



**COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**



**WEEK OF SEPT. 28 - OCT. 4, 2014**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

**BOARD REJECTS HYDRAULIC FRACTURING BAN  
AND WELL STIMULATION BANS  
FOR “RIGHT NOW”  
(ADOPTS A SIMMER THE POT STRATEGY - COULD BE HEATED  
UP AGAIN FAST)**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, September 23, 2014 (Completed)**

**Item 20 - General Public Comment - Speakers Show Up to Protest Gibson Manipulation.**

A number of speakers took the time to criticize Board Chairman Gibson’s prior week refusal to allow Gary Kirkland to speak on energy matters. Gibson ruled that the matters were not in the “purview” of the Board of Supervisors. Gibson had no response and did not defend his action. The Speakers were eloquent and forceful. COLAB requested that Kirkland’s time be restored this week. The Board said and did nothing.

In a separate and tangentially related action, Gibson cut slack for speakers on another matter who arrived late and did not have their speaker slips in when the item was actually called by the Clerk and underway. In the past he has admonished citizens to have all slips in before a matter is called or they cannot speak. He was positively solicitous as he smiled and flattered the speakers as they came up. The other Board members said nothing. Of course these speakers were some of his constituents from Cambria who were seeking a regulatory fee waiver related to work that the Cambria CSD is doing to preserve and increase water supply during the drought. It probably wouldn’t have gone so well if they had come from Creston.

**Background:** Board Chairman Bruce Gibson shut down Libertarian analyst Gary Kirkland for attempting to speak against emerging efforts to attack the oil industry and the Diablo Nuclear

Power Plant. Gibson stated that the matters were not within the purview of the Board of Supervisors and therefore Kirkland could not speak on them.

A prior speaker (Jeanne Blackwell) who is a well-known anti-oil industry activist and President of SLO Clean Water Action had just finished urging the Board to agendaize consideration of an anti-oil fracturing ordinance when Kirkland attempted to point out how oil and oil derived products are essential to the maintenance of our current industrial/techno civilization. As Kirkland was demonstrating how many products in the meeting room were derived from oil and how ridiculous it would be to regress to a “civilization” illuminated by candles and whale oil, Gibson stopped him and ruled that the speech covered matters not in the purview of the Board of Supervisors. Kirkland professionally and quietly submitted to the rule of the Chair and returned to his seat.

**Item 30 - Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) Ban Rejected.** A fairly lengthy hearing was delayed while the Board presented a guy dressed in a fish suit with a Resolution recognizing “Creeks Week.” There were about 70 people, mainly from the local oil industry, who had to wait while the Board indulged the creek people and a blue tea shirted crowd from Cambria who want the County to waive review and inspection fees for a local water project engendered by the drought. Not only did the fish ceremony and the Cambria matter delay the key item of the day, but the Board then actually took a 20-minute break. Due to the delay several key business people were unable to testify. The large crowd of local oil company employees, royalty owners, land owners, suppliers, and business people (who don’t habituate meetings of public bodies) were mystified.

After the staff’s report (yet another power point which was not included in the agenda materials) and prior to any public comment, Hill one-upped his colleagues and signaled his intent to not pursue a ban on fracking. This is the “pro-business” Hill. Of course this is the same pro-business Hill who opposes proposition 13 and strongly supports the Paso Robles Basin water and development moratorium, climate action plan regulations and restrictions, the housing in-lieu tax, and much more.

Finally, and once the time came for public comment, Gibson noted the late hour and large number of speaker slips. By way of manipulation he suggested that participants who would limit their comments to 1 minute would be allowed to speak first, those with 2 minutes would speak second, and finally those who wanted the normal 3 minutes could wait to be last.

Once the hearing got going, 54 people spoke, 43 against any fracking ban or bans on other advanced well stimulation techniques. Eleven were in support, including the Executive Director of the local Sierra Club chapter. The oil industry members largely confined their remarks to technical and economic issues. COLAB raised the question of the larger picture. Since the Board directed staff to research and report back on bans on fracking and other well stimulation techniques, why wouldn’t it be balanced and also direct staff to research how the County might assist in growing the oil and gas industry? The County has a \$176 million deferred road maintenance deficit, an as yet unknown deferred building maintenance deficit, \$346 million and growing unfunded pension liability, and the countywide all-jurisdiction \$1.5-\$2 billion unfunded major highway and transportation system deficit. You would think the Board would explore the

potential of oil and gas industry taxes and royalties instead of just focusing on techniques for driving the industry out of the county.

Once the speakers were completed, there were few questions for staff. Board members spoke on their position. Some highlights:

Hill: Opposed directing staff to work on bans, does not want “to create a solution in search of a problem.” “I don’t see a series of problems that we need to deal with.” He did not want to commit staff resources to work on regulating oil when water is the highest priority.

Mecham: Recognized the jobs and especially the diversity of the jobs created by the industry. He recommended watching implementation of SB 4 (State regulatory rules)

Arnold: Pretty much in agreement.

Ray: Stated that she was in agreement with not directing staff to do anything “**for right now.**” This does raise the possibility that she might support bans and/or other local regulatory efforts in the future (perhaps after November 4<sup>th</sup>)? She does want the staff to go out and discuss the matter with the Economic Vitality Corporation, Agriculture Land Use Advisory Board, Community Service Districts, etc., to see what they think. Ray did not say exactly why she wants the issue to be kept simmering through this circulation process. Are there anti-oil skills out there who will suggest further action?

Gibson: Knew he did not have the votes to do something right now. He waxed wistfully about how the issue is based on “legitimate concerns” for the County to exercise its police powers to protect groundwater, forestall fracking-generated earthquakes, etc.

**Prediction:** This item will come back in the future. Remember, the big picture is not about fracking and other well stimulation techniques. The real purpose in the first instance is to blunt the growth of the fossil fuels, make them scarcer and more costly, and thereby promote so-called green energy alternatives.

The larger purpose is to weaken the economy, increase joblessness, promote poverty, undermine capitalism, erode private property, and beckon a national crisis that will be used to expand governmental powers, expand governmental functions, justify wealth transfers, and ultimately wreck democracy and freedom.

**Background:** Vladimir Putin, the ISIS Caliphate, the Columbian communists, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Syria, the Sierra Club, and government subsidized “green energy” corporations all oppose the development of American fossil fuels. Vast new oil and gas discoveries combined with advanced extraction techniques in the United States are threatening to the enviro-socialist movement (not to mention oil exporting dictatorships).

Earlier in the year the Board directed the staff to prepare a report on options for the County to ban or otherwise regulate hydraulic fracturing, which is a technique whereby an emulsion containing sand, water, and chemicals is injected under pressure into rock surrounding oil wells.

The rock is fractured, allowing trapped oil to be released and ultimately pumped to the surface. A danger of hydraulic fracturing is that, in shallow oil fields, the pressurized emulsion might leak into an aquifer. This has reportedly happened in Pennsylvania. The enviro-socialist left has seized upon this risk to launch a national campaign to promote fear and hysteria, not only about hydraulic fracturing, but other advanced techniques of oil recovery including but not limited to: cyclic steam stimulation, water flood injection, steam flood injection, acid well stimulation, matrix acidization, and well acidization. These other advanced techniques are used commonly, not only in new wells but to maintain existing wells.



**Don't be lulled**

**No Board of Supervisors Meeting Scheduled for Tuesday, September 30, 2014**

Tuesday September 30, 2014 is a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday. The Board generally does not schedule meetings on 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays. They did continue the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to 9:00 AM on Tuesday September 30<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of holding an executive session to consider appointment of the vacant Director of Public Works position. It is possible that they will use the day to conduct interviews. No other business is contemplated.

**San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) Meeting of Wednesday, September 24, 2014 (Completed)**

**No Significant Policy Matters.** There did not appear to be any significant policy matters on the APCD agenda. The call for executive session included a discussion of the Friends of the Dunes lawsuit.

**San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, September 25, 2014 (Completed)**

**No Significant Policy Matters.** There were no significant policy matters on this agenda.