

Rhode Island Atomic Energy Commission

Meeting of 2 January 2013

16 Reactor Road

Narragansett, RI 02882

9:00 AM

Dr. Mecca called the meeting of the Rhode Island Atomic Energy Commission to order at 9:10 AM. The following individuals were present at the meeting:

Dr. Stephen Mecca, RIAEC Chair

Dr. Andrew Kadak, Commissioner

Dr. Bahram Nassersharif, Commissioner

Dr. Anthony Nunes, Commissioner

Mr. Jeff Davis, RINSC Assistant Director for Operations

Mr. Stephen Guarino, RINSC Assistant Director for Radiation and Reactor Safety

Ms. C. Hathaway, RINSC Health Physicist

Ms. Sophia Lenihan, RINSC Information Specialist

Dr. Peter Gromet, Commissioner, was absent.

1. Review of the Recent Health Physicist Recruitment and Selection Process

Dr. Mecca informed the Commission that he had reviewed the recruitment files for the Health Physicist Position, and that he had called candidates that had not been selected for the position in order to find out whether or not they thought that the selection process was fair. He also informed the Commission that he had met with Dr. Thomas Mannock from State Personnel, Mr. Stephen Guarino, RINSC Assistant Director for Radiation and Reactor Safety, and Dr. Anthony Nunes, Commissioner, to determine what the selection process was, and how the candidate that was chosen was selected. Dr. Mecca indicated that there were other qualified candidates, some of whom had a Ph.D. He requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss this matter further.

A motion to go into executive session was made by Dr. Nassersharif, and seconded by Dr. Nunes. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Closed Meeting Summary

The following information has yet to be included:

RIGL 42-46-4(a) reason for holding a closed meeting and nature of business discussed shall be recorded in the minutes.

RIGL 42-46-4(a) a meeting closed to the public shall be limited to matters allowed to be exempted from discussion at open meetings by

42-46-5.

RIGL 42-46-4(b) all votes taken in closed sessions shall be disclosed once the session is reopened; provided however, a vote taken in closed session need not be disclosed for the period of time during which its disclosure would jeopardize any strategy, negotiation, or investigation undertaken pursuant to discussions conducted under 42-46-5.

3. Resumption of Open Meeting

Dr. Mecca informed the RINSC Staff that the Commission had found discrepancies with the selection process, and that they had decided to re-open the search for a Health Physicist. He informed the individual that had been hired, that he was sorry, and that she was a victim of a faulty selection process, but that she would be terminated.

He made the offer that she was welcome to continue to stay on in the position, until a suitable replacement could be found. He indicated that he wanted to make it clear in the record that she had not misrepresented herself in any way, but that the most qualified candidate had not been selected.

Mr. Davis, RINSC Assistant Director for Operations stated that he wanted to make it clear in the record that the individual that had been selected has the same qualifications that the individual that held the position previously, and was more qualified than the individual that

held the position before that, which indicates that the individual that was selected is in fact qualified.

Dr. Mecca re-iterated his opinion that the person hired was not the most qualified person. He informed the staff that the Commission would undergo the process advertising, interviewing, and selecting a replacement, and suggested that the time frame would be that a selection would be made by the mid to end of February 2013. He asked who wrote the advertisement that was sent to the research reactor community when the position was previously opened. Mr. Davis indicated that he had written it. Dr. Mecca asserted that there were significant discrepancies between qualifications as stated in the advertisement that was sent out to the reactor community, and the qualifications as stated in the state vacancy notice. Mr. Davis indicated that the state vacancy notice was used as the bases for writing the advertisement. Both documents are attached.

Dr. Kadak raised an issue regarding the RINSC Staff not being prepared for a class that was going to use the facility. Mr. Davis indicated that he was unaware of any time in which the staff was unprepared for a class that was going to use the facility, but could think of at least one occasion in which a class that was expected to arrive at a specific time had a large segment of the class that arrived forty five minutes after the class was scheduled to start, which pushed the reactor operation schedule back without appropriate planning for operators. Dr. Mecca indicated that the issue at hand

stemmed from the fact that HPGe detectors that were to be used by his class were sent out for “upgrades” just prior to his class coming to the RINSC to perform a series of laboratory exercises. Mr. Zachary Richards, RINSC Reactor Supervisor, was called into the meeting to address this issue. Mr. Richards indicated that approximately three weeks before Dr. Mecca’s class was scheduled, it was discovered that two of the HPGe detectors were not working. Attempts were made to fix the detectors in house, the manufacturer of the detectors was contacted, and it was determined that the detectors would have to be sent back to the manufacturer for repair. Dr. Mecca was informed almost two weeks in advance that two detectors were going to be out for repair (not upgrades), and reminded that the facility has at least one other detector available for use. The email communications trail is attached. The Commissioners concluded that the staff had done all that could be done under the circumstances, and that the issue was not due to lack of preparedness.

Dr. Mecca raised an issue about the fact that the RINSC Assistant Director for Radiation and Reactor Safety taught Physics 210 Radiation Safety at the University of Rhode Island during the fall semester. Drs. Mecca, Nassersharif, and Kadak indicated that they didn’t consider this to be appropriate if the class was taught on state time. Dr. Nunes disagreed. He pointed out that the RINSC Assistant Director for Radiation and Reactor Safety is shared with the University of Rhode Island, and that the university pays 62% of his

salary, along with a 40% overhead fee. Dr. Nunes made it clear that from his perspective, the university has the right to expect that the RINSC Assistant Director for Radiation and Reactor Safety teach courses related to Radiation Safety because he is the university expert on the subject, and effectively all of his salary is paid by the university.

Dr. Mecca was called out of the meeting to take a telephone call from a representative from the State Human Resource Office.

During Dr. Mecca's absence, Dr. Kadak provided the RINSC Staff with a list of what he believes the priorities for RINSC should be:

- Safe Operation**
- Facility Re-Licensing**
- Customer Satisfaction**
- Facility Utilization**
- Investment in User Needs**
- Education Outreach**

Mr. Davis indicated that the staff not only concurs, but is also actively working on each of these priorities, and he provided examples of what the staff was currently doing for each item on the list.

Dr. Mecca returned to the meeting.

9. Adjourn

Dr. Nassersharif made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Dr. Kadak seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Mecca asked that the Commissioners remain for a few minutes after the meeting to discuss the outcome of his telephone conversation.

Attachment 1 HP Advertisement Sent to Research Reactor Community

Health Physicist Position Advertisement

The Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center (RINSC) is seeking candidates for the position of Health Physicist. RINSC maintains and operates a 2 MW research reactor that is used for education, research, and service work. In addition, the facility provides radiation safety services to the University of Rhode Island. The Health Physicist works under the direction of the Radiation Safety Officer to maintain an effective radiation protection and monitoring program.

Major duties and responsibilities include:

- Radiation Surveys**

- **Environmental Monitoring**
- **Radiation Survey Instrument Calibration**
- **Radiation Laboratory Inspection**
- **Radioactive Waste Disposal**
- **Radioactive Material Shipment**
- **Radiation Safety Training**
- **Record Keeping**
- **Technical Assistance to Experimenters**
- **Other related work as required**

Required Qualifications are a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Physics or Nuclear Physics, and experience as may have been gained through employment in a responsible technical position, preferably at a nuclear reactor facility, or any combination of education and experience deemed to be equivalent.

Candidates should send a cover letter and resume to:

Dr. Terry Tehan

Director

Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center

16 Reactor Road

Narragansett, RI 02882

(401) 789-9391 (Telephone)

(401) 782-4201 (Fax)

TTehan@rinsc.ri.gov

Attachment 2 State Vacancy Notice for the HP Position

Attachment 3 Email Trail Regarding Detector Repair

Jeff Davis< jdavis@rinsc.ri.gov>

Student Detectors

4 messages

Zachary Richards< zrichards@rinsc.ri.gov> Thu, Nov 15, 2012 at 3:25 PM

To: Stephen Mecca

Cc: Terry Tehan , Jeff Davis , Stephen Guarino

Dr. Mecca,

I just wanted to make you aware ahead of time that two of the Ortec detectors used in the student lab are going out for service. We may have one of these up and running by the time your class returns on November 28th, most likely we'll still be down to four detectors though. All the computers and spectrometers are functional, so

spectra can be saved from one station and loaded into another to allow all six groups to perform an analysis.

Sorry for the inconvenience, let me know if you have any questions.

-Zach

--

Zachary Richards

Reactor Supervisor

Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center

16 Reactor Rd

Narragansett, RI 02882

P - 401-789-9391

F - 401-782-4201

www.rinsc.ri.gov

zrichards@rinsc.ri.gov

Stephen Mecca< smecca@providence.edu> Fri, Nov 16, 2012 at 11:25 AM

To: Zachary Richards

Cc: Terry Tehan , Jeff Davis , Stephen Guarino

Thanks for letting me know about this. It will be an inconvenience; I doubt I can do the 3 activities I planned for the 19 students.

..Steve Mecca

[Quoted text hidden]

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Stephen Mecca, Ph.D.

Professor

Department Engineering-Physics-Systems

Providence College

Visiting Scholar

Department of Computer Engineering

Faculty of Engineering Science

University of Ghana

Jeff Davis< jdavis@rinsc.ri.gov> Fri, Nov 16, 2012 at 1:37 PM

To: Stephen Mecca

Cc: Zachary Richards , Terry Tehan , Stephen Guarino

Dr. Mecca -

Don't forget that we also have another functioning GeLi detector in the the other counting room. I don't know if it would be usable for your purposes, but if so, we would be effectively down only one detector instead of two.

JD

[Quoted text hidden]

Stephen Mecca< smecca@providence.edu> Fri, Nov 16, 2012 at 3:17

PM

To: Jeff Davis

I'll pair things down a bit, Jeff. Don't worry about it.

..Steve

[Quoted text hidden]