

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

March 19, 2015 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Frank Chestnut, City of Cosmopolis; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Julie Balmelli-Powe, City of Chehalis; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Bud Blake, Thurston County Commissioner; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine

Board Members Absent: Kathi Hoder, City of Aberdeen; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell

Others Present: Jim Kramer, Facilitator; Scott Boettcher, staff; Jessica Hausman, Department of Ecology; Butch Ogden, Conservation Commission; Frank Kersch; Dale Lewis, Congresswoman Herrera-Buetler's office; Lee Napier, Lewis County

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from February 19, 2015
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings_2013-15.aspx#March2015

1. Call to Order

Mr. Kramer opened the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

2. Introductions

Members introduced themselves as they phoned in.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

Mr. Averill corrected the comment he made on page 3 when he spoke of the taxes charged for a flood control zone district. He stated the flood districts are the lowest on the totem pole so if counties or cities reach their limit the flood district tax is the first to go. The meeting notes were approved with the correction.

5. Projects Committee Work Plan

Mr. Boettcher stated the work plan is posted on the website (see here https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/administration_policies_procedures_workplans/35645/policies_procedures_workplans.aspx). At the last Flood Authority meeting the new membership for 2015 was approved: Ron Averill, Chair, Alan Vanell, Frank Chestnut and Bud Blake. On March 17 the Projects Committee met to orient the new members, clarify the role of the Committee and move forward as to the activities the Committee would engage in throughout the year. The Committee wants to have regular quarterly in-person meetings that are scheduled and known to everyone. Once those dates, times and locations are established Mr. Boettcher will send them out.

The Projects Committee's historic role has been to assist and identify new projects. The Committee members thought the role of the committee should be broader -- to track and monitor how projects are

scoped, distributed and implemented. The purpose of the Projects Committee was thought to also be the institutional memory for how projects are identified, scoped, funded, etc. as well how funds are shared between projects.

The Projects Committee is looking forward to meeting on a quarterly basis. It met for the first quarter on March 17 and reviewed the project list and governor's budget and discussed what to do if the legislature does not arrive at the full funding level of the project list, which is \$26 million.

The Committee will continue to monitor the legislature, reach out to local project sponsors, check on the status of projects, determine what can be accomplished over the next biennium, and determine if full funding is needed in the event less than full funding is appropriated. In July and September the Committee will work with OFM and local sponsors; in the final quarter it will monitor and report on project progress.

Mr. Averill stated that the capital budget will probably be the last budget that is approved during this legislative session. There has been some attempt to bring the Governor's budget to a level more than \$30 million. In the next quarter the Flood Authority needs to look at the funding it did receive. It is likely that it will receive less money than was requested and the Authority needs to determine how best to spend the money. The Flood Authority has been good in the past few years in getting projects done. The Projects Committee asked that everyone be realistic about how fast a project can be done so the Committee can phase in and get projects shovel ready so other projects can get started.

Mr. Vanell stated the Projects Committee worked well in the past and he is looking forward to this year on the Committee.

Mr. Boettcher will send an email from the Projects Committee to project sponsors asking them to think about what can be accomplished this biennium in the event full-funding is not achieved. He will also send out the meeting dates for the Projects Committee.

6. Outreach Committee Work Plan

Mr. Boettcher stated the Outreach Committee also met on March 17. The members are Kathi Hoder, Chair, Lonnie Willey, Dan Thompson and Lionel Pinn. Commissioner Fund was also in attendance. It was recognized that the Outreach Committee is a group to represent the Flood Authority at outreach opportunities. It looked at what is on the horizon and what will be good opportunities. One is the flood vent program which will be presented in Bucoda tonight. This summer the Flood Authority will be at the Grays Harbor County Fair and the Southwest Washington Fair. The city of Hoquiam will be an outreach opportunity. The Sharon Grange is a good place to draw people in for a presentation in November.

This quarterly focus will be on a web interface tool for posting contents, photos, maps, charts, etc. Mr. Boettcher has been asked to work with Butch Ogden and Bob Amrine to flesh out one of their stories and bring it back to the Flood Authority. Another story could be talking about the accomplishments of the Flood Authority over the years.

The third quarter will be preparing for the fairs; the fourth quarter will be to attend other outreach events. Mr. Boettcher will set up the quarterly dates and get them sent out to the distribution list.

Mr. Pinn stated he hoped everyone would look at the storyboards. This is great technology for where we are and where we are going. The collaborative work with other groups is good and he encouraged Flood Authority members to be a part of that collaboration.

Mr. Thompson stated reading pamphlets can be dry reading but looking at examples and storytelling is fresh and interesting. Anyone who has had experience with flooding will understand it. This is a good move.

Commissioner Fund mentioned the various Emergency Managements get together and work on flood warning and how to do it better. Mr. Boettcher stated the Outreach Committee would play a role in improving the interface with the early warning system. This should be added to the work plan for the spring and summer.

7. Status Update on Flood Opening Process

Mr. Boettcher stated there is a public meeting tonight in Bucoda to hear more about the foundation flood opening program. The purpose is to develop a list of homeowners who are interested. The first step is to provide permission for contractors to go onto a person's property, measure and look inside the interior of the foundation so they can present their estimates. Insurance rates could be reduced with flood vent work. Mr. Boettcher is participating in final reviews with L & I and contractors are reporting to L & I. Draft forms are being reviewed by the Attorney General's office. There is a lot of support from the various state agencies.

Mr. Vanell stated 29 letters were sent out; one was refused and all but two have sent return receipts. They now have a letter informing them of the meeting; there is a website to look at FEMA brochures describing what a proper flood vent system should look like. Mr. Vanell did not have any idea how many people would attend the meeting. It has been advertised on the reader board, in the paper and in the post office. He is hoping for a fair amount of people. The Outreach Committee will be there to tell the Flood Authority story and Mr. Vanell and Mayor Carr will be there and perhaps a couple of council members. It will be interesting to see the response. Bucoda is the guinea pig for this retrofit and he hoped the process could be streamlined so that it might take six weeks from signature to final. Mr. Boettcher stated the contractors would be at the meeting, also.

Mr. Boettcher had a conversation with the city of Centralia. They are interested and know there are homes that have been elevated with some improper flood venting. Their concern is that this program will be burdensome because the city is short-staffed. We don't want to be burdensome. Centralia is watching Bucoda. If that is successful we may see other jurisdictions coming forward. Mr. Averill stated he would speak with Rob Hill to see if Centralia would be represented at the Bucoda meeting.

8. Update on 2015 Legislation

Mr. Kramer stated there is not any new developments regarding the Chehalis Basin in the legislature. The House is going to come out with an operations budget and it does not include the capital budget. The Governor's budget has \$30 million and they are looking at ways to potentially increase that. The good news is: there is significant discussion and interest and support for work in the Chehalis Basin. A Transportation bill is in the Senate and going to the House and it includes \$79 million for work in Chehalis. That bill is proposing an increase in the gas tax.

(Transcriber's note: There was music interference during this part of the call and much of the conversation was missed).

9. Financial Report

Ms. Napier could not be heard; Mr. Averill had a question about goods and services that was not explained due to the interference.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Reports

a. Chair's Report

Chair Raines had nothing to report.

b. Member Reports

Montesano – Mr. Estes stated Lakeside will finish the paving after April 1 and then the Mary's River project will be totally done.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

There was no State Team Report

Mr. Ogden stated an unexpected benefit was discovered from the farm pads. A fire took out a barn and the animals were able to go to the farm pad and there were no animal losses. He hoped someone was going to the Grays Harbor County shoreline management program meeting tonight.

11. Confirm Next Meeting

The next meeting will be a conference call on April 16.

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.