



# Falmouth, Cape Cod, MA

## Falmouth Democratic Town Committee Monthly Newsletter: November, 20. 2015

### Minutes of the November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Meeting

**Megan English Braga**, Chair, called the meeting to order. She introduced **Lou Turner** who spoke briefly on the issue of the Family Medical Leave bill on Beacon Hill. The Town Committee voted to support the bill, and Lou passed out a list of Beach Hill contacts for members to use in calling in support of the bill.



Lou Turner in favorite sweater

**Anthony Morse**, **Bill Keating's** aide, spoke and asked us to let



Anthony Morse

**Keating** know how we felt about the Homeland Security bill on Syrian refugees. **Keating** is also working on issues of opioids and their use on the Cape, Lyme Disease issues, etc. He asked us to gear up for the election year.

**Michael Blanton**, Bourne Board of Selectmen and member of the Bourne Democratic Town Committee, introduced himself and announced that he may run against **Dave Vieira** in the next election. He has lived his whole life on the Cape and labeled himself as a champion of Main Street and has served on the Bourne Housing Authority.



Michael Blanton

**Megan** introduced our speaker, **Jessica Lambert**, Chief Information



Jessica Lambert

Officer for Next Generation Energy Initiative, an energy consulting group. Her research focuses on resource availability trends and their effect on societal well-being. Her topic was "Decommissioning Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station." She introduced herself by stating she would conduct the presentation as a fact-finding exercise and would discuss the issues intrinsic to nuclear power in an impartial "dispassionate" manner. Nuclear power provides a base load for our electricity use. She acknowledged the fear that residents have of fissionable plutonium

which could be used in bombs but pointed out that it is easier to create bombs in other ways than using a nuclear reactor.

**Jessica** touched on the scary issues of “Dirty Bombs,” and Radiation Poisoning. The ambient radiation poisoning coming off a reactor is negligible with the average exposure being less than one year’s exposure to natural radiation in the environment, less than an annual mammogram or radon in a home in a year. A melt down of a reactor, such as Chernobyl, does produce excessive radiation but this is generally contained quickly and the negative health effects appear to be mostly isolated to those in direct exposure to the radiation. According to the World Health Organization, increase in cancer rate has been minimal in Chernobyl and the surrounding areas except for increased risk of thyroid cancer and breast cancer in postmenopausal women.

In 2014, we purchased 39 percent of our nuclear reactor grade uranium from Russia and the former Soviet block, not from domestic uranium mines. This fuel is largely comprised of uranium from decommissioned nuclear bombs developed in the USSR during the nuclear arms race. Nuclear reactors are used in the process of decommissioning nuclear weapons - weapons of mass destruction.

The Pilgrim Plant provides 5 percent of our region’s energy and gives \$9 million in benefits back to Plymouth as well as employing 633 people. The average cost of decommissioning a nuclear reactor is \$300 to \$400 million, exclusive of disposing of the fuel rods. At the moment, we are paying extra on our electricity bills to go toward a decommissioning fund. There are several steps in decommissioning through the Safe Area Storage plan (SAFSTOR).

Most nuclear power plants were constructed with the intent of lasting 40 years. The state will need to replace the lost energy with a combination of renewables, natural gas, efficiency measures, etc. These options have been discussed in our press and have controversies associated with them. One example might be hydroelectric power from Canada, called the Northern Pass Project, or power from fracked liquefied natural gas (LNG).

There were numerous questions on the decommissioning process, how to account for externalities in cost analysis ( such as the costs of sending nuclear waste to other states, carbon polluting costs of using more coal, the use of renewables to replace nuclear ), etc. Members asked to discuss how long it would take to decommission and to develop replacement fuels, where these fuels would come from, etc.

**Jessica** was glad to take more questions at her email address: [JLambert@NGEI-USA.org](mailto:JLambert@NGEI-USA.org). Megan thanked her for her comprehensive presentation and for fielding the many questions on this important topic.

Submitted by **Kirstin Moritz**, Newsletter Editor and **Martha Gillis**, Photographer

#### **Calendar:**

The December Monthly Meeting is our seasonal party. The date is December 9 from 5-7 pm at the home of **Martha Gillis**, 24 Cooper Road. Invitation will follow.

#### **FDTC Officers:**

Chair: **Megan English Braga** at 508-540-3434 Ext. 4 and [attymeb@gmail.com](mailto:attymeb@gmail.com)

Vice Chair: **Scott Simenas** at 508-540-3490 and [scott\\_simenas@comcast.net](mailto:scott_simenas@comcast.net)

Treasurer: **Lloyd Beckett** at 508-563-6264 and papa@alum.mit.edu  
Secretary: **Lou Turner** at 508-540-3263 and InIturn5557@comcast.net  
Newsletter Editor: **Kirstin Moritz** at 508-540-8528 and kmoritz@verizon.net  
Affirmative Action/Outreach Advisor: **Hugh Gregory** at 508-548-4696 and moohu38@yahoo.com

**Annual Membership Fiscal Year: April 1 to March 31, 2016**

**Name: Precinct:**

**Address and Telephone:**

**Email Address:**

**Elected Committee Member (\$25 a year)\_\_\_\_\_**

**Associate Member (\$15 a year)\_\_\_\_\_**

**Newsletter by U.S. Mail is \$10 extra a year\_\_\_\_\_**

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