

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
Meeting 11:00 A.M.

Telephone Meeting
February 20, 2014 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Arnold Haberstroh, City of Chehalis; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor Commissioner; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis

Board Members Absent: Kathi Hoder, City of Aberdeen, John Penberth, Town of Pe Ell

Others Present: Jim Kramer, Scott Boettcher, Lee Napier, J Vander Stoep, Chuck Turley, Dale Lewis, Frank Kersch, Erin Hart, Jessica Hausman, Rob Hill, Tim Gates, Terry Willis, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Deanna Zieske

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from January 16, 2014
- https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings_2013-15.aspx#Feb2014

1. Call to Order

Mr. Kramer called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

2. Introductions

Members and public identified themselves as they called in.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes from January 16, 2014

Mr. Averill stated there was an error in Public Comment. He stated the gages are 'not always reliable' rather than 'the gages are unreliable.' Mr. Averill also understood Commissioner Cormier to say that the Elma-Porter project would not be continued. Mr. Cormier stated the Commissioners have not said formally if the project would be continued. A study is being done to see if the cost benefit is there; the project is still being considered.

The meeting notes were approved with those changes.

5. Update: Capital Projects

Mr. Kramer stated two changes have occurred since the last meeting. Mill Creek Dam's original estimate was for \$2.35 million. When the regulatory agencies were consulted additional requirements increased that estimate to over \$7 million. The Cosmopolis Engineer is not restoring fish passage at this time for existing culverts that are downstream of the dam. Repairing the dam with the regulatory requirements would require an additional \$1.5 million. The Flood Authority Executive Committee reviewed those recommendations and supported the City in requesting additional funding from the legislature for the cost increase.

The other change was to the Montesano project. The Mayor recommended that they accelerate the portion of project to provide a berm around the wastewater treatment plant in advance of the sheet pile work along the Chehalis River. The cost to accelerate the work is \$80,000 but the City expects the overall project including the sheet pile work will be under budget by at least \$400,000. This change was approved by the Flood Authority Executive Committee so the work could be started immediately on the berm.

Mr. Estes stated the work will be starting around the first of March. By the next Flood Authority meeting on March 20 there will be something to look at physically.

Mr. Averill asked if the change in the wastewater treatment plant was a design change. Mr. Kramer stated it was a change in timing. Mr. Estes stated about \$400,000 would be returned to the Flood Authority.

Chair Raines stated she wanted the Flood Authority and the public to know that when Cosmopolis bid the project for the Scope of Work the figures came back under bid. What caused the overrun were the additional issues with WDFW, Ecology and the Corps of Engineers – improvements that they required – because they considered the dam a new dam rather than a repair or an addition.

Mr. Kramer reported that Chair Raines had received a request from the Lewis County Conservation Commission to endorse bank stabilization to provide water quality and protection on farms. Mr. Kramer and Mr. Boettcher recommend that instead of endorsing that project in March that the Flood Authority have a discussion about when to endorse projects and when not to endorse projects. Past projects have gone through the sub-committee before the Flood Authority takes a position. A process of some sort is recommended because the Authority will receive a number of projects to endorse.

Mr. Averill asked if this project is the one introduced by Mr. Ogden last month with money from Ecology. He understood that the county had already issued an RFP. Ms. Napier stated that the county has not issued an RFP but it did offer to sponsor the project. The deadline was February 14 for the Conservation Commission to submit to Ecology. It is getting ready to go through the review process with a contract date of July 1.

Mr. Averill asked if the Flood Authority needs to endorse it since it is outside of the Flood Authority. Mr. Kramer recommended bringing it back at the March meeting for a process.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated he received a call from a gentleman near Elma whose property has bank erosion. Mr. Vander Stoep suggested he talk to Mr. Boettcher and the Conservation Commission. Mr. Vander Stoep agreed with Mr. Kramer that the Authority may be getting a lot of individual requests along the basin and a process would be a good discussion to have.

6. Update: Local Projects

Mr. Boettcher reported that all of the projects are progressing.

- The Montesano projects – the wastewater treatment plant and the mill – has equipment being moved to the location and the surveying is being done.
- The Mill Creek dam is in the final engineering phase, followed by design and permitting.
- Grays Harbor County has issued an RFQ for the Elma-Porter project and collecting proposals. There will be a study to see if the hydrology will allow the project and a cost benefit analysis will follow the study.
- Grays Harbor County is in the process of the acquisition of two properties on the Wishkah Road project with a survey to be done in March.
- The Pe Ell wastewater treatment plant will go to bid in the spring. The application has been submitted and no problems are anticipated for summer construction.
- Bucoda has gone out for bids for the well protection levee and no problems are expected for summer construction, finishing in July.
- The Conservation Commission has secured 12 interested parties for critter pads, and two evacuation routes. The survey work will be done shortly along with the hydrology process.

Mr. Boettcher is working with Sign Pro for signage for Pe Ell, Bucoda, Montesano and critter pads.

Commissioner Valenzuela met with the Chehalis Tribe and asked the status of about Allen Creek project. Mr. Boettcher stated the contract is in place and was executed on February 7. He needs to speak with Mark White to find out what the timeline is and answer some questions.

7. Update: Outreach to Basin Governments

Mr. Boettcher reported there were two outreach presentations: in Chehalis on February 10 and in Montesano on February 11. Both were well received by council members and mayors who were appreciative of the activity in the basin and the holistic view that is being taken of the flooding in the basin. Napavine and possibly Centralia will be updated. The PowerPoint has been revamped and it is on the website. If other basin governments would desire a presentation, Mr. Boettcher is willing to go. Commissioner Valenzuela stated the Rochester/Grand Mound Chamber will see the presentation in mid-March. Commissioner Fund reminded everyone that this is not a repeat of last year's presentation but an updated one.

Mr. Kramer stated the Governor's Work Group has planned a set of public meetings in May and September. There will be policy workshops in those same months. He would like feedback as to how to design them. There will be one public meeting in the Centralia/Chehalis area and one in the lower basin, starting in the late afternoon with stations where agencies can talk about alternatives, dam alternatives and benefits, and smaller projects. A formal presentation will occur in the early evening. The May meeting will include design of a dam, cost of a dam and potential benefits and other alternatives before getting into the comparison of economic analysis. The September meeting will be the conclusion of technical work. Mr. Kramer will run this by the work group and he welcomes feedback.

8. Update: Assessment of Local Government Floodplain Management

Lewis County has sent out an RFP asking for proposals on the floodplain management. French Whitmore and Associates was selected to perform the work. The Scope of Work has been developed. Ms. Napier is preparing a contract to finalize a firm under contract. Existing ordinances with each jurisdiction is being looked at, along with permitting, requirements, protecting people, and how the ordinances are implemented and how they relate to flood insurance and the CRS. Opportunities for improvements at the jurisdiction level will be looked at to see where they make sense across the basin. The Scope of Work calls for interviewing staff at the local governments and developing a draft report by August, 2014. Staff will be contacted soon so they need to be aware that the Flood Authority supports this.

9. Financial Report

Ms. Napier summarized the financial report, stating that \$10,000 has been expended between January and February. Details from July, 2013 to present date show expenditures of just over \$90,000 which include salaries and consulting services.

10. Public Comment

Mr. Haberstroh asked if there was a fact sheet regarding Centralia Station. He thought it would be helpful to the public. Commissioner Fund asked if staff could contact the Port and get an update and invite them to the March meeting.

Terry Willis reported on the update on the Satsop restoration project. Work is being done with WDFW and there is a contract in place with OFM. There will be public meetings with local land owners so they will know what the project will look like.

Deanna Zieske asked if there was a fact sheet available yet from DOT on their project. Mr. Kramer stated he would follow up with DOT on that issue.

Frank Kersch stated there is water to the center line on Wishkah Rd and the county has posted warning signs, but the flooding is not as bad as it has been.

11. Reports

a. Chair's Report

There was no report from the Chair.

b. Member Reports

Cosmopolis – Chair Raines had received emails regarding the recent rain event with no damage reported. There was a lot of high water but everything seems to be okay.

Thurston County – Commissioner Valenzuela appreciated the frequent emails from One Rain. South Thurston County had some road closures and a bridge was out. The bridge was not due to the rain but repairs are being complicated because of the rain.

Oakville – Mr. Thompson reported the new bridge and culverts are functioning like they were engineered. The residential area that was flooded in the past is now dry. There were 28 homes that flooded in 2007. Mr. Boettcher asked if Mr. Thompson had photos and Mr. Thompson stated he would take some after the meeting.

Montesano – Mr. Estes attended a meeting with FEMA and EMS who are preparing earthquake and tsunami exercises. He reported that the update with the Education and Outreach committee was well received by council and citizens. He thought all jurisdictions should be updated. The March Flood Authority meeting will be in Montesano. There will be no breakfast but Montesano will furnish lunch and would like a head count ahead of time.

Bucoda – Mr. Vanell visited the base of the Skookumchuck Dam on Tuesday and took a movie of the water in the overflow area and part of the Bloody Run tributary below the dam. He will send that to Mr. Boettcher. Mr. Vanell stated Bucoda is fine – the water came up but it was well below the danger levels.

Lewis County – Commissioner Fund stated she appreciated the emails from One Rain. Public Works employees were busy with slides but not flooding. An email came from an Adna resident saying that the ditch is flowing nicely and the drainage is good since the repairs were done. Commissioner Fund had feedback on the Early Warning System that it is not as user-friendly as some would like. She will take a closer look at that.

Chehalis – Mr. Haberstroh also appreciated the update from One Rain. Chehalis met with DOT and Tim Elsea and the additional levee project money may not be needed. The project has been revised down to \$250,000. Mr. Haberstroh liked being able to save money and pass it along to other Flood Authority communities who may need it.

Napavine – Mr. Pinn agreed with Mr. Haberstroh. He stated the transparency and communication with and from the Flood Authority is a very good thing. He also likes the One Rain notification and would like to get the information to the public at large, perhaps through smart phones and web links.

c. Correspondence

Chair Raines stated the only correspondence was from the Conservation Commission which was already discussed.

d. State Team Report

There was no State Team Report.

12. Meeting Conclusions

Mr. Kramer summarized the meeting: the update on local projects; changes to the Mill Creek and Montesano projects; outreach to Basin governments; public meetings in the Spring and Fall; Scope of Work for the Flood Plain Management; and examples of how projects have reduced flooding so far.

13. Confirm next regular meeting, topics and location

The next meeting will be on March 20 in Montesano. Please RSVP to the mayor for lunch. Agenda items will include an update on projects and the Governor's Work Group process and information about a potential dam; possible presentation about Centralia Station. Mayor Estes stated there will likely be a field trip to the wastewater treatment plant.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55.