we're still continuing to make sure that that poses no problems.

In the past, in 1983, we did an initial removal action, and this was due to the LNAPL that we found floating on the water. We dug underground trenches to allow the LNAPL and water to collect in a series of ditches. And the skimmer system collected the LNAPL from the surface of the water. The water did not meet the USEPA's discharge standards, however, so earthen dams were constructed to block the water, and the system was shut down.

Then again in 1994, we did an interim

remedial action and we had a public meeting for that also. We conducted a focused remedial investigation and feasibility study where we found PCB contaminated oil was floating on the watertable. Trenches were then constructed to collect the water and LNAPL and pumps were installed which continue to collect the LNAPL from the surface of the groundwater.

The LNAPL, or the oil, is stored on site prior to disposal off site and we keep track of that. The system may be upgraded if the current system no longer effectively removes the LNAPL from the surface of the groundwater.

Low level radiation was also disposed on the landfill where it had been removed from PSC 13 at NADEP, and on your map on the opposite side of your agenda you can find PSC 13 toward the water around NADEP. This was a disposal site where the radium paint that had been used to paint dials in World War II had been disposed in a pit. We dug that up and consolidated that on OU1.

Also on PSC 18 around Mulberry Cove we had some sandblasting material that we collected. That had naturally occurring radioactive

material that is often found in granite and sand, and we dug that up and also put that on the landfill.

In addition, when we were constructing the LNAPL recovery system north of Child Street, we encountered some radioactive paint that had been disposed there, and we collected that and disposed it on the landfill.

Various studies that were conducted as a part of our investigation include a geophysical survey to determine where all the landfill debris was buried, a radiological survey to determine where the low level radioactive material is, and monitoring wells were installed to determine the type and extent of any contamination on the watertable. Chemical testing of soil, watertable, surface water in ditches and streams, and sediment from muds were also conducted.

As a result, after studying the landfill we found pesticides, PCBs, solvents and heavy metals in the soil, groundwater and sediment.

Next we determined the risk to people in the environment. And after this determination we developed five alternatives to address the

contamination. After thorough discussions with EPA, DEP and the Restoration Advisory Board, we chose alternative three. And you can see there the various alternatives, the different costs, and the different time frames. They're also on the boards outside the room for further study.

The presumptive remedy used for landfills is what we decided to go with. A presumptive remedy is an EPA-identified cleanup method as a preferred method for landfills: Cover the landfill, and then clean up the groundwater because it does not make sense to dig up a landfill and go put it in another landfill.

So all of our alternatives include a cap and cover. This cap is a 30 mil, basically a plastic liner, which will cover the low level radioactive material, and I have samples of what a 30 mil liner is like, a couple of different types of textures that could be used in the design.

On top of that liner and over the rest of the landfill will be 18 inches of soil which will be graded, and on top of that an additional six inches of soil to allow the growth of small plants and grass and to reduce the erosion.

The components of alternative three are to collect the soil outside the landfill and the sediments and muds in the streams that will be dug up and placed on the landfill prior to covering it. A cap and cover system will be installed, and the contamination in the groundwater will be allowed to break down naturally, which is already occurring. It will be assisted by natural flushing with rain, and the water will be monitored to check the process. If the process is not working right, carbon and nutrients will be added to help the bacteria break down the contaminants. We also have a contingency plan to collect water in the stream if contaminant levels begin to reach preset levels.

Alternative three effectively reduces the risk. The estimated time is 30 years. The estimated cost is $4.2 million. And if we have to incorporate some contingencies, the cost will increase to $7.3 million.

On the slide, you will be able to tell -- to the side of the landfill -- I'll do this, I'll point it out. These are areas here that will be excavated from outside the landfill.

They include the area that is in the LNAPL removal area and outside base housing and in the weapons area. Also, the sediments in the stream that goes here, down there and up in the ditch by the LNAPL area are the sediments that are going to be dug up. The groundwater is under here, and that's the groundwater that we will be monitoring.

The benefit of alternative three is that it's the best balance among the three components of risk reduction, cleanup time, and cost. It allows five years of monitoring prior to adding the nutrients so we can do evaluation of the natural remediation, and it is preferred by the Navy, EPA, FDEP and the Restoration Advisory Board.

In summary, I discussed the IR process where we're at; the public comment period; a site history; where the soil, sediment and groundwater contamination is; the preferred alternative, alternative three, which is to dig up the soil and sediment outside the landfill; cap and cover the landfill; and monitor the groundwater; and their benefits, which is the best balance of our constraints, and it's

preferred by all parties: Navy, FDEP, EPA and the RAB.

Our public comment period, as was expressed, is until September 7, 1996, and comments from tonight will be recorded and responses will be documented in the Record of Decision. The preparation of the Record of Decision may be delayed due to concerns by the state of Florida for future land use. When resolved, the Record of Decision or ROD will be signed by Captain Whitmire with written concurrence by EPA and FDEP.

At this point this concludes my presentation, and I'd like to turn the podium over to Bill Dougherty.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay. That is the 20 to 25 minutes of the presentation that we were telling you about. Now we are at the comment period. This is the opportunity for you, the public, to make your comments.

Now, the way we discussed it earlier, there are several ways you can make your comments. If anyone would like to make a comment, please raise your hand, we will address you, and you can step up to the microphone and make your

comment. It will be included in the public record. If you would prefer to make written comments, we have written comment forms available.

Are there any comments that want to be made at this time?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Raises hand.)

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes, sir, if you could identify yourself for the public record, sir.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I am [name], interested citizen.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Yes, sir.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Am I limited to one question, a follow-up as --

MR. DOUGHERTY: One follow-up, please, sir.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The PCBs from the transformer -- I understand you dug up the transformers, but there was leakage on the PCBs and is it still there?

MR. DOUGHERTY: Diane?

MS. LANCASTER: From the transformer area, that soil was dug up and removed, but throughout the whole landfill we found evidence of PCBs being dumped, so there are PCBs still in the groundwater.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The question in regard to the environmental people agreeing, they agreed to the alternative that you have laid out. Did they qualify their agreement?

MS. LANCASTER: As far as?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: As this being a satisfactory process --

MS. LANCASTER: Yes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: -- or does it have to be tested over a number of years?

MS. LANCASTER: This process, the alternative -- or the way the cleanup will happen under CERCLA is that it is monitored every five years for up to 30 years or longer.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: But the environmental people have accepted this process as being acceptable as opposed to digging it up and hauling it somewhere else?

MS. LANCASTER: Yes, sir. Actually, that's preferred by the EPA.

And, Martha, would you like to address that?

MS. BERRY: EPA has a policy in CERCLA cleanups as far as landfills that it's preferred to leave it in place because it is not thought

to be environmentally sensible, if you will, not to mention cost effective. To essentially move landfills from one landfill, you'd essentially be moving it to another landfill.

So instead, the preferred approach to a landfill, which tends to be huge and would be extremely costly to dig up with somewhat minimal or very minimal improvement to the environment is to control exposure by capping and other land use restrictions to control any migration. If there is migration, through the groundwater, as is the case here, or if there was, it's not the case here, but in other landfills there might be air pathways that need to be addressed and that type of thing.

So that's EPA's preferred method of addressing landfill issues under Superfund.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I understand the economics, but do you agree or do you accept the fact that there has been no seepage that was dumped into the aquifer to the point that the groundwater is damaged, wells are damaged at all?

MS. BERRY: There is groundwater contamination and part of our remedy, the

preferred remedy, and that's certainly not the selected remedy until after the public comment period, but it does address the groundwater initially through natural attenuation, but if that does not work over time -- and that will be monitored over the first five years. If that does not appear to be proceeding quickly enough, then nutrients will be added to the groundwater to accelerate the bioremediation.

So the intent is at the end of the 30-year period that the groundwater will meet all EPA and FDEP groundwater standards.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: If we don't have salt water intrusion by that time? Okay. Thank you.

MS. BERRY: Thank you.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Just as an elaboration, so you understand, regarding the bioremediation that Diane talked about, that bacteria that breaks down -- the bacteria breaks down contaminants, correct?

MS. BERRY: (Nods head.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Does it work on PCBs?

MS. LANCASTER: Yes, it does. In addition, I heard a concern that you may be concerned that some drinking wells may be affected. There are

no drinking wells in this area.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay. Are there any other comments that anyone would like to make?

THE AUDIENCE: (No response.)

MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay. Since we have no other comments, sir, if you had any additional comments you would like to make, you can feel free to make them at this time. We want to make sure that your concerns are addressed.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: This type of oversight and corrective action has been going on for quite some time or has been attempted for quite some time. How long has the Navy, NAS Jax, been looking after this as far as digging up the transformers, removing those? How long has that been going -- how long have they been after the environmental control aspects of this as opposed to reaching this point of decision?

MS. LANCASTER: In '78 is when the vandalism was discovered, and that's when the transformers in the soil were excavated and dug up.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Otherwise it was just dumped, being added to it?

MS. LANCASTER: Yes, sir. It was closed in

'78.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Where has the material been going since that time?

MS. LANCASTER: We have a contract with the city landfill and all of our contractors dispose our trash via the city landfill, which is out at Trail Ridge.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. It's going there now --

MS. LANCASTER: Yes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: -- without regard to what it is?

MS. LANCASTER: No, sir. We are very, very careful. We do not send any hazardous waste, we have a very strict hazardous waste program on board.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: And that is hauled where?

MS. LANCASTER: That hazardous waste is collected and inspected pretty regularly, by the way, by the state and EPA. And it is collected. We have a permanent storage area, and from there is disposed through the Defense Logistics Agency through their contractors. They inspect their contractors to make sure that

it is going to appropriate places.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: That does not include the runoff from the Tarmac for aircraft where they scrub down aircraft and it drains into the river?

MS. LANCASTER: The actual washing of the aircraft and the outside of the aircraft is done on the aircraft wash rack. We have identified another waste stream and that is currently being collected.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay.

MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay. We appreciate the interest and we would like to invite you to our Restoration Advisory Board meetings. We have it at the Timucuan Elementary School. It's on 110th Street. It meets the third Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. We'd love to have you out there, because we discuss these issues all the time, address your concerns, and you can see all the types of activities that we're involved in. There's a lot more activity. It's not just OU1. There is lots of different areas that we're working on around the base, and you can keep up to date every month on exactly what we're doing. And we'd like to have you there

any time you'd like to come.

Are there any other comments?

THE AUDIENCE: (No response.)

MR. DOUGHERTY: Okay. If there are no further oral comments, if anyone wants to make written comments, the forms are available. Other than that, that concludes our meeting.

Oh, yes. Please have some cookies and coffee and I guess that's iced tea back there. We encourage you to have some snacks and drinks on your way out. Thank you all for coming. We will be here, if anyone has anything, any other questions while you're snacking, we will be here to answer your questions.

(The proceedings were concluded at 7:35 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA:

COUNTY OF DUVAL :

I, Marlene M. Thompson, Registered Professional Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 12th day of August, 1996.

Marlene M. Thompson, RPR