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CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-___

INTRODUCED BY:

Mayor David Coss

A RESOLUTION

REQUESTING CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES TO LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY'S PROPOSED PLAN OF LEAVING NUCLEAR WASTES BURIED IN PLACE AT TA-54, AREA G; URGING INSTEAD FOR FULL CHARACTERIZATION AND EXCAVATION OF THE WASTES, OFFSITE DISPOSAL OF ANY HIGH-LEVEL, TRANSURANIC, AND MIXED LOW LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTES; AND DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO INFORM THE NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT AND RELEVANT STATE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES.

WHEREAS, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) has announced its preferred alternative to leave approximately one million cubic meters of radioactive, toxic and hazardous wastes buried in place at Material Disposal Area G in Technical Area-54, which the New Mexico Environment Department must approve or not; and

WHEREAS, Area G is a 63-acre site, which started accepting radioactive, toxic and hazardous wastes in 1957 when record keeping was poor; and

WHEREAS, Area G is located 18 miles from the Santa Fe Plaza, just west of the residential

1 community of White Rock, and 5 miles from the Buckman Well Field near the Rio Grande, which
2 provides drinking water for the City of Santa Fe; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Area G is located 0.10 miles from the Pueblo de San Ildefonso boundary, 8.78
4 miles from the boundary of the Pueblo of Santa Clara, 9.83 miles from the boundary of the Pueblo of
5 Pojoaque, 11.95 miles from the boundary of the Pueblo of Tesuque , 13.56 miles from the center of
6 the Pueblo of Nambe. 14.1 miles from the boundary of the Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh; 14.03 miles
7 from the center of the City of Espanola, 17.54 miles from the center of the Village of Tesuque, 54.25
8 miles from the center of the Town of Taos, 5.44 miles from the center of Los Alamos; and

9 **WHEREAS**, LANL was not originally chosen for its geologic qualities as a permanent
10 nuclear waste disposal site; and

11 **WHEREAS**, LANL is located in a complex seismic zone above both the Rio Grande and a
12 sole source aquifer providing drinking water for 270,000 people, including the City of Santa Fe; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Area G wastes are buried in unlined pits, trenches and shafts dug directly into
14 the volcanic tuff, in contrast to the composite liners and leachate collection systems that the New
15 Mexico Environment Department requires of local governments; and

16 **WHEREAS**, LANL has claimed that full cleanup of Area G would cost the inflated sum of
17 29 billion dollars, but nevertheless recently successfully excavated its smaller Materials Disposal
18 Area B for 136 million dollars; and

19 **WHEREAS**, extrapolation from Area B's actual costs demonstrates that full cleanup of Area
20 G could be completed for around 6 billion dollars, or less than the cost of four years' worth of the
21 Lab's nuclear weapons programs that generated the wastes to begin with; and

22 **WHEREAS**, full cleanup of Area G would be a win-win for New Mexicans, permanently
23 protecting our precious groundwater and the Rio Grande while creating 100's of high paying jobs for
24 twenty years or more;

25

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**
2 **CITY OF SANTA FE** that the governing body hereby urges the New Mexico Environment
3 Department (NMED) to NOT allow the *de facto* creation of a permanent nuclear waste dump by
4 approving "cap and cover" of the estimated one million cubic meters of radioactive and hazardous
5 wastes at LANL's Area G; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the governing body hereby requests that NMED
7 should require full characterization and excavation of the wastes; and offsite disposal of any
8 transuranic or mixed low-level radioactive wastes; and

9 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that in the unlikely event any high-level radioactive wastes
10 are found and excavated, they must be safely isolated in Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS) until
11 transported offsite to another Department of Energy (DOE) site or final disposal at a future national
12 high-level waste repository; and

13 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, wastes at TA-54 should be completely excavated with no
14 new disposal of wastes; and

15 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, DOE and LANL closure and post-closure plans for
16 Technical Area-54 must be submitted to NMED prior to NMED's issuance of its Statement of Basis
17 for Area G; and

18 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NMED should provide for a public hearing as required
19 by the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act and the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
20 (RCRA) laws and regulations requiring protection of human health and the environment on all
21 matters pertaining to comprehensive cleanup of TA-54; and

22 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the governing body urges the DOE and LANL to
23 conduct the seismic field studies as required by DOE Orders and industry standards which must be
24 completed before any TA-54 cleanup decisions are made by NMED and to conduct field studies of
25 the groundwater below LANL as recommended in 2007 by the National Academy of Sciences "Plans

1 and Practices for Groundwater Protection at the Los Alamos National Laboratory” and as required by
2 the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act; and

3 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the governing body believes an excavation pilot
4 project at Area G to demonstrate feasibility of full cleanup would be prudent, based upon the recent
5 successful completion of Material Disposal Area B; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the New Mexico House Radioactive & Hazardous
7 Materials and Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committees should hold public hearings on all
8 matters pertaining to comprehensive cleanup of Area G; and

9 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the governing body directs the City Clerk to send
10 copies of this resolution to the New Mexico Environment Department, our congressional delegation,
11 our governor, the Department of Energy, the National Nuclear Security Administration , Los Alamos
12 National Security LLC, and the two New Mexico legislative committees referenced herein.

13 PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2013.

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16 ATTEST:

DAVID COSS, MAYOR

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YOLANDA Y. VIGIL, CITY CLERK

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21 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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24 KELLEY A. BRENNAN, INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY

25 *M/Melissa/Resolutions/Nuclear Waste – LANL - final*