MINUTE ITEM

34

03/26/87
W 17059
Lammers

City of Long Beach

Calendar Item 34 was pulled from the agenda prior to the meeting, no item being prepared.

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03/26/87
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PROPOSED COGENERATION FACILITY
LONG BEACH UNIT, WILMINGTON OIL FIELD
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The Long Beach Unit proposes to construct a 49 MW cogeneration facility to reduce operating costs. By July 1986 the annualized cost of power purchased from Southern California Edison had reached $37 million. Since July Edison has reduced this cost to about $25 million as a condition of the Unit agreeing to accept power shut down in the event Edison encounters a peak capacity overload. A feasibility study conducted by Bechtel Power Corporation determined that the Unit could self generate power at a cost substantially below Edison's reduced interruptible rate and also avoid the shut-down risk. The estimated capital cost is $65 million which includes purchasing existing Edison owned facilities located within and serving Unit operations. Design and construction would take approximately 2 years with a goal of start-up in April 1989.

It was proposed originally to fund the project through the Unit plan and budget. As a result of the severe impact on the budget of the oil price decline, other financing options have been examined. The impacts on the Unit would be:

1. LB Unit Cash Funded

Budget expenditures are estimated at approximately $2 million in 1986/87, $35 million in 1987/88 and $28 million 1988/89. This option would generate the highest cumulative cash benefit to the Unit, an estimated $305 million over 20 years of plant operation. The net present value (NPV) is $67 million based on 10% cash discount rate. The Unit would assume all project risks such as the future of oil prices, long term fuel gas prices and supplies, future commercial electrical energy rates and all plant maintenance and operating costs.

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The disadvantages of this alternative are that the tideland oil and gas revenues flowing through Public Resources Code Section 6217 to the various accounts would be reduced by $35 million and $28 million in 1987-88 and 1988-89 respectively. This would occur at the same time as these revenues are already reduced by 75% or more due to lower prices for crude oil and gas. A further disadvantage is that the Unit (of which the State has the largest share) would assume all risks of operation. Should oil prices remain low this risk could be quite high.

2. State Budget Funded

Financing provided by a capital outlay budget appropriation, throught the annual Governor's Budget. This would result in a very favorable return to the State. However, the budget would not become effective until July 1987 and the project's economics would suffer from time delay costs in implementing due to foregone energy savings (approximately $20 million per year). The delay could also adversely affect project permit applications in process and expose the project to more stringent licensing requirements currently under consideration at both state and federal levels.

The disadvantages here are that $60+ million would have to be appropriated out of current funds while revenues for capital projects from tideland oil sources are down substantially. This would mean that amount would not be available for other projects where outside financing is not possible as it is in this case. This alternative also suffers from the same risk assumption factors as under Alternative 1 above.

3. Retirement System Funding

The State Teachers Retirement Fund (STRS) expressed interest in providing investment capital. Public Employees Retirement System has not expressed an interest to date. STRS (or PERS) and Bechtel could enter into a joint financial arrangement wherein STRS would provide all or a major part of the capital. Bechtel would design, construct, operate and manage the facility and also possibly assume a partial capital equity position. The Unit would agree to purchase cogenerated power at a rate

lower than the prevailing utility rate. STRS would receive a return on investment comparable to that currently payable to a commercial lending institution. After STRS (or PERS) and Bechtel received adequate return on their investment (expected 12 years of plant operation) the facility would be turned over to the Unit at little or no cost. The Unit would have the benefit of all financial gain from then on, at the same time assuming all project costs and risks.

The estimated cumulative cash benefit to the Unit over 20 years would be about $200 million with a NPV of approximately $60 million. The extent of savings would be determined by the terms of the power purchase agreement.

The energy cost to the Unit would be lowered if the Unit was willing to assume some project risks which would be defined in a "take or pay" or "take on demand" arrangement.

In spite of possible interest by either of the state retirement systems ultimately the decision might be to not take such an investment opportunity. This would delay the project and incur the same foregone savings as Alternative 2 above.

4. Third Party Funded

Bechtel has expressed willingness to fully capitalize the project. Bechtel would design, construct, own and operate the plant for about 12 years and then turn it over completely to the Unit at little or no cost. The Unit would negotiate a power purchase contract with Bechtel similar to that described above in the retirement funded case. Bechtel would assume all project risks during its period of ownership.

A disadvantage is that this option would return the lowest net return to the State. The estimated 20 years cumulative savings to the Unit would be $177 million with a NPV of $39 million. While the total savings are $128 million less than under Alternatives 1 or 2, the State would have the use of $60+ million during the payout period. At a rate of 5.5% (assumed average rate for current Pooled Money Investment Fund earnings) the potential investment earnings would just about equal the savings loss.

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Although Bechtel has confirmed its commitment to build the project and sell power to the Unit, other suppliers may also be interested. In a case under this option the City, as Unit Operator, would enter into a power purchase agreement with a successful bidder through the City's competitive bid process.

A summary table of the above options is shown on Exhibit "A".

EXHIBITS:
A. Summary Table.
B. Project Financing Structure - Cash Funded Alternatives.
C. Project Financing Structure - Bechtel Funded Alternatives.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. DETERMINE THAT IT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE STATE TO HAVE THE PROPOSED 49MW COGENERATION PLANT CONSTRUCTED TO REDUCE ELECTRIC POWER COSTS TO THE LONG BEACH UNIT.

2. FIND THAT THE THIRD PARTY FUNDED ALTERNATIVE, WHEN CONSIDERED WITH THE MAXIMUM POTENTIAL REVENUES FLOWING FROM THE LONG BEACH UNIT AND THE MINIMAL RISK TO BE ASSUMED THEREUNDER, BEST SERVES THE NEEDS OF THE STATE.

3. RECOMMEND TO THE UNIT OPERATOR, THE CITY OF LONG BEACH, THAT IT ENTER INTO A POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH A THIRD PARTY COGENERATION DEVELOPER TO PROVIDE ELECTRIC POWER AT THE LEAST COST TO THE LONG BEACH UNIT.

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