

**ETP Special Meeting
April 20, 2009
(Minutes in Verbatim Format)**

Meeting began at 1:53 p.m.

Brian McMahon, Executive Director: Please call the roll.

Sheryl Sheehan, Executive Assistant:

Barry Broad has recused himself from this project due to a conflict of interest and is not present today.

Greg Campbell – here

Bart Florence – here

Scott Gordon – absent

Jennifer Grutzius – (arrived after initial roll call at 1:55 p.m.)

Janine Montoya – here – Ms. Montoya is participating by conference call from Tri County Air Conditioning and Fireplaces in Newbury Park, CA, as published in the special meeting notice.

Edward Rendon has recused himself from this project due to a conflict of interest and is not present today.

Janice Roberts – absent

Sheryl Sheehan: Therefore, we do not have a quorum at this time. There are only three members present; one by conference call and two in person.

Brian McMahon: So, I certainly apologize to all of you who made the effort of coming up here. As of this morning, we believed that we had a quorum. An emergency has arisen, and we no longer have a quorum. So the Panel is unable to take any action today. Are there any public comments?

Jose Ramirez: Mr. McMahon, my name is Jose Ramirez, and I would like to acknowledge that I was here today for this meeting. I would like to make a few comments to the Board members that are here, as the City Manager for the City of Firebaugh.

This is very surprising to me that there is not a quorum today. It almost seems like it was strategic. I hope he does have an emergency. But we feel that there should have been made arrangements to actually have this hearing. Some of us drove three to four hours, and we actually left a lot of the things that we do on a

day-to-day basis to be up here. This is unfortunate because we need action to be taken. At the City of Firebaugh, when there is a board member with a conflict, typically what happens is, in order to meet the quorum, we actually ask that individual to come back in and participate. I'm not sure how this Board works, but at the last meeting I think that that should have taken place.

For the record, I would just like to say that our area has been devastatingly hit by the economic recession, and other issues. We just had four days of protest marching. The first day we had 4,500 people; the second day we had 1,200 people; the third day we had 800 people; and the last day we had over 10,000 people marching. We marched for eight miles per day because of the chronic water crisis that we are facing. We have a 40 percent unemployment rate; not just my city but the neighboring city, and the other city, San Joaquin, Mendota, Heron. That is why we need this training money. We definitely need the help, and we are trying to be great neighbors and partnering with our business community to do something for the people. Right now, we've had food drives that started at 3:00 p.m. and people were standing in line at 7:00 a.m. If there was not a need, those people would not be standing in line for five to six hours just to get a box of food, and it really disheartens me to see that this kind of thing is going on.

Brian McMahon: And let me say that we would not have scheduled this meeting, had we not believed that we had a quorum. We polled panel members all last week and this morning, and believed that we had the minimum number required.

Jose Ramirez: And there is no reflection on you or the Board members, just that we are really hurting and it just seems like nobody is listening to us and that is why I'm being passionate about what I'm saying. You know, the Governor showed up on Friday in front of 10,000 people and we were there, and we did everything we could. The City of Firebaugh spent a lot of money that we didn't even have to give food away. We are crying out for help, and it seems like nobody is listening to us. Issues that are on the other side of the mountains are totally different than the issues that we are facing on this side.

Brian McMahon: Well, ETP typically does not schedule special meetings like this. We did this in order to be responsive to your needs to begin training ahead of the season, and again we apologize for not reaching a quorum today.

Jose Ramirez: Well my hope and desire, sincerest desire, is that something can be done fairly quickly so that we don't hold all these people hostage for some much needed money. Thank you.

Meeting ended at 1:58 p.m.