

1 CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

2 RESOLUTION NO. 2013-111

3 INTRODUCED BY:

4 Mayor David Coss

6 Councilor Patti Bushee

7 Councilor Rebecca Wurzbarger

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9  
10 A RESOLUTION

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

18  
19 WHEREAS, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) has announced its preferred  
20 alternative to leave approximately one million cubic meters of radioactive, toxic and hazardous  
21 wastes buried in place at Material Disposal Area G in Technical Area-54, which the New Mexico  
22 Environment Department must approve or not; and

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

25 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         **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**

1 CITY OF SANTA FE that the governing body hereby urges the New Mexico Environment  
2 Department (NMED) to NOT allow the *de facto* creation of a permanent nuclear waste dump by  
3 approving “cap and cover” of the estimated one million cubic meters of radioactive and hazardous  
4 wastes at LANL’s Area G; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act; and

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

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

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

12 PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED this 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2013.

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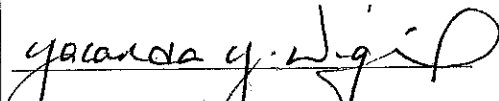


15 ATTEST:

DAVID COSS, MAYOR

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18 YOLANDA Y. VIGIL, CITY CLERK

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20 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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23 KELLEY A. BRENNAN, INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY

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*M/Melissa/Resolutions/2013-111 Nuclear Waste - LANL - final*