



## Bellefonte Efficiency & Sustainability Team

B.E.S.T.

A local chapter of Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League



November 15, 2012

TVA Board of Directors  
Chairman William B. Sansom  
Marilyn A. Brown  
William Graves

Neil McBride  
Richard Howorth  
Barbara S. Haskew

Tennessee Valley Authority  
400 West Summit Hill Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37902  
[board@tva.gov](mailto:board@tva.gov)

Re: TVA Choices and Actions for Environmental and Financial Sustainability

Dear TVA Directors,

Once again, as concerned citizens, we must voice our grievances and make suggestions for progress. For some inexplicable reason, this board chose to hide who the CEO candidates were and when and who voted for your recent appointment. Can you explain why you treat the list of candidates and your own votes as directors as if they were confidential? We are not aware of any proprietary or national security issues regarding the selection of a CEO for the TVA; but as ratepayers, we are aware that your choice will impact our finances and our future. That this government position paying nearly 10 times the salary of the President of the United States would be chosen in secret requires explanation. Fortunately, our BEST/MATRR member, Garry Morgan, has filed a formal complaint against your violations of both the Sunshine Act and your own TVA Board Practices Rules. One can only presume that repetitive unanimous acceptance votes indicate a practice of private pre-voting by this board, and that your votes at the public meetings are predetermined performances.

Now to the business of energy and resource management, again we request that you honor the repeated Government Accounting Office recommendations for TVA to invest in energy efficiency, to avail yourselves of the GAO's financial expertise, and guide the TVA with the long range goals the GAO has recommended to TVA for three decades now:

- 1. to lead the nation in developing electricity management plans and programs,**
- 2. to encourage energy conservation and the most efficient energy production and use,**
- 3. to encourage the use of renewable resources, and**
- 4. to assure adequate public involvement in energy planning and policy making.<sup>1, 2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> General Accounting Office Comptroller's Report to Congress, "[Triennial Assessment of the Tennessee Valley Authority – Fiscal Years 1977-1979](#)," EMD-80-91, August 13, 1980, pgs. 7 & 8.

<sup>2</sup> General Accounting Office (GAO) report on TVA to Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate, "[Tennessee Valley Authority: Full Consideration of Energy Efficiency and Better Capital Expenditures Planning Are Needed](#)," GAO-12-107, October 2011.

Although you have involved the public nominally in your Integrated Resource Plan, the 2011 plan for 2020 has only suggested 6% Energy Efficiency and 1% Renewable Energy Development – with no financial comparisons between developing Energy Efficiency, Renewables, and Nuclear and with no assurance of implementation of even those paltry Efficiency and Renewable goals. Your choice of yet another CEO with a history of serving nuclear lobbyists indicates continuation of your dogged pursuit of this dangerous and antiquated technology, despite clear evidence that Energy Efficiency and Renewables can ensure the financial and energy independence of our nation.

We are also sorely disappointed in TVA's perpetuation of inaccurate nuclear lobbying propaganda. Perhaps 100% base load requirements were necessary before computers became available as energy management tools, but they no longer apply in the 21st century. And claims that nuclear means clean air are simply false. For every kWh of power, the nuclear fuel cycle emits 30-60 grams of CO<sub>2</sub>; <sup>3</sup> so, if TVA expands to an annual nuclear production of 10,000 kWh (or half its current electricity), TVA will actually be adding 725,000 to 1,455,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the atmosphere annually. It is also disingenuous that TVA boasts of reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, yet says nothing of the potentially DNA altering and carcinogenic radioactive emissions routinely released from its nuclear power plants – with no air quality warnings to the exposed public. Now that we know solar power is cheaper than nuclear and that Tennessee alone has the potential for generating 2.2 million GWhs from rural utility-scale solar,<sup>4</sup> there is simply no excuse for clinging to the dirty myths of nuclear power in the south. For heaven's sake, we are in the nation's sunbelt and should be leaders in developing solar. TVA should be leading the nation's utilities toward a sustainable future, instead of adding to the growing mountains of highly toxic and unmanageable radioactive trash – with no safe disposal or safe storage solution, even after 70 years of intensive research. That you would even consider risking our lives using weapons-grade MOX plutonium fuel in the aging, problem-prone reactors at Browns Ferry is simply beyond comprehension. We again call on the TVA to remove all irradiated fuel rods that have been in your cooling pools for over 5 years and secure them in hardened onsite dry cask storage (HOSS) for the immediate safety of Tennessee Valley citizens and property.

We have watched this board of directors simply rubber-stamp every recommendation given by its staff for years now, with very few questions asked. When Watts Bar 2 incurred an allegedly unexpected cost overrun of \$2 billion in 2012, this board acted as if nothing had happened. A two billion dollar 'error' would initiate a major investigation in any corporation on this planet, yet this TVA board of directors treated \$2 billion as a minor accounting error. This indicates either that you are not qualified to read the financial statements with a critical eye and have not hired someone who is, or you have decided to collude with this executive staff in whatever acts of 'creative accounting' they can cook up. You are paying exorbitant sums <sup>5</sup> for serious mismanagement and unanimously approve every salary raise requested – and every 100s of millions and billions of dollars of nuclear reconstruction put before you. At the same time, you approve TVA selling its real assets to keep out of bankruptcy from its continuing nuclear obsession. Once those real assets are gone, they are taken away from future generations – and each of you is directly responsible. A shuffling of personnel is not accountability – just ask the Catholic church. A \$2 billion error should demand rigorous and truthful TVA accountability, at the very least.

We rate-payers are running out of patience with your lack of in depth analysis and of spine as directors, and call on you to honor your oath to serve the people of the Tennessee Valley, not multinational nuclear contractors. The people of this valley want to see you succeed and to see the

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<sup>3</sup> Sui-San Lim, "[Comparison of Greenhouse-Gas Emissions and Abatement Cost of Nuclear and Alternative Energy Options from a Life- Cycle Perspective](#)", Oko-Institut, Darmstadt, Germany, January, 2006, pg. 4.

<sup>4</sup> National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), "[U.S. Renewable Technical Potentials: A GIS Based Analysis](#)," NREL/TP-<sup>o</sup>6A20-<sup>o</sup>51946, July 2012, page 11, Table 3.

<sup>5</sup> David Flessner and Pam Sohn, "[TVA Boosts Year-End Bonuses Despite Federal Pay Freeze](#)", Chattanooga Times Free Press, Nov. 19, 2011

TVA remember its mandate to lead the nation in energy innovation and economic development. As former chairman David Freeman reminded you last year, you are wasting our money on this dogged, irrational pursuit of nuclear power as your TVA staff persists in "building yesterday's technology tomorrow" and adding to 30 years of continuous radioactive trash pileups in our valley that will remain toxic for a 100,000 years.

We know you can do better, and the time is now to begin a new era for the TVA – where you chose to lead our country into truthfully clean, safe, and affordable energy. Here are our suggestions:

1. Reinstate TVA's Successful 500,000 Home 'David Freeman Energy Efficiency Program' for TVA's remaining 8,500,000 Customers Who Did Not Receive the Program Benefits
2. Reclaim Wasted Power Plant Heat and Biogas for Combined Heat to Power (CHP) Electric Generation
3. Develop Solar and Wind Power, and Upgrade TVA Hydroelectric Assets
4. Integrate Renewable Energy with Smart Technology for a Reliable 21st Century Grid

Renewable technology is here – now and for the future – and is proven reliable with energy management tools and continues to be increasingly cheaper than nuclear.<sup>6,7</sup> You all know this (see [our previous letters](#)), but you keep plowing away in the same muddy, expensive rut.<sup>8,9</sup> We ask you to stand up and step out of that nuclear rut, and to lead us into a sustainable future for our children and their children. This board can lead us toward a truthfully clean, safe and renewable future, but it requires Actions rather than Acquiescence. We call on you to remember your position as Directors, not Followers, and to make your vote count now for a sustainable future.

Thank you for your service, your time, and your consideration.

Respectfully,

Gretel Johnston  
for Mothers Against Tennessee River Radiation (MATRR)

[best@matrr.org](mailto:best@matrr.org)

[MATRR.org](http://MATRR.org) – Because It Matters

CC: President Barack Obama, Secretary Stephen Chu, former TVA Chairman S. David Freeman

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<sup>6</sup> Mark Cooper, Senior Fellow for Economic Analysis, "[The Economics of Nuclear Reactors: Renaissance or Relapse?](#)", Institute for Energy and the Environment, Vermont Law School, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> John O. Blackburn, Sam Cu "[Solar and Nuclear Costs – The Historic Crossover: Solar Energy is Now the Better Buy](#)", NC WARN Waste Awareness & Reduction Network, July 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Jeffrey Immelt, "[GE's Immelt: Natural Gas Now Much Cheaper Than Nuclear](#)", Forbes Magazine, July 1, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Lucas W. Davis, "[Prospects for Nuclear Power](#)", Journal of Economic Perspectives, American Economic Association, Vol. 26(1), Winter 2012, pgs. 49-66.