Minutes of the Meeting of the Clean Coal Review Board

April 30, 2014

Room 100

Illinois State Capitol Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Chairman Luechtefeld called the meeting to order at 8:45 am.

Members present: Senator Dave Luechtefeld, Representative Mike Bost, Senator Sam McCann, Senator Andy Manar, Representative John Cavaletto, Representative Jerry Costello II, Mr. Phil Gonet, Mr. Joe Angleton, and Dr. Rita Cheng.

Minutes of the November 6, 2013 meeting were discussed and Mr. Phil Gonet pointed out some corrections and those minutes have been amended.

A motion was made to approve the minutes, as corrected, by Mr. Phil Gonet. The motion was seconded by Rep. Jerry Costello II.

Report of Ongoing Projects was discussed by Senator Luechtefeld and Tomasz Wiltowski.

A motion to accept these reports was made by Representative Mike Bost and that motion was seconded by Mr. Joe Angleton.

Senator Luechtefeld asked members of the Board to take a look at old business, new proposals, and new business.

On the order of new business, Senator Luechtefeld opened a discussion on the SIU proposal. Senator Luechtefeld started the discussion by stating that he realized that there was some concern on whether or not the ICCRB had gotten good results over the years with their $20 million dollars. Could we have done something better? What can we do with the remaining monies? At the last meeting we had proposed a Department of Energy at SIU. After asking the University to come up with a plan, we have decided to create an SIU Department of Energy.

Dr. Rita Cheng believes that SIU would benefit greatly from a Department of Energy at the school. There is already high demand for their Department of Engineering, Chemical Engineering. A Department of Energy would be an opportunity to support research that would attract good students. They will take a look at housing, scholarships, and funding.

Tomasz Wiltowski adds that this proposed Department of Energy would boost energy research and would be a chance to grow in the areas of chemical engineering, energy storage, gasification, mining. With this plan, creation of a new Department, we are on the right track.

Representative Cavaletto asks if there will be a Futuregen connection? Will EIU be involved? Can we do some alternate work in that area?
Dr. Rita Cheng says that there can be a partnership with EIU; students can transfer to the U of I’s Department of Engineering. Representative Cavaletto is interested in seeing more people working together.

Phil Gonet asks what will the process be, once they get a formal proposal.

Dr. Cheng replies that the campus process takes the longest and then IBHE will also have to be involved. When Mr. Phil Gonet stated that it will take months to go through the process, Dr. Cheng stated that she is working to speed up the process, but it will more than likely take several months.

Mr. Phil Gonet asks if IBHE is receptive to proposals such as this and Dr. Cheng responds that they are and they will ask questions. Representative Jerry Costello and Mr. Phil Gonet ask what the total cost will be after 4 years. Dr. Cheng replies that it will be self-sustaining.

Representative Mike Bost asks what guarantee we have that this will be a long-term school. Will there be friction studies?

Dr. Cheng answers that endowments will ensure that this is long-term and friction studies will still be done. She also states that a Department within the school is better than a project – a Department is sustainable because it is a department. The small Department of Mining for example, has been around for a while. Endowments could be considered for scholarships.

Joe Angleton asks if the funding will be incremental or if all money would be needed up front. Dr. Cheng states that we can work on details of a budget for FY16, before we get off the ground. By fall of 2015, have faculty established, funding in bank, some endowed money.

Tomasz Wiltowski says that those faculties are important and that scholarships offer procurement. He then asks what kind of expertise will these students have in 3, 4, or 5 years. Are there good results from both sides? Mr. Joe Angleton answers that there are 9 or 10 mining students graduating this year. All were offered jobs before graduation – 100% placement.

Phil Gonet states that this is what we need...that it is skewed as high-cost...but they’ve reduced it. Tom Wiltowski states that there is an optimistic placement of mining engineers.

Senator Luechtefeld tells the Board that the scholarships will help kids and that there is obviously no guarantee that we will be successful, but we will have a better chance of producing students who will apply for grants to keep things going. Representative Cavaletto mentions getting the private sector involved, hit all of that – government, state, federal – they will all support this. Phil Gonet adds that the Illinois Mining Institute – with money from an annual meeting will offer $20,000 per year for mining scholarships and they will strongly support this. Dr. Cheng adds field trips and internships as another way to garner support.

Senator Sam McCann asks “what do we need to do today?”

Representative Costello asks what are the chances of anti-coal groups coming in to try to take the money or the funding. Senator Luechtefeld directs the question to Mr. Phil Gonet who replies that no, they can’t target our money.
Dr. Cheng states that we are going to do this. We will move forward with approval, letters of support, endorsements for local kids and kids all around the State of Illinois. She will provide more details for the Board at the next meeting.

Senator Sam McCann wants the focus of the school to be how to burn more Illinois coal in Illinois. Senator Dave Luechtefeld ensures the Board that we will do everything we can to make this happen.

The Board looks at legislation this year before the Illinois General Assembly;

HB 5939 – CURRIE – this bill was re-referred to the House Rules Committee on 3/8/14
HB 5660 – CONROY – this bill was re-referred to the House Rules Committee on 4/11/14
HR 782 – PHELPS-BOST – this resolution was adopted on 5/30/14 with a vote of 66-36-2

A motion to adjourn was made by Senator Luechtefeld. Representative Bost agreed with the motion and it was seconded by Representative Jerry Costello, II.