

Two important meetings took place this week, another is taking place today.

SPECIAL RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING, January 11, 2011

The SEC Board of Trustees Special Re-organization Meeting was Tuesday evening. The first order of business was re-electing the same officers which was no surprise as the meeting was rescheduled to allow all members of the board majority to be present. There was some opposition with the votes 8 to 2 or in one case 8 to 3. Nothing will change until the trustees change or a judge orders a change.

The second order of business was the setting of the hearing date on the recall of Paul Bustamante, District 2. The videos below illustrate the strange behavior of the board. It has become routine to see their hostility directed at Charlie Wagner but this time it spilled over into insults and threats directed at members in attendance.

Mr. Bustamante started off by acting as though the meeting was the actual recall hearing with a rather incoherent defense of his actions. He then moved to a setting of the date for the hearing which was more of a putting off of the hearing to some indefinite time in the future. Fortunately, Mr. Richard Epstein, District 2 petitioner, had included this language in the document accompanying the signed petition. "Time is of the essence in verifying the signatures and, if the petition is approved, calling a district meeting. If the verification of signatures takes more than thirty days, and, if the petition is verified, a district meeting is not called within thirty more days, that will be a clear indication that the Trustees are unwilling to abide by the bylaws of the SEC." State law 62-15-17. Initiative by members. also sets a limit of 45 days from the presentation of a petition to the special meeting. The timing of the special meeting is proscribed by the petitioning parties and state law and not under the jurisdiction of Mr. Bustamante.

The validation of the petition signers was the next issue raised. The petition documents were presented to the board on November 22, 2010. Although the petitioners requested that the validation of the 115 signing members be verified by an independent auditor, the work was carried out by SEC staff. Thirty of the one hundred fifteen were removed when the petition was returned on to the board on December 22, 2010. Mr. Epstein requested, verbally and in writing, the names of the stricken signers and was refused. Attorney Francish stated that he should be satisfied with the fact that the petition still had the required 10%. In the face of the by-law passed at the 2010 Annual Meeting requiring adherence to the "Inspection of Public Records Act," the lawyer and the board refused to give Mr. Epstein the documents. A night's reflection and maybe a check of law books led Mr. Francish to change his mind. He has had to do this many times when his opinions face challenges. Ms. Latasa informed Mr. Epstein yesterday that the list of rejected signers would be given to him. District 2 petitioners will check and challenge the removals.

RATE INCREASE INFORMATIONAL MEETING, DISTRICT 1. January 12, 2011

Last evening (5:30 p.m.) at the Las Nutrias Senior Center, the first of the Rate Increase Information Meetings was held. Thirty-five members, four trustees, nine SEC staffers plus Interim General Manager, Richard Lopez, were in attendance along with Cat Cobb of SGS Engineering. Several of the District 1

members brought copies of the Petition to recall Leo Cordova, Trustee. The Q & A period raised many interesting issues, one of the more amusing and pointed was raised by a gentleman who looking directly at the group of SEC staffers asked if efficiency was being considered in the operation of the co-op. About this time, a member noticed the petition clipboard and asked to sign it. Unfortunately several others in the audience also wanted to sign and the clipboard was passed around arriving at a friend of Mr. Cordova who protested such activity within the meeting. The clipboard owner who had been out of the room, returned at this point and apologized for the inappropriate but unintentional occurrence. After the meeting the petition holders went outside the building to ask exiting members if they wished to sign the recall petition. Mr. Griego, County Commissioner for the area, came out to ask them to leave. He was the first of several. The petitioners countered that the Senior Center was a county owned public building and as citizens of the county and District 1, they had a right to be there and politely ask if people wished to sign. The only rudeness and/or anger was on the part of people trying to deny members their right to peaceful assembly. The petitioners departed with the last of the members.

RATE INCREASE INFORMATIONAL MEETING, DISTRICT 5. January 13, 2011

This report needs to begin on Wednesday, January 12, 2011 when a Quemado member asked when the District 5 meeting was to be held. They were aware of the pending rate increase from the coverage in Enchantment Magazine." This was the first indication that District 5 members had no idea that meetings were scheduled for the following day. The problem arose from the fact that the official SEC announcement of the meeting was limited to two ads in the "El Defensor Chieftain," a publication that is not distributed in Catron county. The ads were obviously not eye catching also as attendance at the Magdalena was limited to 3 members although the meeting time of 9 a.m. was probably the main factor for the low attendance. People work during the day. In addition to the three members, Trustees Bruton, Wagner, and Wade attended along with 9 SEC staffers, Mr. Lopez, IGM, and Cat Cobb. Mr. Lopez noted that there were some problems with the District 5 schedule and that both the Magdalena and Quemado meetings would be held a second time at 5:30 p.m. in order to reach more members. Speaking of efficiency, duplicate meetings with overtime for the staff, rent for the venues, costs for Ms. Cobb, etc. A report on the 3 p.m. meeting in Quemado will follow. Trustee Wagner called several members in the area who are trying to spread the word about the meeting and is heading for Quemado to reach business people in the area. Something ironic to close with: Trustee Dave Wade rose during the Q & A in Magdalena to state that "We didn't have these problems before Charlie came on the board."