

August 21, 2014

TVA Board of Directors  
Chairman Joe Ritch  
William B. Sansom      Marilyn A. Brown  
Barbara S. Haskew      Richard Howorth  
Lynn Evans              Peter Mahurin  
Michael McWherter  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
[board@tva.gov](mailto:board@tva.gov)

Re: TVA Directors' Choices

Dear Directors:

First, I would like to thank TVA for inviting knowledgeable nuclear activist citizens onto your Watts Bar Citizen Action Panel, such as David Lochbaum, Don Safer and Brian Paddock (in addition to your including me on the panel); and to thank you for the extraordinary tour of Watts Bar II before the reactor assembly was complete. It was an exciting tour which shed new light on many safety control factors and levels of necessary redundancy and backup, as well as the graphic immensity of the Watts Bar II project. We are grateful for the opportunity to exchange information in depth on the panel, and we commend the board and CEO Johnson for the newly implemented programs of more open communications with citizens living near TVA power plants. We hope this proves to be an enduring legacy.

Grateful as we are for the move towards transparency, we will continue to ask this board to reconsider your push for more nuclear power in the Tennessee Valley, as long as ionizing radiation remains an unhealthy toxin for people and our biosphere.

Last quarter (5/8/14) we wrote asking the TVA Board to lead the nation towards truthfully clean energy independence through Energy Efficiency (EE) and Renewable programs, and we provided multiple recent financial and environmental studies showing the cost and health benefits for TVA and your customers. We also reminded you of the highly successful program that TVA implemented decades ago under former Chairman David Freeman's leadership, and asked that you 1.) reactivate that program, 2.) add Co-Generation savings using Combined Heat to Power (CHP) units at your power plants, 3.) upgrade your hydro-generation, and 4.) aggressively lead us into the future of energy with Renewable and Sustainable technologies – technologies that do not pollute our valley. Again, we called on you to lead the nation in producing truthfully clean electricity and achieving safe energy independence for America.

Unfortunately, you have responded in your quarterly board meeting today with words of praise for Energy Efficiency, but with acts that contradict your words. There appears to be an odd pact among this board to only vote unanimously for anything you review that calls for a vote. At least for the public showing of your vote process, you rarely ask penetrating questions, and even if you do question or object, you still vote for something with which you may in good conscience actually disagree. You are appointed by the President of the United States because of your knowledge and intelligence. We ask that you use those qualities to vote as qualified independent thinkers, able to assess and discuss information, and to vote according to your own analysis in reaching a majority (not unanimous) vote on goals, plans and policies to guide the TVA executive staff "for the benefit of the people of the valley."

You voted unanimously today to reduce your investment in Energy Efficiency by 25% in next year's budget (which is frankly shameful in this day and age), and to also once again increase the rates your TVA customers will be paying. Everyone knows that Energy Efficiency saves customers money, improves their homes, buildings and factories, and creates many more jobs; so why do you contradict your words of caring about the TVA mission for the people and businesses of the valley with your acts of extremely expensive nuclear expansion?

As shown in our last letter, Energy Efficiency is seven times more cost-effective than nuclear power, and does not produce nuclear waste that remains dangerous for thousands of years. TVA's nuclear power construction has driven TVA into serious financial difficulties, yet you continue to expand TVA's nuclear programs, instead of investing in non-polluting, inexpensive and highly beneficial Energy Efficiency programs? Why this contradiction between words and action? Do you think that just saying you support something, even in your IRP, can justify not actually supporting it? Your measly investment in cost savings for TVA and your customers via EE is already an embarrassment compared to utilities around the country, and for decades you have ignored the repeated recommendations from the Congressional Budget Office that TVA needs to increase Energy Efficiency.

As Director Dr. Marilyn Brown said in her statement today, before voting to approve the 2015 budget with its 25% decrease in Energy Efficiency funding, "the one Gigawatt power plant that we have built over the last ten years [with Energy Efficiency], has saved TVA and its customers \$650 million dollars of capital expenditures and ongoing reductions in fuel costs." For a company with \$28 billion dollars in debt, these savings should be an exciting direction to build on, not a direction to cut funding by 25%, while once again leading TVA into yet another billion dollars in debt with your antiquated nuclear expansion – a direction that has proven itself to lead onto the path toward bankruptcy since the 1970s, and certainly would have bankrupted TVA long ago if there were not so many tax-payer subsidies keeping nuclear from going under and keeping TVA in ever increasing debt to the government, our people.

We must ask – Who are you supporting, the nuclear power industry, or your mission to work "for the benefit of the people of the valley?"

Dr. Brown also called Co-Generation and Combined Heat to Power (CHP) technologies an "untapped resource" in the valley, in relation to valley industries; but, this stakeholder wonders why the TVA power plants are not using CHP to generate electricity from plant waste heat at high efficiency rates. This is a cost-saving measure that would prove beneficial for almost all of your power plants, and would reduce pollution at the same time.

Our member, Sandy Kurtz, wrote after your TVA Board meeting that, "we heard over and over from speakers that TVA power must be 'reliable'. Those folks believe that solar and wind are not. In 3 minutes and 47 seconds, Amory Lovins explains why the myth that wind and solar power aren't reliable is not true." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsgrahFln0s>

Another point that seems important to raise with this Board of Directors is a clarification of your role in the TVA corporate hierarchy. You are the boss, period. The buck stops with you, and the buck also begins with you. Your title is Director for a reason: you are expected to direct the staff, not to just approve all of their recommendations. It was extremely revealing of this board's attitude towards directing this staff during the meeting today when Director Sansom, Chair of the Nuclear Oversight Committee, asked if Director Dr. Brown could assess the Energy Efficiency of the new Watts Bar Power Plant unit. The Watts Bar executive's reply was telling: he said they "would take it under consideration." Surely, you do see that this a backwards role reversal. We ask that you fully assume your role as Directors and lead, not follow, this executive staff. They are charged with carrying out the policies established by you, not the other way around. You are the leaders, and we ask that you honor that responsibility.

According to the TVA Board of Directors page on the TVA website:

“The Board of Directors guides TVA in achieving the objectives and missions established by the TVA Act for the benefit of the people of the Valley.

“As provided by the TVA Act and the TVA Bylaws, the principal responsibilities of the Board are to establish the broad strategies, goals, and objectives, long-range plans, and policies of TVA and to ensure that those are achieved by the TVA staff led by the Chief Executive Officer. Each Director takes an oath to faithfully and impartially perform the duties of office. Directors serve part-time.”

Granted, the fact that you serve part-time may be a limiting factor for some of you; but you did take an oath to fulfill the duties of your office as Directors during your term, so we ask that you please apply your skills and knowledge responsibly to your duties in guiding the TVA.

It grieves us to write another letter admonishing this board for its actions, and we eagerly await the day when we can celebrate your achievements in leading our country toward truthfully clean, inexpensive, and non-polluting energy independence.

Sincerely,

Gretel Johnston  
and Garry Morgan

for BEST/MATRR  
Bellefonte Efficiency & Sustainability Team (BEST)  
Mothers Against Tennessee River Radiation (MATRR)  
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