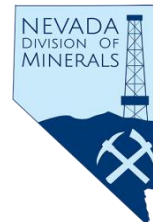




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Thursday, May 13, 2021

1:00 P.M.

**MINUTES**

Commissioners	Staff	Public
Rich DeLong	Mike Visher	Jim Faulds, NBMG
Mary Korpi	Rob Ghiglieri	John Muntean, NBMG
Art Henderson	Sherrie Nuckolls	
Josh Nordquist	Rebecca Ely	
Nigel Bain	Garrett Wake	
Bob Felder	Cortney Luxford	
Randy Griffin	Anthony Walsh, DAG	

**CALL TO ORDER**

1:00 PM by Richard DeLong

**COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

None

**AGENDA**

A. Approval of the Agenda

**Anthony Walsh:** Made open meeting announcement regarding Governor Sisolak's directive for the suspension of the open meeting law requirements for in-person meetings. That directive will be expiring on June 1<sup>st</sup> which means a physical location for a meeting will be required. However, Commissioners may still attend electronically it just needs to be at a location where the general public can attend or call in. Also, the physical posting requirements will be reinstated.

**Richard DeLong:** Thanked Anthony.

**Motion to approve the agenda made by:** Mary Korpi.

**Seconded by:** Josh Nordquist.

**Unanimously approved.**

**II. MINUTES**

A. Approval of the March 11, 2021 quarterly meeting minutes

**Motion to approve the March 11, 2021 minutes made by:** Randy Griffin.

**Seconded by:** Bob Felder.

**Unanimously approved.**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Introduction of New Fluid Minerals Program Manager**

**Mike Visher:** Announced Cortney Luxford as Lowell Price's replacement who started on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Cortney Luxford:** Introduced himself and spoke a little bit about himself and his background.

**Richard DeLong:** Was your experience in the Central Valley of California?

**Cortney Luxford:** Mostly the Northern Valley. I worked for a small operator, so I got to do leasing, rights-a-way, legal documents, geophysics, mapping, kind of a broad bit of experience with the industry.

**Richard DeLong:** I got my undergrad degree at Cal State Chico and a lot of the geologists there went into the gas fields in and around the Sacramento area so I'm familiar with the fields.

**Mike Visher:** Cortney's been very busy combing through the information left behind by Lowell and trying to reorganize some of the information, get acquainted with our filing, and our various systems. He is also learning and getting to know some of the other folks at other agencies that we deal with, especially over at NDEP and their underground injection control folks. He's doing a great job getting started here and has some good ideas on how we can further the program. We're happy to have him here.

**Richard DeLong:** Great.

#### **B. Update of 81<sup>st</sup> (2021) Session of the Nevada Legislature**

Mike Visher gave an update on bills with potential to impact the minerals industry along with a status report on the agency's biennial budget.

**Richard DeLong:** Asked when the deadline date for a bill moving out of the house of origin.

**Mike Visher:** That's already gone by unless a bill has been declared exempt. If a bill is declared exempt it can live on all the way up until it dies. This Friday any bill must clear the second house if it wasn't exempt.

**Richard DeLong:** Asked when would AB148 take effect and what about applications that are currently in process.

**Mike Visher:** Mike explained that it would not affect those who are currently being reviewed, the statute would be effective upon passage of the legislature. The regulations would have to be adopted through NDEP and SEC, probably a year away due to workshops, etc.

**Richard DeLong:** Okay.

**Richard DeLong:** Asked if Greg Lovato with NDEP will be involved in the discussions regarding AB240 with Assemblyman Watts.

**Mike Visher:** He could be, but I think right now the Assemblyman needs to understand more about the distinctions between the agencies and what we do. The various components of our outreach are something I don't think he understood. Our outreach is very basic earth science outreach and is not an indoctrination into the minerals industry but is much broader in scope. The impacts to K-12 classrooms are very large and very much appreciated. There is a place for all of that and that place is here at the Division. I don't think he understood any of that when he introduced the bill. He never had any discussion with any of the agencies before he submitted the bill to LCB, nor did he discuss it with the Governor's office.

**Richard DeLong:** Where I was coming from is would Greg be the best vehicle to explain the limitations of the State Environmental Commission as it relates to special knowledge to the Minerals Commission has relative to fluid minerals.

**Mike Visher:** For sure, I agree with that. Chairman Porta with SEC was on the first hearing for this but there were never any questions asked of anybody. I think this just speaks to more education is required.

**Nigel Bain:** With the money from the federal government, has that put a lot of tax initiatives on the back burner or are they still smoldering away?

**Mike Visher:** I think they are still very much in play. There's unfinished business that they are still looking to address from the special session. That needs to be addressed somehow either by one of these joint resolutions or a compromise bill. I expect that one of those or more will move forward and we'll see that play out in the next couple of weeks.

**Rich DeLong:** Is ACR3 exempt?

**Mike Visher:** It is just because it's a concurrent resolution, it can travel all the way to the end. It could also move along really fast. I think it could be sitting in the wings waiting for what happens with the mining bills.

**Jim Faulds:** Yes, regarding SCR10, I have a meeting with Senator Spearman tomorrow afternoon so we'll discuss that, we know that the state could use a broad assessment of lithium resources. The Bureau hasn't completed this but the USGS has done a little bit for a few individual basins. I will give some background on that and see what she thinks. I can't ask for funding, but I can say that additional resources would be needed to carry out this kind of broad study. Understanding lithium resources are complex and more than one type of lithium resource. To do a proper assessment would be probably a couple of years' analyses. The state could benefit greatly on that.

**Mike Visher:** She did reiterate during the hearing that the bill is not intended to open anything up or close anything off its really just to get a better understanding of where the current state is on these and how Nevada has a roll in it. I think it's a smart move.

**Jim Faulds:** I would agree.

#### **C. NBMG 2019 Mineral Industry Report and 2019/2020 Exploration Survey**

Presenter John Muntean was not in attendance in the meeting at this time and the item was Tabled for another meeting.

#### **D. Summer AML Program Plans**

Rob Ghiglieri presented a PowerPoint and discussed the summer intern program and the new AML billboard.

**Mary Korpj:** Stated that recently she and her husband stayed in Tonopah and the next day when they were heading out the billboard caught their eyes and said it really looks good and is in a perfect location.

**Rob Ghiglieri:** Eventually there will be a sign on the other side of the panel as well. We wanted to test the first sign and then move forward from there. Tonopah has a much cheaper rate, only \$200 a month compared to a billboard in Reno at \$1,800 a month. So, for the price it is a pretty good deal for an area that has a lot of abandoned mines.

### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Soliciting Donations for NBMG Projects**

Mike Visher went over a bullet list outlining suggestion for soliciting donations which was briefly discussed at the January meeting.

**Randy Griffin:** Asked if these are projects by UNR or UNLV or who's doing what project.

**Mike Visher:** Initially this topic came up with regards to the special projects that the Commission approved to be funded to be done by the NBMG, this was the Lithium study/report and the report on the geology of Railroad Valley. Initially Commissioner Henderson suggested that we reach out to Tesla or Albemarle to see if they had any interest in supporting the project through donation of money to the Bureau so this is one way we could address that.

**Randy Griffin:** Okay, so those are the two projects that I remember from the January meeting so we're talking those specific two projects, not a project from UNR is doing something and we go out to a specific industry, it's not something wholesale it's those specific projects?

**Mike Visher:** At this point and relating to our past discussion yes but because of the role that you play it could be anything that you're aware of that the university being UNR or UNLV is doing, if it was something that you were acting as a liaison bringing two big different groups together, it's something you might do at a casual meeting.

**Randy Griffin:** Okay, so it's an overall outreach program to help UNR or UNLV on these two projects and future ones. Is that the kind of project you're talking about going forward?

**Mike Visher:** Yes.

**Jim Faulds:** Just a couple of things, it's probably going to be best to think of this as specific projects so that the donations go where someone wants them to go and of course, as you probably know, there's a completely separate development group, they collect donations, The Development Group at the College of Science at UNR would be completely separate. It would be good to think of this separately and with specific to the Bureau. It does take some time for a contribution by the time folks sign off on it, and they might want the tax credit, so if it's a significant donation that can take a couple months to set up.

**Art Henderson:** The way I remember this Mike is that we were asking for donations so that we could possibly do the third project as well. We thought all three projects were very well suited and we chose two but we were asking for donations so that would allow us to do the third project, this is how I remember it.

**Mike Visher:** So, then the third project going forward would be contingent on having enough funds coming in through donations or if we had additional funds that came in to support the lithium report in a sufficient amount that the Commission could then reallocate some of those monies to the third project, is that what you're thinking then?

**Art Henderson:** Yes, that's what I was thinking when I said contact Tesla because they would be the most interested in lithium I would think, so that's my understanding is that the first two projects that were approved we thought the third

project was still a valid project and a very good one so we said let's go ahead and try to get some donations from corporations to allow us to do that third project as well.

**Mike Visser:** Perhaps what we need to do is to consider the two projects that have already been approved and then try to come up with some company contacts to pursue for donations while at the same time looking at the third one as a potential project and then if there are donations that come in then we can look at reallocating the offset of those donations to the third project at another meeting.

**Randy Griffin:** What I'm hearing Mike is that we ask for donations for all three projects and then if we get enough to do all three then we allocate it that way, is that a good assumption on my part?

**Art Henderson:** Randy, my memory and anybody can tell me if I'm wrong is we've already funding the first two projects, we have enough money to do those. We were asking for donations for the third project this is how I remember it.

**Rich DeLong:** Could I suggest Mike you coordinate with whichever Commissioners you think appropriate to come up with a list of companies that might be appropriate to ask for donations for the three different projects and then circulate that to the Commissioners for them to provide input and then identify whatever companies make it out of that review lets identify contacts and then allocates those to the appropriate Commissioner or Commissioners to contact those companies. Does that make sense to the group, Mike to you?

**Mike Visser:** Before we get to that point, I guess I would want to ask Jim if he can recall the discussion about the workload capacity at the Bureau for those three projects there was some limitations as I recall.

**Jim Faulds:** Yes, thank you Mike. Unfortunately, we do have limitations since the great recession mode most of our cartographic GIS staff has been self-funded so it's always this fine balance between really trying to get as many projects as we can and keep that group going and keep it producing good things for the state. We determined that three funded projects although very worthy projects are very much appreciated would be difficult for us to crank out three funded projects within the two-year biennium so there are some work force limitations unfortunately and made even be worse now with the budget cuts that are coming down right now, two projects are fine but if there's a third fully funded project right now, we probably could not produce that within the next biennium.

**Mike Visser:** So for the two projects that have been funded, the Railroad Valley and the lithium report, if we solicited donations towards either of those projects are there add on components that could be funded through that additional donation either as an extension of the project or how the final product is put forward, put out to public that those monies could be used for that would essentially make that product go a little bit further for either add-ons that could be tacked onto that project because now you have some additional funding..

**Jim Faulds:** Yes, within limits of course we could make each project go further. The Railroad Valley project, maybe it's additional cross sections, maybe it's having a more interactive interface on the actual published map, clicking on a well and seeing well logs and things like that. If the lithium report, for example, can be coupled with the story map to have a better digital interface with the general public. So, there are add-ons we could do to both within limits.

**Randy Griffin:** Let's say Tesla donated \$5,000 for the lithium report, of course they're going to want a copy of that report so I assume they can get one as soon as it's finalized, is that a good assumption of mine?

**Jim Faulds:** Absolutely and really all of our reports are free online, if you wanted a printed copy that's where you do have to pay but if it's a sponsor of the report, we're going to provide them with printed copies.

**Mike Visser:** I think those discussions between the company and the university regards to the donation that's between them.

**Jim Faulds:** The company cannot have their favorite areas and want us to write those in the report we could not do that but the donations for the report that is wrapped up in the obligation to produce the report so we're not going to take a donation for a report on lithium and do a report on beryllium, there's an obligation that comes with that but there's not an obligation to personally benefit that company or individual.

**Randy Griffin:** Let's say I know 4 or 5 contacts in various companies that would help UNR do the report then I would just turn over those contact names and numbers, there's not going to be a responsibility on a Commissioner part to call up and say I've given your name to so and so and they'll be calling you for this project that they're doing and they're probably going to be asking for donations, we're not going to do any of that?

**Mike Visser:** You are contacting those either you think have an affinity for the project or might benefit from the project but you're just providing them with the UNR contact information; Jim for the technical component with what the project entails and then Donna's contact information for answers to questions on donations, that's it.

**Randy Griffin:** Basically, seeing if they're interested in the project at all.

**Mike Visher:** Right, and then that's the end of your responsibility at that point.

**Randy Griffin:** Okay.

**Mike Visher:** So, after hearing from Jim, we're back to the two projects and then coming up with a list of companies to solicit or provide contact information at the university with regards to potential donations and if any of those decide to donate then it will be up to Jim to come up with those additional project enhancements that fit with the donation amounts. The list of companies, the preparation of that I think we can do that and work with the Commission to come up with the list but then that list would have to be provided to the Commission for review, but nothing can be done with regards to action until the next Commission meeting, is that correct Tony?

**Anthony Walsh:** Yes, that is correct.

**Rich DeLong:** I'm not sure there's an actual action for the Commission on this item other than to provide input on the list and potential contacts. I wouldn't think providing that information to Mike would be subject to the Open Meeting Law requirements would it Tony?

**Anthony Walsh:** No, that's correct, the action item in this scenario is to basically decide on the framework of how it's going to be accomplished and then from there as the list goes out that's fine.

**Rich DeLong:** I hope that we can accomplish that in this discussion now and how we're going to move forward on it.

**Anthony Walsh:** I think that is appropriate under the agenda item.

**Rich DeLong:** I have laid out a thought process, obviously it's not all three of them right now it's just those two, are there any other thoughts or comments about that approach? Again, I'm not sure we need to vote on it if it's an approach that works, I think we're just asking Mike to coordinate things with the commissioners.

**Bob Felder:** Just to comment on fundraising, if we go to the potential sources and say here's the contact information if they happen to be interested, it's pretty soft pedal I think we need to take a little more of a proactive approach because if we leave the ball in their court, it will probably stay there, I think we need to be more proactive about asking for the funding.

**Rich DeLong:** Fair point.

**Mike Visher:** I think that's part of the proactive approach in trying to put in front of them why they should be donating, why it benefits them. We have knowledge of what the projects entail, we were already provided the project presentations with regards to what the projects are in detail and what it's going to provide for deliverables. We need to make sure that we are not promising anything on behalf of the University, that's really what their development group does with regards to the donations, this is what your money would do but we can't give you access to the report before its public, you don't get an advanced draft before the public does, those discussions are between the University and the company that's making the donation.

**Randy Griffin:** Mike, if somebody could put together a one pager about the project, I know we saw a slide presentation, so when we do contact these people, we have something to reference.

**Mike Visher:** So fortunately, Jim gave us all a one-page overview of the project so I think all you would do is take that one page and distill it down to a series of bullet points that are intended for whoever you're going to be speaking with. We don't need to come up with anything else because there's a lot of detail in there about what it is and why it's needed. Essentially, you're going to take a highlighter and say these are the points that are important to company xyz, this is why I think you're a good fit.

**Jim Faulds:** The one page was provided at the January meeting as part of the agenda, nothing was changed for the March meeting. The January meeting had the summaries for all three projects.

**Mike Visher:** Right.

**Rich DeLong:** Do the Commissioners have a good understanding of the approach here, any additional discussion? I don't see a need to vote on it. I'm happy to have Tony comment on it.

**Anthony Walsh:** I understand this is a nebulous action. My comfort level with a vote would be essentially that the Commission is deciding they're authorizing themselves to go out and communicate these types of donations or this donation process to get the ball rolling. There wouldn't be group action towards soliciting one type of industry person or not. However just for Open Meeting purposes, if it's on the record that the Commission agreed that there would be individuals reaching out to companies, I feel comfortable with that being an action even though it's a little bit of a vague action rather than say actually funding agreement or funding a project.

**Motion to promote funding through industry donations for the projects selected last meeting made by:** Randy Griffin.

**Seconded by:** Mary Korpi.

**Approved by 6 Ayes and 1 Nay**

**Rich DeLong:** Art, do you want to add any additional content on your vote?

**Art Henderson:** I have no additional comment at this time.

**Rich DeLong:** I'd like to go back to Item C under New Business which is the NBMG 2019 Mineral Industry Report and the 2019/2020 Exploration Survey since we have John Muntean on the phone now. John, could you walk through that item?

**Anthony Walsh:** For the record I think it would be appropriate to have a motion to un-table that or a recognition that we're un-tabling the item for the next time.

**Rich DeLong:** Since John has since joined the meeting rather than tabling item III. C. under New Business we're going to discuss it here such that we don't need to carry it on to the next meeting.

**Anthony Walsh:** Very good and I think that covers it as items may be taken out of order, it's back on the agenda.

#### **New Business**

##### **C. NBMG 2019 Mineral Industry Report and 2019/2020 Exploration Survey**

**John Muntean:** Gave a brief review of the Bureau's Minerals Industry Report and 2019/2020 Exploration Survey.

#### **COMMISSION BUSINESS**

##### **A. Review of staff monthly activity reports**

**Rich DeLong:** I think it was nice that the Las Vegas Natural History Museum sent a thank you letter to Garrett with regards to the funding and support provided by the Commission and the Division for the display at the museum.

**Mike Visher:** Chairman, along those lines I visited the museum on Monday and saw the display in person and it looks even nicer in person and it's also quite large. I met with Marilyn Gillespie there and she just gushed on how well it's being received. It has been on a limited basis just because they're not fully open but they're getting really good feedback. It's something that everyone gravitates towards as soon as they are in that room. She's very, very appreciative of the exhibit and the assistance provided by the Commission. She also did provide a letter as an exhibit in opposition to AB240 when that was being heard. That was very nice of the museum to do an acknowledgment of the work that's been done in the past by the Commission and the Division.

**Rich DeLong:** It would be interesting to see if a similar display can occur in the Truckee Meadows area.

**Mike Visher:** Yes, it would be. Now that one has been done it's a lot easier to replicate.

**Rich DeLong:** Yes, exactly, there isn't a set up cost.

**B. Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, July 22, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. with a tour of the new Ormat Repower Project.**

**Art Henderson:** Asked Mike which Commissioner appointments end June 30<sup>th</sup> and what is the process to be reappointed if they'd like to stay on.

**Mike Visher:** I'm supposed to have a meeting with the Governor's office, Scott Gilles, and I'll get that information from him.

**Rich DeLong:** The Commissioners whose term is up are mine, Mary Korpi, Art Henderson, and Nigel Bain.

**Mike Visher:** Correct.

**Rich DeLong:** If you are interested in continuing, I do suggest you get an application in soon.

#### **COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

Rob Ghiglieri reminded the Commission the 2021 NAAMLPL conference which will be held September 12-15, 2021 in Lake Tahoe. This will be an in-person conference with tours to Virginia City, around Lake Tahoe, Yerington including the Anaconda site as well as Nevada Copper, and then one tour will be going to Bodie Historic State Park in California. There will be technical sessions on topics having to do with mine remediation. We are always looking for sponsors and exhibitors. If you know of any companies with the opportunity to sponsor or have an exhibit that would associate with

this conference, please forward them to me. The staff is working hard to stay on top of this and get everything ready for hopefully around 200 people nationwide. We're expecting a slight decrease in attendance compared to previous estimates due to travel restrictions for state and federal agencies.

**ADJOURNMENT**

2:56 p.m.