

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
Telephone Meeting 9:00 A.M.

September 21, 2017 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Trent Lougheed, City of Chehalis; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Frank Chestnut, City of Cosmopolis; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Deanne Shaw, City of Aberdeen; Bud Blake, Thurston County Commissioner; Brian Shay, City of Hoquiam.

Board Members Absent: Dan Wood, City of Montesano; Jim Haslett, City of Napavine; Richard Armstrong, City of Oakville

Others Present: Steve Schmitz, KPFF; Gloria Rogers, WDFW; Kris Koski, City of Aberdeen; Rick Sangder, City of Aberdeen; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell alternate; Graham Perednia, The Chronicle; Pat Anderson, Lewis County; Jim Kramer, Facilitator; Scott Boettcher, Staff.

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from August Meeting
- Local Projects
- Financial Report
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings.aspx#Sept2017

1. Call to Order

Chair Raines called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made as members phoned in.

3. Approval of agenda

There were no changes and the agenda was approved by consensus.

4. Approval of August Meeting Notes

There were no changes and the meeting notes were approved by consensus.

5. Update: Chehalis Basin Gages

Scott reported that there is a lot happening related to gages in the Basin to help the public during flood season. Two gages in Centralia for example have been replaced. They just recently went on-line, are in the process of being calibrated, and will be fully functional by November.

At the last meeting a cost share proposal with USGS was discussed regarding resetting gage datums to NAVD 88 and the Flood Authority thought it had merit if we could find funding. FEMA map elevations for example often differ from USGS gage elevation information and they do not correlate, so there would be great value in doing this for improving and communicating elevation data.

Ecology has six gages that they are also considering updating to NAVD88. There is good foundational work being done.

The Gages Group met last week. The Gages Group is an ad hoc committee consisting of USGS, Lewis, Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties, Ecology, NOAA (NWS), Ron Averill, WSE, and WEST and will be used to set priorities for gage-related activities in the Basin. The Gages Group is looking at additional gages in the basin and adding precipitation gages to the Flood Warning System web site. It will work with WEST as to which gages can be added for flood warning. The group would like to be able to also add email alerts based on weather forecasts. Right now alarms go off when water reaches a certain height. The gages group is interested in doing a public webinar about what the flood warning system is and how it can benefit the public. The group is working in the background to improve flood warning. WEST's technical report of inventory included findings that in 2008-2009 there were 139 gage sensors in system. Now there are about 600 and WEST and others are going to identify which of those 600 gage sensors would be appropriate to put into the flood warning system.

Ron stated that before he went to the Gages Group meeting he checked the web pages for Centralia and Chehalis and discovered that the icon for the Chehalis Flood Warning System was no longer on the opening pages of either site. We have done a good job of getting gage alerts out to people, but if the jurisdictions want to take advantage of the entire flood warning system they need to keep their websites current (with the flood warning system icon in a prominent place). If people have trouble finding the icon they can't use the flood warning system. Ron found the icon on the Centralia site at the Community Development level and he will see about getting it on opening page.

Scott stated he will ask everyone to refresh their websites and put the icon in a prominent place.

6. Update: Flood Warning System email gage alerts

Scott and WEST will send out an email for signing up for email alerts. We don't really know the full extent of how many people are getting alerts because one person who signs up can distribute the email to others within his/her organization.

7. Update: Outreach Southwest Washington Fair, TVW

Edna and Ron spent time at the booth, as well as J. Vander Stoep, Dolores Lee, and Dan Thompson. When Scott was there, there were many productive conversations about projects on the ground, email alerts, etc. When he was able to engage those conversations he learned of people's appreciation of these services.

Edna stated a good handout was the Lewis County flood book about where to find information. She brought Lewis County Alerts that was helpful, also. It was good to have the pictures displayed on the computer.

Ron stated a lot of people seemed to be interested in signing up for email alerts. He agreed it was good to have the slides of flooding and the projects that the Flood Authority has worked on. We need to hook up to the flood warning system that we have so we can show how people can get onto the internet to see how the system works. He would like to implement that next year.

Edna stated Mr. Sanderson, former director of Office of Columbia Basin was there. It was nice to hear about his experiences in that position.

Scott is continuing to work with TVW and to provide Mike McClanahan with helpful materials for the 10-year anniversary documentary. Scott will contact Lewis County Flood Control Zone District to see if there is room for Mike to attend the District's upcoming tour of the proposed dam site.

Flood Warning System – Dave Curtis and Scott will be doing an update for people to sign up for emails. Over time, on several of the jurisdictions' web sites the icon has gone away and Scott will send the icon back out to everyone. He asked that jurisdictions talk to their IT departments to put the icon in a prominent location.

8. Update: Local Projects

The table shows all projects (33) and Scott organized them by the most complete to the least complete, and included a spending column. The green column shows what Scott expects to be completed by the end of the year. Jurisdictions are pushing hard to complete their projects by flood season. The lower left box is showing de-obligation amounts made as a result of the lack of a 2017-19 capital budget.

9. Action: Establishment of Grays Harbor County role in Lower Satsop

Scott stated that in 2012 there was an appropriation of \$500,000 to hire Watershed Science and Engineering (WSE) to look at alternatives in the Lower Satsop to slow down erosion and address flood issues. At the end of WSE's analyses they discontinued their sponsorship of the project. After that WDFW thought it would be a good habitat project and wanted to take it on. They are working on designs to restore the ponds. Their scope grew to include opening the relic channel and it became clear that there needed to be enhanced coordination and communicate with land owners in order for both projects (restoration and relic channel) to happen in a timely way (and this was not happening).

10-17-2017 Proposed Rewrite To Above Paragraph:

In 2012 there was an appropriation of \$500,000 to Grays Harbor County who retained Watershed Science and Engineering (WSE) to look at alternatives for removal of a revetment along the left bank of the Satsop River to slow down erosion and reduce flooding. WSE concluded that removal of the revetment could threaten Keys Road and thus Grays Harbor County decided to discontinue their sponsorship of the project. The \$450,000 that remained in the original lower Satsop authorization was reauthorized to WDFW to evaluate erosion reduction and habitat restoration opportunities in the lower Satsop Reach. WDFW has developed a design to remove dikes and debris and restore ponds on the WDFW property. WDFW's proposed project also included opening a relic channel to promote a shift in the channel alignment to reduce bank erosion on the Willis property. Because the relic channel opening might affect other landowners it became clear that there needed to be enhanced coordination and communication with land owners (primarily the Port) in order for the complete project (restoration and relic channel opening) to move forward.

Because the Lower Satsop is complex and the assets are very important to different groups, it would be good for the County to get involved again to make sure the projects don't cause problems for other people. Things to consider include a well, roads, habitat, and agricultural land protection. The County identified points for coordinating projects and to have eyes and ears on the ground to make sure toes aren't getting stepped on.

Chair Raines stated that meetings have gone well. She has met with WDFW and the Port, and the Port would like the County to have a larger role in different aspects. There is a multitude of interests in that area and that needs to be kept in mind.

Scott stated the recommendation is: The Flood Authority endorses Grays Harbor County serving as primary point to ensure projects are moving along, including partnerships. The recommendation was approved by consensus.

10. Update: Chehalis Basin timeline for TVW

TVW has expressed an interest in better understanding the history (players, major events, organizations, etc.) of the Chehalis Basin effort. Scott offered to help build a timeline, which would be a good exercise for all of us. With Flood Authority support, he could build a timeline to help explain the history of this process. Major elements include: Support of this effort in every Legislative session; the Flood Authority; The Governor's Work Group; Office of Chehalis Basin; studies; strategies still under way; the Early Warning System. He would be interested as to what would be major pieces of our history to capture in the timeline.

Alan suggested the 2009 event in Bucoda could be added.

Jim stated there was a timeline in the Programmatic EIS that could be looked at. One turning point was the regrouping of the Flood Authority and the agreement with the Chehalis Tribe to sign off on local projects.

Scott asked for anything that might be significant to be sent to him in an email and he will bring something back to the October meeting.

Jim also added the expanded work group last fall (Tribes, local reps, Gordon, Karen and others) that recommended to the governor, including funding for the dam, local projects, and aquatic species plan. That recommendation has support of local members in the Basin and Quinault Indian Nation. This was a large step. Also, the next step for funding of the Aberdeen/Hoquiam flooding project.

11. Public Comment

No comments

12. Financial Report

Scott – Last month - \$16,178.36 expenditures for staff and consultants; balance of \$67,484.52 which will take us through November, including obligations.

13. Reports

a. Chair's Report

Chair Raines had meetings with local and state people regarding the Lower Satsop. She had the opportunity to tour areas in Grays Harbor County and to talk about the Lower Satsop and Fry Creek projects; she toured the Mill Creek Dam site with Cosmopolis staff, Jeff Nations, and then toured the Wishkah Flood Wall with Steve Schmitz and Blake Lord of KPFF. Following the tour she met with Representative Tharinger and constituents in that area and KPFF staff to provide an update on the flood wall project and to discuss the modification of the wall height. Chair Raines will encourage additional conversations.

b. Members Reports

Lewis County - Commissioner Fund stated there will be a meeting with 19th and 20th districts for a roundtable on flood mitigation on October 6th.

Cosmopolis – Before the meeting in Cosmopolis next month, Frank encouraged people to look at the web cam to see the finished dam wall. By the time of the meeting, the stream will have been released and it will look very different. The final pour for fish ladder is in 1 to 2 weeks. The link to the web cam is on the agenda. Chair Raines said to make sure to wear good, sturdy walking shoes.

Chair Raines stated, regarding the Wishkah Road project, that she has asked Steve to give a brief summary. He will explain where the tide gates are; most likely we will drive by it as it is not a good road to be able to get out and walk. Steve stated people could get out if he can organize it with the contractor. It might be feasible to go for a little walk.

Centralia – Ron stated that Kahle Jennings, lead on China Creek, retired in August, and that the project is on hold. Kahle is still around if we need any information when the project picks up again.

Aberdeen – Kris stated he is anticipating another revision for the north shore levee, and Fry creek has preliminary design recommendations and the consultant is scoping out final design. There will be a presentation tomorrow on that project. On the 29th we will participate in the ATA chapter conference talking about coastal resiliency, and the Fry Creek project will be discussed then, also. Chair Raines stated that perhaps in early 2018 the Flood Authority can visit Fry Creek.

Commissioner Fund stated that the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Zone District appointed an advisory board. There were 18 applications that narrowed down to 11. She is very excited about the people who want to serve.

Alan stated the Thurston Regional Planning Council is updating the flood mitigation plan in order to keep CRS for flood repairs to the highest discount level. There was a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners; they will vote on it and hopefully pass it by the end of the year. It will need to be reviewed by others. Most of their mitigation plans had to do with the Nisqually and Deschutes Rivers, and they did not talk much about Chehalis basin. We could have an outreach to Thurston Regional Planning Council for that.

Pe Ell – Lonnie stated there will be a workshop on October 10 at the high school at 6pm regarding the dam. There will be technical experts there, and kiosks with information on the dam and aquatic species.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

There was no State Team Report.

14. Confirm Next Regular Meeting

The next meeting will be at the Cosmopolis Fire Station on October 19.

The meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.