

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Centralia Police Department Training Facility
1401 W. Mellen St, Centralia**

July 17, 2014 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Dennis Osborn, City of Chehalis; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; Kathi Hoder, City of Aberdeen; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Ron Averill, City of Centralia

Board Members Absent: Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor County

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from June 19, 2014
- Financial Report
- See all handouts and materials used at:
https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings_2013-15.aspx#July2014

1. Call to Order

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

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made by all attending.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with a change to Item 8: There would be no Centralia Station update; there would be an update on the China Creek project instead.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

There were no changes to the meeting notes of June 16 and so approved.

5. Approval of Gage Maintenance Costs for 2015

Mr. Boettcher stated last year's cost was a little over \$60,000 for all of the gages; this year it will be just over \$55,000. That is because inventory has already been purchased and is being held for maintenance purposes. This year the same method will be followed to determine the three counties' cost: population plus insurance costs. There were thumbs up for approval.

6. Discussion: Process and Potential Project List for 2015-17 Biennium

The Governor's Chehalis Basin Work Group and the Governor's office will be putting together its budget with state agencies and the Flood Authority needs to weigh in on projects for construction. The Project Committee has been developing a list and a process for recommending projects.

Mr. Boettcher recapped the existing projects. Seven of the funded projects are done: Sickman Ford Bridge; Phase I of Satsop Restoration; Adna Levee; Airport Phase I(1A); Livestock pads and Evacuation routes; Bucoda Levee; Flood Gage Station by the Chehalis Tribe. The Pe Ell project should be completed in October or November. The Washington Conservation Commission is working on 13 livestock and equipment pads and 2 evacuation routes, to be completed in September.

Jerry Louthain, HDR, and Larry Karpack, WSE, summarized several potential new projects being evaluated for possible consideration next biennium. These projects, along with existing projects already underway that may need additional next step funding, will likely exceed available funding levels for the 2015-17 biennium. As such, the Flood Authority will need to go through a winnowing down process and make a recommendation.

Mr. Louthain stated his firm is providing additional analysis on 10 projects. Some are studies only.

1 - Kirkland Rd: study only. Here the Newaukum River overflows and fills the underpass at I-5. Napavine has proposed a change to the flood maps for that area, which has flooded about 7 times in the last 20 years. HDR is tasked with a conceptual design and preliminary cost. There is no design on this yet; there will be a cost for a study.

2 – State Route 6 Overflow: The Chehalis River overflows and closes a large stretch of SR 6. HDR is working with DOT; WSE is doing the modeling. A couple of options include a Scheuber Rd bypass or raise SR 6, or a combination of these two. Mr. Karpack stated he is looking at keeping the hydraulics the same (equalized) so water is not diverted to create flooding somewhere else.

Mr. Louthain stated the cost for raising SR 6 would be \$3 to \$5 million and \$25 million for a bypass. Mr. Boettcher stated we are talking about local projects but some of them may become DOT projects. Mr. Kramer asked if the project is to maintain the hydraulics then a bypass would not be needed. Mr. Karpack stated that was correct.

Mr. Karpack stated DOT has provided an estimate to raise the road; it is not a project that is getting done by DOT at this time. There are three other places where water overtops SR 6. If they do raise the road, travelers can get to Scheuber Rd but they won't get further up the highway.

3 – Dillenbaugh Creek: This project would reroute the creek through Stan Hedwall Park back to the Newaukum River. WDFW and DOT are interested in doing this and closing off the holes under I-5 to keep the water from backing up. Mr. Averill stated that DOT eventually plans to widen I-5 and the bridges will need to be replaced. There are 4 bridges because of the creek. If the Dillenbaugh is moved it will save a lot of cost.

Mr. Karpack is working with DOT and the railroad. The DOT project includes a flood wall along Main St. If the flow of the Dillenbaugh is blocked under I-5 then Main Street may not need work. Mr. Boettcher stated there could be an additional challenge working with the railroad and there will be environmental questions by cutting off the flow.

4 – Main Street Re-grade: Water overflows Main Street and cuts off access from Chehalis to I-5. This problem would also go away if the Dillenbaugh problem goes away.

5 – Salzer Creek: This is a Lewis County proposal and it is looking at a tide gate type of installation so water cannot back into the Salzer Creek from the Chehalis River. Mr. Karpack stated this is not a stand-alone project. If the hole under I-5 is plugged it would not stop the flooding on the Miracle Mile.

6 – Bucoda Main Street Re-grade: The Skookumchuck overtops its banks and floods about 50 homes. Modeling in 2012 showed a need for a bridge that carries the same amount of water, or culverts. Flooding is determined by the reservoir at the Skookumchuck Dam. There is no regulated flood protection at the dam. If the reservoir is down there will be no flooding but if the reservoir is full then the Skookumchuck will flood. This project has an estimated \$3.7 million preliminary cost.

7 – Moon Rd: This is proposed by the Chehalis Tribe. The Tribe raised low spots on Anderson Rd so that when SR 12 was open Anderson Rd was open. The Tribe would like to do a similar project on Moon Rd. Benefits of this project would give another route to the Tribal Government and the casino. Modeling and additional studies are still needed.

8 – Black River Bridge: This is a proposal by the Chehalis Tribe. The preliminary cost is \$5.6 million to alleviate Chehalis River overflow and Black River water. Mr. Karpack stated hydraulically the bridge is not a constriction but DOT would like to widen the bridge because it is very narrow. It would not be a flood project because the bridge is way above the water. It could change a Black River flood but that has not been looked at. It may also be a DOT project. Changing the bridge would not change Chehalis River flooding.

9 – Roundtree Creek: This is a study proposed by the Chehalis Tribe. A study would look at re-routing Roundtree Creek to Harris Creek – or restore Roundtree Creek to its original channel. There is a fish habitat issue here as well as the flooding of SR 12.

10 – Wynoochee Valley Rd Re-grade: This is a Grays Harbor County proposal to elevate a portion of the road at an estimated cost of \$150,000.

Mr. Boettcher stated the Flood Authority's recommended a list of projects needs to go to the Governor's Work Group before Nov 1. Projects that have been started and need additional funding plus the ten projects that Mr. Louthain is assessing will likely far exceed funding that has been allowed in the past from the legislature.

Mr. Boettcher outlined the process for the Flood Authority to develop their recommendation. He suggested monthly activities: July: criteria to select projects and an information template to bring back to the Flood Authority; August: approve criteria and template; September: ranking, sorting and organizing the projects. Overlaying this is the relationship with DOT. Within the Centralia/Chehalis area projects go from Kirkland to Salzer Creek that affect DOT. The Flood Authority needs to work with WSE and coordinate with DOT through September. Mr. Averill stated new projects need to be looked at with and without a dam.

Ms. Hoder would like to focus on Grays Harbor County to finish projects that have been started. Chair Raines agreed. Mr. Averill stated an investment has already been made in those: the design is done. Costs have changed and we are looking at \$10 million for more projects. We might have one big project and not enough money for another large one. Chair Raines stated those projects remain on the list but the Flood Authority needs to look at projects to add to the list.

Mr. Kramer asked if projects already under way go to the top of the list. Commissioner Valenzuela agreed but the Project Committee must be explicit about criteria. Mr. Averill stated if a project is on a waiting list and costs have changed, those changes must be brought back to the Flood Authority.

Mr. Thompson stated criteria should include ways to alleviate human suffering and damage.

Mr. Boettcher stated criteria would be brought to the August meeting.

7. Discussion: October Public Meetings

Mr. Kramer stated the same process used for the May meeting will be used on September 25-26 for the policy workshops at Great Wolf Lodge. Another set of public meetings will be on October 1-2. He was concerned with the lack of attendance in the lower basin at the last public meeting and asked if there should be another meeting at that location. People are more aware of flooding issues in the upper basin but there was also a lot encouragement by Flood Authority members to encourage attendance at the Chehalis public meeting.

Commissioner Valenzuela suggested a single centrally-located meeting, perhaps at Great Wolf Lodge. She stated the Flood Authority needs to make the most of its resources.

Ms. Hoder thought it was important to have a meeting in the lower basin and she volunteered to get the word out. Chair Raines agreed and suggested more publicity. Mr. Pinn liked the central location but stated that all of the water ends up going to the lower basin and there should be a meeting there.

Mr. Kramer stated there would be two meetings and encouraged everyone to encourage members of the public to attend.

8. Update: Centralia Station Project

Mr. Kramer stated there was no response from the Port regarding an invitation to speak about the Centralia Station project. Mr. Averill stated he understood that the Port thought the study it published should sufficiently provide information on the project.

There were questions from the Authority as to why the Port had not responded. Chair Raines stated she would make contact with the Port.

Update: China Creek

Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia, provided a PowerPoint on the China Creek project. He stated a study had been done in 1977 through the Soil Conservation Service. There are two flooding problems in this watershed: backwater in the lower basin and flooding in the channel itself. In 2007 structural solutions were looked at, and all cost between \$7 and \$12 million. In 2012 Centralia put in a request for a project, and in 2013 it received the report on the watershed analysis. The creek is considered by the state to be a fish-bearing stream and that must be considered for the project.

The city is looking at two storage potentials: Agnew Mill Pond and McAtee Rd. The hope is to store water at McAtee until the water runs off in Centralia. There is a higher cost for localized improvement at McAtee Rd; there is a lower cost for minor reductions downtown for smaller, recurring storms for Agnew Mill Pond.

Centralia is further evaluating storage locations downtown and in Vinegar Valley. The city has also done some channel-enhancing projects to clean out the canary grass in several places to improve flow.

Mr. Jennings stated that 28 acres at Agnew Mill Pond were donated to the city. Based on that donation the city is working on a phased project. Flood mitigation funds from Department of Transportation were \$465,000. Design and permitting could use all of that.

Mr. Jennings started a conversation with Mark White of the Chehalis Tribe. Mr. White took Mr. Jennings to Portland to look at a meadowland that was a non-structural project that provided water storage. The Tribe would support that type of project for Centralia and would partner in permitting and funding. Mr. Jennings showed a slide of the Portland project which included walking trails, picnic areas, and explained how the water was stored and released as needed.

After that conversation, the city bought a piece of property and that will be Phase I; a preliminary design has been completed. A topography survey will be done soon. Phase II berm size will be based on how Phase I works.

The Board thanked Mr. Jennings for the informative presentation.

9. Update: Flood Authority Policies and Procedures on Website

Mr. Boettcher stated at the last meeting there was a discussion about when the Executive Committee can make decisions without first addressing the Flood Authority Board, and what projects can be asked for endorsement. On the Ezview home page Mr. Boettcher has a page for current governing documents. This should be helpful to bring new people up to speed.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Reports

a. Chair's Report

Chair's Raines reported that she and Commissioner Fund met with the Quinault Indian Nation. There was a good discussion with the Tribe and Chair Raines hopes to talk with them again.

b. Member Reports

Pe Ell – Mr. Willey thanked everyone for the welcome and stated he was pleased to be on board.

Centralia – Mr. Averill stated the I-5 project is ahead of schedule and the interchange will most likely be in use by the end of the year.

Napavine – Mr. Pinn stated the Napavine Fun Time Festival is this weekend.

Montesano – Mr. Estes thanked the Executive Committee for visiting the QIN. He stated there was a good presentation in Cosmopolis by the Education and Outreach Committee. He announced that this Saturday is the annual car show in Montesano. Regarding projects, Mary's River is driving steel. It will not prevent flooding at the mill but it will protect the bank if the oxbow breaks through. The wall around the wastewater treatment plant has been completed.

Thurston County – Commissioner Valenzuela stated Lake Fair is this weekend. She thanked Mr. Boettcher for the update on the gage maintenance.

Bucoda – Mr. Vanell stated the levee project has been completed. August 9 will be a territorial picnic. There may be a Thurston County K-9 demonstration.

Mr. Boettcher reported that the Bucoda project came in at \$37,000 under budget. Montesano will also be under budget.

Chehalis – The Viet Nam travelling wall memorial will be at the Veterans Museum this weekend. It is a free event.

Oakville -- Mr. Thompson stated he would be willing to represent the Flood Authority at the Grays Harbor County fair in August.

Aberdeen – Ms. Hoder stated there will be a Potlatch bonfire on August 7. Art Walk is next week.

Mr. Kramer wanted the Board to know that there was a great effort given by Chair Raines and Commissioner Fund in visiting the QIN. There have been several years of persistence to get a meeting with them and it finally happened.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

Butch Ogden stated the Conservation Commission is waiting on final designs on two more livestock pads. There will be permitting next week in Grays Harbor County for livestock pads. He stated a trucking company from Kelso got the contract to haul steel for the Montesano project and kept four trucks busy for weeks.

12. Financial Report

Ms. Napier explained the expenses for contracts, expenses and wages by staff and the studies. The total was \$224,644.60. There will be more expenses for studies as French and Associates continues its task.

13. Meeting Conclusions

Mr. Kramer summarized today's meeting: the Board made a decision on gage allocation costs for 2015; there is a process for development recommendations for the projects list; there will be two public meetings in September and October; the Board heard the presentation on China Creek; the policies and procedures are on the website; two projects came in under budget.

14. Confirm next regular meeting

The next meeting will be a telephone meeting on August 21; on September 18 the Flood Authority will meet in Thurston County, the meeting place to be announced at a later date.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.