

GOLDEN TRIANGLE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE
February 15, 2005
MINUTES

Walter Almon called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests.

Committee Reports:

Walter Almon gave the **Budget Committee Report**. Invoices were sent out for annual membership assessment. Please process those invoices and get the payments into the GTBR.

Walter Almon gave the Construction Industry Institute (CII) Report. A subcommittee is working on topics for a turnaround seminar. On February 23, 2005, 9:00 AM at ABC there will be a meeting on a philosophy call Lean Construction Methodology. Strategic Project Solutions will give a two-hour presentation. That same group will return in May to conduct a half-day seminar on this methodology, as it is a new methodology in the construction world. Please let Walter know if you or your organization wants to attend.

John Durkay gave the Legal Committee report. Things have heated up in Washington D.C. and Austin, Texas. Every two years the Texas Legislature convenes. No real change is expected this year. It is a continued concern that business will be asked to pay for schools. Franchise taxes may increase for smaller companies and those taxes may extend to partnerships, LLC and others. This is the number one issue before the legislature. During this session it will be inappropriate for additional tort reform laws to be introduced. The legislature took care of most tort reform during the last session. On the D.C. side things are happening in class action tort reform business. On the asbestos and silicosis side some extensive work has begun. An MDL is where you can take three to four hundred suits that have been spread across the state and put them in one pot. Asbestos covers a wide area from auto mechanics to foundries. Any help in this area will be welcomed.

Alan Brown reported for the Safety Committee. The full committee will meet in March. In April the subcommittees will split until after the safety awards banquet. One topic discussed for the contractor subcommittee to work on is the GTBR Safety Survey. They will review the surveys and compile information and give a report on the status of the survey. Changes for parts one and two of the submittal application have been completed. Parts three and four will not accompany parts one and two this year. It will be a surprise when the audit team visits your site facility. The submittal application will be mailed to your site plant manager and site safety representative. Owners must nominate the contractors and return the application to the GTBR Office by the deadline date of April 15, 2005. Applications will be mailed soon. The American Society of Safety Engineers had a successful showing of sixty-three members at the LOBO Show.

Program:

John Durkay gave the introduction of what the Federal government is doing for security and anti-terrorism. Brit Featherston with the U.S. Attorney's Office was unable to attend the meeting. Brit is responsible for the anti-terrorism task force. Anti-terrorism is an

important issue. The products plants deal with on a daily basis are hazardous. Knowing how to respond to an emergency first covers keeping casualties down. Boundaries don't mean anything in an emergency. Mutual aid was originally formed by the Sabine-Neches Chiefs Association to cover area disasters. Everyone works together to respond to fire, hazardous materials, police, waterfront, and the military as well as others. Over the years the Chiefs Association has grown. The anti-terrorism task force has developed a cooperating stance with the Chiefs Association.... in other words the Chiefs have let the anti-terrorism task force join the rest of the emergency response team.

The Southeast Texas alerting network predates 9/11 and is the best system for alerting the public. Background screens were developed prior to 9/11 as well. Our community has kicked it up a notch to improve on existing systems and is open to the development of new and better systems. The task force includes the U.S. Attorney's Office, The Department of Homeland Security, The Federal Bureau of Investigation, The Texas Department of Public Safety, County Sheriff's and Police Departments. This area has a great working relationship with the two key components associated with anti-terrorism and they are the FBI and Coast Guard. The Coast Guard is onsite and ready and they understand business. Their budget is small so they think practically.

Mark Brown views the anti-terrorism task force from Federal Bureau of Investigation standpoint. An incident at a plant is presumed an act of terrorism until proven otherwise. Prevention is the number one priority of the FBI. A short overview of the JTTF informed those attending today's luncheon that local people are in those positions and have a personal interest because they have families that live in the area as well. The JTTF is placed in areas of strategic targets for threats. Our infrastructure played a significant role in bringing in the JTTF as did our sheriffs and police departments. Mark stated that Captain Richey has helped coordinate a partnership between business and industry and government and law enforcement in this area.

Captain Richey was commissioned in 1981. She was a research chemist. Captain Richey stated that the U.S. Coast Guard is small but moves quickly and efficiently. The Coast Guard's history consist of the following:

- Steamboat Inspection Service
- Lighthouse Board
- Life Saving Service
- Revenue Cutter Service

Homeland Security – U.S. Coast Guard
Missions:

- Maritime Safety
- Law Enforcement – Drug Interdiction
- Search and Rescue
- Maritime Mobility – Ice Breaking
- Protection of Natural Resources – Marine Environment Response
- National Defense
- Homeland Security

Operation Noble Eagle – Work in U.S. and overseas

Congress was generous and new teams have been formed. Their boats have been upgraded. Marine safety and security teams were formed very quickly after 9/11. These guys are super law enforcement guys and rapidly deployable as well as capable and specialized. They are involved in field intelligence and review information to keep the area safe. Because of their involvement with deep water and rough seas they are getting new air equipment that will allow them to go farther offshore and protect the U.S. better. The helicopters will also prevent holding ships offshore for extended periods of time which will help local industry. The Coast Guard is not integrated into Homeland Security. They are on the outside and a separate organization. They have moved from the Social Security building located at Jimmy Johnson Boulevard and Highway 69 across the highway to the Bank building.

Military load out and escorting ships has been a very important part of their job. Boarding vessels has improved and has increased by five percent. They now know in advance which vessels they will board. They are on the waterways everyday. They are very involved with the Chiefs Association and have the opportunity to share information that helps prevent major transportation incidents. They are getting four new 25ft boats and four smaller boats. These boats will help with load outs. Questions were fielded from the group.

Adjourned.