

## CONTROVERSIAL MEMBERSHIP HISTORY FOR TCLAB

July 2002, the Board of Supervisors re-convened the Technical Committee on Land Applied Biosolids after citizens expressed concern about the public health and safety of spreading sludge as "free fertilizer" on farmland near populated areas. The existing Committee contained six members all of whom had financial ties to sludge. The BOS was asked, at the time, by Barbara L. Rubin to appoint concerned citizens and farmers who do not use sludge to the Committee. (Out of 1,032 farms in Loudoun County only 15 held permits to spread Class B sludge. The TCLAB had 2 farmers who spread, none that did not.) The BOS did not act on her request. In the meantime, one slot occupied by an industry member was promptly filled with another industry member. There is a letter indicating Larry Yates, Department of Environmental Health, solicited industry applications to fill this available position.

In August/September, 2002, Lloyd Wright, an industry member, filled the slot. Mr. Wright was granted full voting rights and was elected vice-chairman, in spite of the fact he was not then officially confirmed by the BOS. Official confirmation did not occur until March 2003, when other new members were proposed to the BOS. The new members were also controversial.

Citizens protested against the TCLAB in a September 2002 public meeting. They asked the BOS to disband the Committee for apparent bias, and lack of credentials to deal with health issues. The BOS again did not act on the request. TCLAB, realizing it did not have public support, advertised for new members. Barbara Rubin, who by this time had researched sludge and the health issue for over a year, was encouraged by the Committee Chairman to apply. She did apply and was rejected by the Committee. Mr. Wright, from the sludge industry, spoke against her appointment, expressing concern that she was "biased."

Again the County Government and TCLAB had a public relations problem by preventing concerned citizens on the Committee filled with perceived sludge advocates. Sally Kurtz asked Barbara if she would still consider being on the Committee. She said yes. Three new member names (including Lloyd Wright) were forwarded to the Land Use Committee for confirmation, before being sent to the BOS for final approval. Sally Kurtz, Eleanore Towe, and Mark Herring are on this Committee. Jim Burton, and Chuck Harris also attended the meeting.

Many citizens, realizing for the first time Lloyd Wright was not officially a member of TCLAB, expressed their opposition to his appointment to the BOS and Land Use Committee. Supervisor Harris raised the fact the TCLAB committee exhibited bias by virtue of the fact that all existing members were connected to sludge in some way that might color their opinions. His opinion was countered by Jim Burton who said the Committee needed industry to be represented (it already was by Steve Cawthron, a supervisor of the Leesburg Sludge Plant). Susan Williams asked to speak, but was never given the floor before the first vote. She protested and was allowed to speak after the initial vote to accept Lloyd. In her statement, she pointed out Lloyd would be biased because of his financial ties to sludge, and he did not even live in Virginia, much less Loudoun County. Mark Herring replied that he had always said non-Loudoun County residents should not serve on committees. Jim Burton supported Lloyd by saying it is not a formal requirement. A second vote was taken and Lloyd Wright was approved by all three voting members on the Land Use Committee. Sally Kurtz submitted Barbara L. Rubin's nomination as a TCLAB member. All four candidate names went before the full BOS and were accepted.