October 19, 2015

Mayor and Kalamazoo City Commission

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

Michigan Safe Energy Future is present to support the Resolution brought forth by the Sierra Club’s Nuclear Free Michigan Committee. The Sierra Club has also filed a legal brief with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission in support of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel (ASLBP) decision to grant our Coalition evidentiary hearings regarding the extremely degraded and old reactor pressure vessel at Palisades Nuclear Generating Station, not far from Kalamazoo and very near South Haven. It must be physically tested with the best technology available today.

The long-standing Coalition granted the hearings are the following esteemed organizations: Beyond Nuclear, D.C., Don’t Waste Michigan, Nuclear Energy Information Service, Illinois and Michigan Safe Energy Future-South Haven Chapter.

The NRC conceded in 2012 that Palisades has the worst embrittled reactor pressure vessel in America. This was also the leading safety issue raised by the Coalition and many interveners back as far as 2005 at the last licensing period and continuously thereafter.

A simple explanation of this major risk is: An activation of the Emergency Core Cooling System—the last line of defense against a reactor core meltdown at Palisades—could, ironically, invite catastrophe because as it “cools,” suddenly, injected cold water could cause “Pressurized Thermal Shock” (PTS) in the aging pressure vessel. High-pressure, magnified by the sudden temperature decrease could cause the pressure vessel to fracture due to embrittlement. This fracture will lead to a Loss of Coolant Accident with a core meltdown resulting in a catastrophic radioactivity release into the environment.

Thus, Palisades is at an extremely high risk of a Meltdown causing major radiation release.

Please note and remember about Palisades:
• It is within the 50-mile radiation zone as are many cities and towns in Michigan.
• Our Lake Michigan provides drinking water to over 7 million people and a meltdown would affect people in a 4-state area.
• There have been 3 “near misses” documented.
• It is one of the oldest nuclear plants in the World which is aging quickly without the necessary and required repairs done by its out-of-state owner, Entergy from Louisiana.

Again, we request, and strongly urge, the City of Kalamazoo to support this Resolution as a pro-active measure to protect our citizens. In addition, Michigan Safe Energy Future asks that our Mayor write a letter in support of the hearings, similar to that of the Grand Rapids Mayor. It would be helpful.

We cannot afford to lose our lives, our Lake Michigan and so much more.

Respectfully,

Michigan Safe Energy Future-Kalamazoo Chapter
Represented by Iris Potter, a Coordinator
Kalamazoo, MI