

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

Lucky Eagle Casino  
Black River Meeting Room  
Oakville

### **November 21, 2013 - Meeting Notes**

**Board Members Present:** Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; John Elmore, City of Centralia; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Lee Napier, Lewis County; Arnold Haberstroh, City of Chehalis; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell

**Board Members Absent:** Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine

**Others Present:** Please see sign in sheet

#### **Handouts/Materials Used:**

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from October 17, 2013
- Power Point: Montesano Projects
- Power Point: Early Warning System
- Draft Letter to Governor re: Transportation Funding Package

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Raines called the meeting to order at 9:07.

#### **2. Introductions**

Self-introductions were made by all attending.

#### **3. Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Kramer asked that the letter to the Governor re: transportation funding be added as 9a. The agenda was approved by consensus with the addition.

#### **4. Approval of October 17 meeting notes**

The meeting notes were approved by consensus as presented.

#### **5. Updates and Discussion on the Montesano Projects**

Mr. Kramer stated there are three elements of the Montesano projects. Those include protection of the Mary's Lumber mill, protection of the wastewater treatment plant, and the relic channel. He recognized Mr. Steve Schmitz of Parametrix.

Mr. Schmitz explained the projects goals for the mill, which will be protected to a 500-year flood, and the wastewater treatment plant. The preferred alternatives were a steel sheet pile wall for the mill and vinyl sheet pile wall for the wastewater treatment plant. He showed on an aerial photo where the sheet pile wall will be installed at the mill, preserving all natural vegetation there. He showed schematics of how the sheet pile wall is constructed and put into place. The log deck that is still there (surviving the

fire) will be removed to be used at a different location. Mr. Schmitz explained that precautions will be taken to keep debris out of the river.

Mr. Schmitz showed the detailed schematic of the vinyl sheet pile wall at the wastewater treatment plant. He stated there is no debris that comes with high water that might damage the wall. This wall will protect up to 23.5'.

Permits applied for include the shoreline substantial development, SEPA and JARPA. Opening bids will be on December 10; construction begins in April and will be completed in July. Both construction projects will be done at the same time to allow for inspections, etc. to be done simultaneously; there will be one contractor for both projects.

There has been some discussion on the old relic channel and whether part of the wetland should be opened up or restored. The owner of the land is inclined to sell the property if all of it is purchased. There needs to be a better understanding regarding removing the fill to allow the river to do its natural thing. Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) must come into this conversation as they need to protect the shoulder.

Mr. Kramer stated DOT was concerned about the bridge because it needs infrastructure work. Part of the bridge infrastructure is made out of wood rather than concrete.

Mr. Schmitz thanked everyone for their support of this project.

## **6. Flood Warning System Update**

Dave Curtis gave an overview of the Early Warning System. He explained the GOES system, the website and all of the links to aid in predicting floods. He stated there will be a link through the University of Washington soon. He thanked Trans Alta for their help and allowing him to connect into their warning system.

Mr. Curtis stated people are using the website to get information. The graph showed a spike in use when the heavy rains came a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. Curtis showed how to use the inundation maps on the internet. The maps go to the 500 year flood and he cautioned that the maps should be used only as guidance. There is always uncertainty in the forecasts. Mr. Curtis is using probability forecasts provided by the National Weather Service and staff is superimposing maps to make the areas "fuzzy", indicating the possibility of flooding in a larger area.

Mr. Kramer asked if the maps could show the maximum extent of flooding. Mr. Curtis stated the maps would get extremely busy. Mr. Haberstroh asked what it would cost to get to that level. Mr. Curtis stating that doing the maps is not a huge budget item; he already has the models and new cross sections. He estimated about \$50,000. He also stated he is adding one new section every couple of months to the inundation maps.

Mr. Curtis stated he is looking at a statewide application for the Early Warning System, to include Washington Emergency Management and Department of Ecology. It is a concept that is favorable but it is still not clear who will manage or budget it.

Mr. Curtis showed slides of different cities that have reduced their Community Rating System (CRS) for flood insurance rate reduction and how that was accomplished.

Mr. Boettcher and Mr. Curtis will discuss next steps and those will be brought to the next meeting.

### **8. Discussions of Signs for Local Projects**

Mr. Haberstroh had suggested at previous meetings that signs should be used that show what the Flood Authority is doing to reduce flood damage. The Flood Authority will need public support down the road for other projects. Mr. Boettcher had done some mock ups with different slogans and images that might be used. It was suggested that the signage be budgeted into the bid for a project. There was consensus to continue with this concept and it was agreed that the Education/Outreach committee was the best venue for this. Several suggestions were made: value of protection; protection statement; contractor's name; "sponsor" or some other name for jurisdiction; signs for projects already completed. Butch Ogden stated the Conservation Commission might be able to order signs through Walla Walla Penitentiary. Mr. Kramer stated the subcommittee would look at all those questions.

### **7. Update on Flood Authority Website**

Mr. Boettcher distributed a paper that shows where the projects are being constructed across the Basin. Over half of the money allocated for projects has been moved as of November. The Montesano projects are in permitting stage now; the Pe Ell project will be submitting applications within the next couple of weeks; Bucoda has submitted its applications. The signs will be timely showing that the money is being spent on real projects that are flood-oriented and construction will begin soon. Mr. Boettcher's paper is on the website.

### **9. Update on Governor's Work Group**

Mr. Kramer reported that the policy workshop last week was well attended by agencies, the Chehalis and Quinault Tribes and others. The group is at the early stages of an analytical process to make recommendations to the Governor during the next session regarding flood damage prevention, aquatic species, options for I-5 and other projects. Last week's workshop focused on research of fish passage, fish use and presence in the upper basin and potential design options for a dam. The next workshop will be in the spring.

Commissioner Valenzuela complimented the Chronicle for its article and the interpretation of a very complex subject. Mr. Vander Stoep thanked Mr. Kramer for getting all of the information together. He also stated that he and Chairman Burnett presented an update of the overview of local projects at Centralia College recently. It was well attended. He complimented the Ruckelshaus Center, Mr. Kramer and the two Governors for working to get to the point where the Flood Authority and the Chehalis Tribe can work together.

### **9a. Letter to Governor**

Mr. Kramer stated there are options for transportation package under consideration by the Governor and the legislature for. One item under consideration is a \$100 million for contributing to the protection of I-5 from flood closures. The draft letter asks the Governor to include that money into the transportation package. Kramer proposed that the letter comes from Chairman Burnett and Chair Raines and is sent very soon.

Mr. Thompson stated the Flood Authority had talked about water retention probability (levees) even though retention structures were built. Would the \$100 million be used for that? Mr. Kramer stated

WSDOT wrote it very broadly so the money could be used as needed. We want a basin-wide solution, whatever that might look like.

There was consensus to send the letter.

#### **10. Financial Report**

Ms. Napier reported that \$9738.04 had been expended for salaries, wages and consulting services October through November. Total remaining balance is \$485,322.18. She asked for questions. There were none.

#### **11. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **12. Reports**

##### **a. Chair's Report**

There was no report.

##### **b. Member Reports**

*Thurston County* – Commissioner Valenzuela had copies of Thurston County's flood bulletin which helped that county improve its CRS rating, which is now a 4. She also reported that she and Mr. Boettcher would be giving a presentation to the Rochester/Oakville Chamber of Commerce regarding the projects and the Governor's Work Group in January.

*Bucoda* – Mr. Vanell stated the Projects Committee had a phone meeting and was continuing to monitor the work of small projects on the website. There will be a meeting in early December to review projects and Ms. Petersen will submit a technical memo back to the Flood Authority by December 13.

*Montesano* – Mr. Estes stated the Education/Outreach Committee had talked about the signs that Mr. Haberstroh recommended. He thanked Arnold for suggesting the signs and for Mr. Boettcher's work on the mock-ups. He stated the Committee also toured the entire basin with a representative of Representative Herrera-Buetler.

##### **c. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence

##### **d. State Team Report**

Mr. Ogden met with OFM last week and the contract for critter pads should be signed next week. There are 20 requests for critter pads in Lewis County. Thurston County is working on the information for their critter pads; there will be a meeting in Grays Harbor County next week. Most of the projects so far are small.

Perry Lund stated Department of Ecology is coordinating a team to work with responses to reports that are coming out on projects. DOE will have a new coordinator: Jessica Hausman will be replacing Susanna Stoike.

#### **13. Meeting Conclusions**

Mr. Kramer stated the meeting conclusions were:

- The update on the Montesano projects with construction beginning in April; projects are within budget; the wetland restoration piece is moving forward.
- Mr. Curtis' Early Warning System presentation was very informative and the Basin is in much better shape for receiving timely information than we were, and there are new features on the Early Warning System.
- The Flood Authority will move ahead on signage for projects in the Basin.
- The website has new information.
- The results of the Governor's work group were recapped. Next Step: send the letter to the legislators for the \$100 million transportation piece for I-5.

#### **14. Confirm Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be a phone meeting on December 19. In January it will be on the 16<sup>th</sup> in Lewis County. Mr. Kramer will try to have FEMA representatives at the January meeting. He recommended that meeting be broadly advertised.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44. A tour of the Chehalis Tribe's Sickman Ford overflow bridge was scheduled immediately following of the meeting.