



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

November 2, 2022

Mr. Leon Shields  
Chair  
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board  
P.O. Box 2001, EM-942  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

Dear Mr. Shields:

Thank you for your June 30, 2022, letter, and recommendations regarding the Environmental Management (EM) Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) membership appointment process. I agree with your recommendations. Since this membership topic was originally discussed by the Chairs, many efficiencies in recruitment and appointments have been implemented. Below are specifics addressing each of your recommendations.

EM SSAB Recommendation: The membership review and approval process should include all reasonable activities necessary to prevent lapsed memberships.

Response: Prior to sites recruiting members and submitting a membership package to EM Headquarters for approval, sites now involve Headquarters staff. This early communication ensures alignment on recruitment goals before recruitment efforts take place, resulting in improved coordination that expedites package approvals.

Also, the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) has worked with the various reviewing officials and streamlined the membership packages to only include essential information.

EM SSAB Recommendation: The site manager should be empowered to temporarily extend the terms of lapsed members in good standing or to temporarily appoint other qualified members to replace lapsed members until a new membership package is approved.

Response: A new policy was recently implemented that helps minimize lapses in membership for those members who are seeking reappointment. To ensure functionality of a Board, the DFO has the authority to allow current members who have been proposed for reappointment by the site to serve in an interim status for up to 90 days, after their current term expires, while the membership package is being reviewed by the Department.

EM SSAB Recommendation: The DOE should publish the review and appointment process and then take feedback from the public and EM SSAB members. The published information should identify which elements are required by the Federal Advisory

Committee Act, the General Services Administration, and the EM SSAB charter, and which elements are internal to the DOE, as well as where those DOE policies and procedures can be found.

Response: During the October 2021 EM SSAB Chairs meeting, the DFO explained the appointment process and encouraged the Chairs to make a recommendation on how the process could be improved. Her presentation can be found at [www.energy.gov/em/articles/chairs-meeting-october-2021](http://www.energy.gov/em/articles/chairs-meeting-october-2021). Copies of the guiding documents for the operation of a Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) board, including board membership, can be found at [www.energy.gov/em/em-site-specific-advisory-board](http://www.energy.gov/em/em-site-specific-advisory-board). If the board has further recommendations, please submit them to the DFO.

The EM SSAB program has helped to amplify community voices for more than 25 years, and I always appreciate your feedback on how to improve the program. Please keep in mind that the EM SSAB is one of many FACA committees managed by the Department and some committee operating processes and initiatives may involve Department-wide considerations. If you have any questions, please contact me or Ms. Kelly Snyder, the EM SSAB DFO, at (702) 918-6715 or [kelly.snyder@em.doe.gov](mailto:kelly.snyder@em.doe.gov).

Sincerely,



William I. White  
Senior Advisor for Environmental Management

cc: Melyssa Noe, Alternate Deputy DFO  
Candice Robertson, EM-2 (Acting)  
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Kristen Ellis, EM-4.3  
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