

MINUTES
BOARD OF COAL MINE SAFETY
June 14, 2011 - Uniontown, PA

BOARD MEMBERS

Michael Krancer, Chairman, Secretary, DEP
Ron Bowersox, United Mine Workers of America
Frank Reidelbach, United Mine Workers of America
Albert Aloia, CONSOL Energy, Inc.
John Gallick, AlphaNatural Resources

OTHERS PRESENT

Joseph Sbaffoni, Director, Bureau of Mine Safety
Daniel Lapato, Executive Policy Specialist, Policy Office
Richard Morrison, Attorney, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel
George Ellis, Pennsylvania Coal Association
John Burr, CONSOL Energy, Inc.
Jeffrey Stancheck, Bureau of Mine Safety
Allison Gaida, Bureau of Mine Safety

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Michael Krancer called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. in the Bureau of Mine Safety conference room, Fayette County Health Center, 100 New Salem Road, Uniontown, PA. A quorum existed with all members of the Board except Jim Sabella and Stanko Popich in attendance. Chairman Krancer introduced himself and asked for introductions around the room.

The Board considered its first item of business – approval of the December 15, 2010, meeting minutes. Chairman Krancer called for a motion to adopt the minutes.

Albert Aloia moved to adopt the minutes. Ron Bowersox seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Adopting Proposed Miner Act Regulations, Chapter 208

Chairman Krancer asked for discussion on the proposed regulations. Albert Aloia requested clarification for the PCA on Section 208.21, Escapeways. PCA is in agreement to have two intake openings to the surface. However, when a mine first opens, there is a period of time when you do not have two openings. Joe Sbaffoni informed the Board that Section 274(b) of the Act provides an exception to address the PCA's concern.

A motion was made by John Gallick to adopt the proposed Miner Act regulations for Chapter 208. Frank Reildbach seconded the motion. All present were in favor and motion carried unanimously 5 to 0.

Update on PCA Cable Study

John Burr gave an overview for Chairman Krancer on the study. Americable and General Cable performed laboratory tests and both companies completed their studies earlier this year. The studies included metallic shielded cables and non-metallic shielded cables. Three designs were identified as being suitable for the next phase, underground testing. AlphaNatural Resources agreed to test the cables manufactured by Americable, and ConsolEnergy agreed to test cables manufactured by General Cable. The delivery of the cables for testing was delayed. Two 1,000-foot lengths of cable were discovered for lab testing that were also suitable for underground testing. One non-metallic shielded General cable held up reasonable well in a ConsolEnergy mine. An issue with splicing the cable was observed during the underground testing, but it had previously been observed during the lab phase and was being addressed. A flat cable was identified and one of the mines agreed to make a training video and modify some equipment to put a cable in. John Burr was just advised today that both companies have now completed the manufacturing of cables for underground testing and are in the process of getting them delivered to mines. Enlow Fork will test General Cable and AlphaNatural Resources, Cumberland will test Americable. PCA has identified at least three manufacturers with “sensitive ground fault detection” instead of current ground fault protection.

John Burr will provide a copy of the study to be forwarded to the Board.

Joseph Sbaffoni asked if it would come out that one cable is better than the other, or whether it would be a combination in different applications. John Burr said that they must keep an open mind until the end of study and a report will be provided to the Board of the study.

Joe Sbaffoni gave background to Chairman Krancer on the initial need for this study to be addressed to the Board.

John Burr hopes the underground testing of each cable is completed by the end of the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Identifying and Prioritizing Regulations to be Addressed

John Gallick suggested that the PCA and UMWA identify and prioritize areas that need to be addressed and bring to the next meeting. DEP will go through the Act to see what regulations are to be promulgated.

Joe Sbaffoni hoped that the AED regulations would be out, published, comments, and be voted on by the next meeting. Richard Morrison does not believe the AED comment period will be done until the end of the year.

CERMUSA

A presentation was scheduled by CERMUSA (Center of Excellence for Remote and Medically Under-Served Areas) following this meeting. Ron Bowersox stated that Indiana University of Pennsylvania was not available for this meeting. A presentation may be scheduled to follow the September meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Krancer asked if there were any public comments.

George Ellis from the Pennsylvania Coal Association commended the Board on how they handled the Miner Act.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss,

Chairman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Gallick seconded this motion.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 13, at the Marion Center Mine Rescue and Training Facility, if available. The official meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.