



**9:00 a.m. via Zoom
January 21, 2021 - Meeting Notes**

Board Members Present: Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Tye Menser, Thurston County Commissioner; Edna Fund, Lewis County; Brian Shay, City of Hoquiam; Kris Koski, City of Aberdeen; Trent Loughheed, City of Chehalis; Steve Lyle, Town of Bucoda; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell; Dan Wood, City of Montesano; Ron Averill, City of Centralia

Board Members Absent: Richard Armstrong, City of Oakville; Shawn O'Neill, City of Aberdeen

Others Present: Dave Curtis, WEST; J. Vander Stoep; Jay Gordon; Chrissy Bailey; Raymond Walton; Jeff Budnick; Lee Napier

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from November 19, 2020
- Local Projects List
- Financial Reports
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/Default.aspx#Jan2021

1. Call to Order

Chair Raines called meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. Introductions

Introductions were made as participants logged in.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes or additions to the agenda and so approved by consensus.

4. Approval of November 19, 2020 meeting notes

There were no corrections or revisions. The meeting notes were approved by consensus.

5. Select Chair and Vice Chair for 2021

Scott stated there were eight nominations for Vickie Raines for Chair; for Vice Chair there were 7 nominations for Edna and 1 nomination for Brian. He asked for questions or clarifications. There was a question regarding the abstentions. Scott explained that there were some members who did not care to make a nomination. After discussion, it was decided to not use the term abstentions. Brian stated he would withdraw if Edna wanted to continue as Vice Chair. She stated she would like to continue. Ron made a motion to close the nominations. There was consensus to elect Vickie Raines for Chair and Edna Fund for Vice Chair.

6. Flood Warning System and Recent Storms

Dave Curtis presented a slide show with updated information about the Basin. He stated there are 96 gage sites and over 250 sensors. There are rain, stream and tide gages and weather stations, which provide a lot of data streaming through the website. The slides showed the total rainfall, atmospheric river events, precipitation forecasts, various graphs and more. He stated there are 252 individuals who have signed up for high water alert messages, and 1,314 gage signups. There were 2,852 alerts delivered in 2020. There are three webcams: Montesano wastewater treatment plant, Mellen Street, and at the Satsop River. There is a rain gage dashboard and a river cross section dashboard, and Dave explained all of the dashboards.

Next Steps: Dave reported that some gage relocations are necessary, either because of permitting or access issues, or tree growth over the last decade. One webcam may be relocated on the Lower Satsop River at the Port of Grays Harbor well.

Dave is testing forecasted high water alerts, which tests the ability to send out messages when water is soon to rise above flood stage. He is not sure if this should go to the public or only to first responders and the Flood Authority. He wants to be cautious not want to “over warn.”

How does the Flood Warning System in the Chehalis River basin compare to other basins? Dave stated “very well”, with several features that not everyone in the rest of the country is using – such as webcams. Some basins are larger (350 sites rain gages in a Texas basin). Our Basin should be very pleased with the site. The Flood authority pays for 12 gages and there are 80 more that are bought and paid for by other users. Jay Gordon stated he was very impressed with being able to see a few days in advance and how the gages corrected during the rain. He has a lot of confidence in the accuracy of the gages.

Kris stated there is a sensor over the Wishkah River and he would like to get information from the sensor sent out to everyone and perhaps get it tied into the Chehalis Basin system. Dave stated that the USGS gage at Montesano is still out of service (it is tied to the tides) and that it was used for high water alerts for that end of the Basin. Also, techniques used to forecast elevations in the river at Porter assume water can move only in one direction; if there is a coastal surge, their current technology does not work. Dave is trying to get other techniques to get decent forecasts in that area.

Scott thanked Dave for his system. Dave stated it is the Flood Authority’s system, and it is very gratifying to know that it works so well and is being used so extensively.

7. CFAR (Community Flood Assistance and Resilience) Update with Chrissy Bailey

Chrissy shared a PowerPoint that included the strategy for the next year. Eligible actions: Chrissy summarized the requests for technical support or assistance, and early opportunities for structure retrofits (such as in Bucoda) and the elevation certificate pilot (being implemented in Aberdeen). She explained the benefit to communities and tribes and to property owners.

Budget: \$3 million was allocated at the beginning of the program for site visits, etc. For funding to be allocated for Phase I Early Opportunity Programs (EOP) we have spent about \$500,000. At the end of the biennium there is \$750,000 to \$1 million left, and that does not include consultants, engineers, etc., or Phase II of Aberdeen work.

Kris stated that Aberdeen is taking the first steps to enter CRS; the city requested assistance visit from FEMA and they are scheduling a field visit for February 9. All of this started with French Wetmore going over flood protection codes, which were brought up to speed; speed processes were improved, and a series of steps leading to the February 9 visit. Credit to all for the assistance that Aberdeen has received.

Brian asked if other communities could tap into the Aberdeen pilot project. Chrissy stated yes, other communities can tap into this type of effort. The City has on-call contracts and can execute a task order with a surveyor to do the work. If Hoquiam does not have that capability, OCB can help, but an extra step is for OCB to hire a contractor or give funding and the city and statewide competitive process takes time.

Brian asked, regarding the budget, if there is a target for what CFAR will get out of the budget. Chrissy stated at this point there is not a dollar amount for CFAR. Depending on what moves forward, CFAR may be an implementation vessel under a local actions program instead of under CFAR. She, Jim Kramer and Andrea are discussing this.

8. Update on Local Projects

Scott has looked at all local projects that the Flood Authority has done from 2012 to 2021. There have been 29 physical construction projects at \$35 million and 24 planning projects at \$8 million. 82% of money spent was physically on the ground. The projects took an average of 867 days, with an average cost of \$827,000. This is a good story about local projects.

Looking forward, the PowerPoint showed local project submittals for the 2021-2023 biennium. The total requests add up to \$9.4 million. We are always looking for any surplus funds that might be used to jump-start these new project requests. Any work we can do now will make the request for funding that much smaller. He asked for help and perspective on preparing a story. He will be compiling the Flood Authority's requests for 2021-2023 and asking for feedback. He welcomes thoughts from all.

Lastly, the Montesano Wastewater Treatment Plant project has been completed. Log jacks were placed in front of the treatment plant. He showed before and after pictures – July 2018 was before. January 7, 21 shows log structures and the protected wastewater treatment plant. The latest photo shows debris catching on the log jacks, which shows the river moving away from the treatment plant. This is a great example of a solution that provides slowing the river down, collecting debris and protecting the facility.

9. Discussion – Local Resolutions

Last April the Flood Authority made an effort to adopt resolutions for a continuing effort to support basin-wide solutions to flooding. Scott would like to update that resolution. It could be given to the legislation now and later we could independently work with individual jurisdictions. Since the initial resolution and the one last April there have been many changes, and we probably should not rely on what we did last April to be passed along; it will be better to have a current resolution. J. Vander Stoep stated it would be the same policy as last spring but it will update projects.

Scott summary was to approve this resolution and get it to the legislators immediately, then Scott will work with individual jurisdictions for their resolutions. Dan moved to approve the resolution reiterating our support for basin-wide flood projects. Second by Ron. Scott added that fish Impacts will be mitigated. There was consensus.

10. Legislative Updates

Scott stated the links to legislative updates are available on the EZview site.

11. Office of Chehalis Basin

This report was not given due to time constraints.

12. Public Comment

There were no public comments due to time constraints.

13. Financial Report

November expenses for salaries, wages and consultants were \$8,602.02.

December expenses were \$8,515.25, also for salaries, wages and consultants. Staff worked with WEST on an O & M agreement, which members will see next month.

14. Reports

This report was not given due to time constraints.

15. Confirm Next Regular Meeting

The next Flood Authority meeting will occur on March 18, 2021 via Zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.