

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT  
OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
COMMISSION HEARING

Adoption of Agenda  
and  
Adoption of February 28, March 1 and March 8, 2017  
Special Meeting Minutes  
and  
Other Business and Pending Litigation

April 4, 2017

Santa Fe, New Mexico

BEFORE DAVID R CATANACH, CHAIRPERSON  
PATRICK PADILLA, COMMISSIONER  
DR ROBERT S BALCH, COMMISSIONER  
BILL BRANCARD, ESQ

This matter came on for hearing before the  
New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission on Tuesday,  
April 4, 2017, at the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and  
Natural Resources Department, Wendell Chino Building,  
1220 South St Francis Drive, Porter Hall, Room 102,  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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1 (9 06 a m )

2 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Call the hearing to  
3 order this morning This is the meeting of the  
4 New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission My name is  
5 David Catanach, Chairman of the Commission The time is  
6 about 9 05 a m on April 4th, 2017 This meeting is  
7 being conducted in Porter Hall within the Wendell Chino  
8 State Building At this time I will take roll

9 Will the Commissioners please introduce  
10 themselves for the record?

11 COMMISSIONER PADILLA Patrick Padilla,  
12 designee of the New Mexico Commission of Public Lands

13 COMMISSIONER BALCH Dr Robert Balch,  
14 designee of the Secretary of Energy, Minerals and  
15 Natural Resources

16 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Thank you,  
17 Commissioners

18 Also present is Bill Brancard, Commission  
19 attorney, and Florene Davidson

20 The first order of business, Commissioners,  
21 in your packet, you should have an agenda for today's  
22 meeting If you reviewed the agenda, do I hear a motion  
23 to adopt -- a motion and a second to adopt the agenda?

24 COMMISSIONER PADILLA I've reviewed it,  
25 and I would move to adopt it

1 COMMISSIONER BALCH I have also reviewed  
2 it, and I second the motion

3 CHAIRMAN CATANACH All in favor?  
4 (Ayes are unanimous )

5 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Motion to adopt the  
6 agenda for today's meeting is passed

7 Also in your packet are a couple more  
8 things, the draft minutes from the Commission meeting  
9 that was conducted February 28th through March 1st,  
10 2017

11 Commissioners, if you've reviewed the  
12 minutes, do you have any changes? If not, is there a  
13 motion and a second to adopt the minutes?

14 COMMISSIONER BALCH I have no changes, and  
15 I move to adopt

16 COMMISSIONER PADILLA I've also reviewed  
17 them, and I have no changes, and I second that motion

18 CHAIRMAN CATANACH All in favor?  
19 (Ayes are unanimous )

20 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Motion to adopt the  
21 minutes from the Commission meeting conducted February  
22 28th through March 1st, 2017 is passed

23 Also in your packet are the draft minutes  
24 from the March 8th, 2017 Commission meeting

25 Again, Commissioners, if you've reviewed

1 the minutes, do you have any changes? And if not, is  
2 there a motion and a second to adopt the minutes?

3 COMMISSIONER PADILLA I've reviewed them  
4 I have no changes, and I move to adopt them

5 COMMISSIONER BALCH I would second the  
6 motion

7 CHAIRMAN CATANACH All in favor?

8 (Ayes are unanimous )

9 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Motion to adopt the  
10 March 8th, 2017 Commission meeting is passed

11 (The proceedings conclude, 9 08 a m )

12 (10 16 a m )

13 CHAIRMAN CATANACH So I wanted to bring up  
14 to the Commission while we have the opportunity, we  
15 did -- by way of background, we did have another  
16 application for a de novo hearing that I would like to  
17 brief you guys on This case was heard by the Division  
18 on September 29th, 2016 As a result of that hearing,  
19 Order Number R-14300 was issued on February 21st This  
20 was an application where Mewbourne Oil Company came in  
21 and sought to revoke the injection authority granted  
22 under SWD-744 for the particular well, the Willow Lake  
23 Well Number 1H, which was currently operated by Pyote  
24 Well Service, LLC, Eddy County, New Mexico And just a  
25 brief discussion of the case Mewbourne and, I believe,

1 some other parties -- I'm not certain -- that were  
2 involved in that came in, and their contention was that  
3 this particular well was injecting into an interval in  
4 the Bone Spring Formation Mewbourne and some other  
5 parties contended that due to that injection, some  
6 additional reserves or some reserves were being watered  
7 out or being affected by the injection in some of their  
8 offset horizontal wells

9 The Division heard that case and issued  
10 that order and effectively approved Mewbourne's  
11 application We ordered the operator of that particular  
12 well to -- effective April 1st, to shut the well in and  
13 cease injection

14 Pyote has applied for a de novo hearing on  
15 that matter and has requested the May 18th Commission  
16 docket for that particular case They've also requested  
17 in their application that a stay of that particular  
18 order, R-14300 -- that the order be stayed until such  
19 time as the hearing is conducted and a decision is  
20 reached by the Commission

21 A couple of things I guess the de novo  
22 hearing will be granted That's -- that's pretty much  
23 automatic The hearing will be held on May 18th I  
24 guess with regards to the stay -- and correct me if I  
25 misstep here, Mr Brancard But I have the authority to

1 make a ruling on the stay by myself But, I mean, would  
2 it be appropriate for the Commission to discuss that  
3 stay?

4 MR BRANCARD You have to put it on the  
5 agenda of the meeting to discuss it I mean, that's --  
6 you know

7 COMMISSIONER BALCH It's not on the agenda  
8 today?

9 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Right

10 COMMISSIONER BALCH So the next time -- we  
11 have to have a special meeting

12 COMMISSIONER PADILLA Don't we have  
13 something April 24th?

14 COMMISSIONER BALCH Yes, deliberations

15 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Deliberations

16 COMMISSIONER PADILLA It's not a formal  
17 meeting?

18 MR BRANCARD We should discuss that --  
19 whether you -- whether you just want that to be a closed  
20 deliberation meeting or whether you also want that to  
21 later open up into a later meeting where you announce a  
22 decision

23 COMMISSIONER BALCH Tuesday, the 25th,  
24 we're deliberating COG versus Mewbourne

25 COMMISSIONER PADILLA 25th?

1                   CHAIRMAN CATANACH    I don't have an issue  
2 making a decision on the stay    If the Commission wants  
3 to be involved in that, we can certainly schedule that  
4 to be on that date

5                   COMMISSIONER BALCH    I don't have an  
6 opinion on that    I'll let you make the decision on the  
7 stay    I'm fine

8                   CHAIRMAN CATANACH    We can -- if we do it  
9 that way, I can take care of all of this without  
10 involving the Commission and then schedule the hearing  
11 for May 18

12                   COMMISSIONER PADILLA    Again, for the sake  
13 of expediency --

14                   COMMISSIONER BALCH    That means another six  
15 weeks of operation of the SWD

16                   CHAIRMAN CATANACH    Right    And my concern  
17 would be the protection of the oil and gas reserves  
18 That'll be a primary concern when I make that decision  
19 on the stay

20                   COMMISSIONER BALCH    Okay    I'll trust your  
21 judgment on it

22                   CHAIRMAN CATANACH    So I'll go ahead and  
23 decide that stay

24                                We might want to talk about scheduling on  
25 the May 18th hearing    If the Roswell case is also going

1 to be heard on that date, we may want to check to see  
2 the availability of the Commission on the 19th

3 COMMISSIONER BALCH I think I'm available  
4 On the 17th, I could be available as well, and it looks  
5 like I'm available the next week as well

6 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Wow

7 COMMISSIONER BALCH I found a window

8 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Did the airlines close?

9 COMMISSIONER BALCH Yeah I found a  
10 window between China and somewhere else

11 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Well, I guess I would  
12 suggest that we go with the 18th and 19th, depending on  
13 Mr Padilla

14 COMMISSIONER PADILLA I'm fairly certain I  
15 can find the time

16 COMMISSIONER BALCH And if we did have it  
17 extended, I believe I'm available the next week

18 COMMISSIONER PADILLA 17th, I'm not  
19 available, but the 18th and 19th, yes

20 CHAIRMAN CATANACH I think, if I'm not  
21 mistaken, in talking to the Examiners, that Mewbourne --  
22 and I might ask Mr Bruce

23 Did that last one day, Mr Bruce?

24 MR BRUCE No Actually, in that case,  
25 Mr Chairman, I represented Kaiser-Francis Ms Kessler

1 and Mr Feldewert represented Mewbourne

2 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Mr Feldewert, do you  
3 remember how long that lasted?

4 MR FELDEWERT 1 00 to 6 00

5 CHAIRMAN CATANACH So it was half a day

6 MR BRUCE But, Mr Chairman, there may be  
7 an additional witness that we may present, that  
8 Kaiser-Francis may present And so as you know, with  
9 more questioners, more time

10 CHAIRMAN CATANACH More lawyers, more  
11 questions

12 MR BRUCE You bet

13 COMMISSIONER BALCH More Examiners

14 CHAIRMAN CATANACH So you're free?

15 COMMISSIONER PADILLA (Indicating )

16 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Okay We'll just hold  
17 that 19th in reserve, because on the Roswell thing,  
18 we're going to have to hear the case and make open  
19 deliberations on the rule change -- on the proposed rule  
20 change So I don't envision that taking long, but it  
21 could take a while

22 COMMISSIONER BALCH That's essentially a  
23 day for each case It should be sufficient

24 CHAIRMAN CATANACH I would think so,  
25 definitely

1                   Okay    Should we talk about the April  
2 25th --

3                   Do we need to say anything on that,  
4 Mr Brancard?

5                   MR BRANCARD    Well, it depends on when you  
6 want to announce your decision    So you can hold this as  
7 an entirely closed meeting just for deliberations, and  
8 it stays that way, but then you would announce your  
9 decision at the next meeting of the Commission    Or you  
10 can say this is a part closed, part open meeting and, at  
11 the end of your deliberations, go into open session and  
12 announce the decision and direct somebody to prepare an  
13 order, for purposes of Florene having to get the notice  
14 right and get all the Open Meetings Act compliance here  
15 That's the issue here

16                   COMMISSIONER BALCH    It's been more typical  
17 to deliberate a case and then make a decision and  
18 announcement right away

19                   CHAIRMAN CATANACH    It would save some time  
20 as far as getting an order prepared    And in that case,  
21 we could finalize the order at the May 18th hearing and  
22 sign that order at that time opposed to announcing the  
23 decision at that time and going --

24                   COMMISSIONER BALCH    Or we could hedge and  
25 say a decision may be made

1 MR BRANCARD I think we could say that,  
2 that a decision may be made

3 CHAIRMAN CATANACH So that would be a  
4 partially closed and partially open meeting

5 COMMISSIONER PADILLA It will be open, and  
6 then we'll go into closed session right away and then  
7 announce in the afternoon

8 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Okay So we'll  
9 schedule it that way

10 So did you want to give us any --

11 MR BRANCARD Oh Just an update with  
12 where we are with litigation, we have two cases The  
13 geothermal case remains stuck in the district court  
14 judge's hands We had a motion to dismiss We had a  
15 hearing on that motion now over six months ago, and we  
16 have no decision from the judge in that case If he  
17 denies the motion to dismiss, then we'll brief the case  
18 That's where we are on the geothermal case

19 Slightly related to that is that the entity  
20 that has the permit did, in fact, declare bankruptcy,  
21 and I don't see -- in the last few weeks So they are  
22 in bankruptcy court now, and we will, through the  
23 Attorney General's Office, enter an appearance in the  
24 case to protect our interest with the permits We don't  
25 necessarily file a claim But we now have this sort of

1 routine The AG's Office does a very good job  
2 representing our agencies in proceedings In the world  
3 these days, there is a number of those So we will  
4 enter an appearance in that case, too

5 The second case is the Jalapeno-Matador  
6 matter, which is now being briefed Jalapeno filed  
7 their brief in chief, and we'll be filing our briefs in  
8 the next week or two NMOGA filed to intervene in the  
9 case And there is a slightly confusing order from the  
10 judge It appears that they have been granted  
11 intervening status, and then the judge goes on to  
12 discuss the amicus brief they're going to file So --

13 COMMISSIONER BALCH Okay

14 MR BRANCARD -- it's a little strange  
15 But anyway, they're in the case The Division has also  
16 filed to intervene We'll be asking the judge to sign  
17 on that, too

18 That's where we are on litigation

19 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Do we need to talk  
20 about legislative issues at all?

21 MR BRANCARD The Legislature was  
22 exciting

23 COMMISSIONER PADILLA Enough said

24 MR BRANCARD Nothing -- nothing -- well,  
25 we did get legislation passed on the brine well -- the

1 brine well issue, creating local authority -- decision  
2 making on the brine well, and then there is a whole slew  
3 of memorials, some of which actually got through

4 CHAIRMAN CATANACH To my knowledge, I  
5 thought only the venting and flaring got through SM-102,  
6 which requires the Division to produce a report sometime  
7 this year on venting and flaring and the biggest -- or  
8 the companies that flare and vent the most and that kind  
9 of thing and the reasons why and the possible solutions  
10 out there to the problem So sometime this year, we'll  
11 have to compose that report and probably testify before  
12 an interim committee at some point, I would think

13 COMMISSIONER BALCH That might be just the  
14 acid gas people Something else to work on on your  
15 weekends

16 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Anyway, so I think  
17 that's it Is there anything else? Anything further of  
18 us that we need to discuss?

19 COMMISSIONER PADILLA Nothing further from  
20 me

21 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Okay With that --

22 MR FELDEWERT Mr Chairman, I do have one  
23 request

24 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Mr Feldewert

25 MR FELDEWERT Yes It relates to that

1 case you bought up earlier, 15519, the Division hearing,  
2 R-14300

3 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Yes, sir

4 MR FELDEWERT It's my understanding that  
5 out of the order, the well was to be shut in by April  
6 1st I do not know whether that has happened As you  
7 also know, the parties who appeared in that case have  
8 likewise filed an objection with the Commission for  
9 request for a stay The motion for a stay, seems to me,  
10 can be addressed fairly quickly, but my fundamental  
11 point is that I don't think the filing of a motion for a  
12 stay alleviates the requirement that they shut in the  
13 order -- or that they shut in the well So I don't know  
14 what the status is I don't know what your timetable is  
15 on addressing that motion for a stay, but we obviously  
16 do have concerns with the continued injection of that  
17 well and the apparent -- and the issue as to whether the  
18 Division order has been complied with

19 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Good point,  
20 Mr Feldewert We will look into that, and we will try  
21 and get the stay order issued as soon as we can

22 MR FELDEWERT Thank you

23 CHAIRMAN CATANACH Thank you

24 There being nothing further, this meeting  
25 of the Commission is adjourned

(The proceedings conclude, 10 30 a m )

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
2 COUNTY OF BERNALILLO

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4 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

5 I, MARY C HANKINS, Certified Court  
6 Reporter, New Mexico Certified Court Reporter No 20,  
7 and Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify  
8 that I reported the foregoing proceedings in  
9 stenographic shorthand and that the foregoing pages are  
10 a true and correct transcript of those proceedings that  
11 were reduced to printed form by me to the best of my  
12 ability

13 I FURTHER CERTIFY that the Reporter's  
14 Record of the proceedings truly and accurately reflects  
15 the exhibits, if any, offered by the respective parties

16 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither  
17 employed by nor related to any of the parties or  
18 attorneys in this case and that I have no interest in  
19 the final disposition of this case

20

21



22

MARY C HANKINS, CCR, RPR  
Certified Court Reporter  
New Mexico CCR No 20  
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