

## **STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN TUCCI REGARDING THE PROPOSED STANDBY POWER GENERATION FACILITY**

Before we start with the agenda for today's meeting, I want to make a few comments about the Standby Power Generating Facility (or, as we sometimes call it, the "SPGF") that is part of PVSC's ongoing resiliency project. Over the last several months, PVSC has received input from parties interested in the SPGF. Some comments have come during our public Commissioners Meetings. In addition, PVSC has held a number of public meetings dedicated to only the SPGF project, and we have received comments during those meetings. We have also received comments via email. Finally, we have had numerous conversations directly with members of the public. We will continue to receive comments through all of these methods, or through any other method of communication that will help to facilitate discussion on this important issue.

The most recent public meeting dedicated to the SPGF project was held just two weeks ago, on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two questions were asked during that meeting that I would like to address. The first question is whether the Commissioners are aware of the comments that PVSC has received from the public regarding the SPGF. The answer is yes, we are. As I said, many of the comments have been given during meetings such as the one we are having today. With regard to comments that are received via other methods of communication or at other public meetings that PVSC holds to discuss the SPGF, those comments are forwarded to the Commissioners for our review and consideration.

The second question that was asked is why the Commissioners have not attended the three public meetings that PVSC has held to discuss the SPGF. As our General Counsel explained at the time, the reason is because we wish to avoid the conflict that attendance in such situations inherently causes. No individual Commissioner has the authority to bind this Commission to any course of action. Further, no Commissioner should pre-judge or be asked to pre-judge a matter or commit to a particular point of view before a matter is submitted to the entire Board for consideration, or really even comment on a matter before it is submitted to the entire Board for consideration. It simply is not appropriate for any of us to do that. So if one or even several of us attended a meeting, it creates frustration for both the public and for us. The public is frustrated because they feel that they are not getting answers and that the Commissioner is ducking questions. The Commissioner is frustrated because she or he knows that she or he cannot answer the questions being asked and cannot promise that she or he will act in a particular way with regard to the matter in the future. We do not want to put either the public or ourselves in that kind of situation.

With that in mind, let me reiterate the answer to the first question. We have received your comments. As with any comments received on any matter that comes before this Board, those comments will be considered by the Commissioners during our deliberations on whatever action we ultimately do or do not take.

I would like to close my remarks by repeating something our General Counsel stated several times at the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, and something that our Executive Director has stated several times during each Commissioners Meeting since June. This Board has NOT made any decision yet as to how it will proceed with the SPGF. In June, and in response to your comments, we set out a plan of action to revisit our original thinking on this matter. That plan of action has been implemented and we will continue to follow it until we are satisfied that we have enough information to make a decision on how to move forward.

When I look at our Board, I am both heartened and proud to see well over 100 years of collective public service. I did not misspeak – together, the people before you have dedicated over a century of our lives to helping others. We are elected officials; we are public employees; we are educators; we are firefighters; we raise money for charities; we are religious community leaders; we are veterans; we coach Little League; and we teach Sunday School. Most of all, we are people. All of us live in the communities that make up PVSC – it is a requirement to serve on this Board. Many of us were born and raised here. We are your friends and your neighbors.

We do not always agree with each other on each issue that comes before this Board. One thing on which we all agree, however, is that formulating good policy requires an open mind, one without pre-judgment. That is the commitment that this Board makes to the public on this matter and on every matter. We will carefully consider every comment that we receive, along with information provided to us by our staff and by our technical team, and we will carefully consider information provided to us by outside consultants with whom our team has been meeting throughout this process, and we will make our decision after careful, thoughtful deliberation regarding all of the options that are before us.