

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

**Meeting 11:00 A.M.
Telephone Meeting**

August 21, 2014 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Arnold Haberstroh, City of Chehalis; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Kathi Hoder, City of Aberdeen; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis

Board Members Excused: Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine

Others Present: Jim Kramer; Scott Boettcher; Jessica Hausman, Lee Napier; Frank Kersch; Dennis Osborn; Dale Lewis; Kyle Spurr; Jerry Louthain; Julie Balmelli-Powe; Paul Johnson; Deanna Zieske

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from July 17, 2014
- Small Projects Recruitment Form and Criteria
- Financial Report
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings_2013-15.aspx#August2014

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:08.

2. Introductions

Attendees identified themselves as they called in.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Vanell asked for clarification on Item 7. He stated sometimes these projects are referred to as "local projects" and other times "small projects." Mr. Boettcher stated they should be called "small projects." The agenda was approved with that correction.

4. Approval of July 17 Meeting Notes

There were no changes or corrections to the July 17 meeting notes.

5. Grays Harbor and Southwest Washington Fairs

Mr. Boettcher reported that there was good interaction with the public at both the Grays Harbor County and Southwest Washington Fairs. He suggested budgeting for the fairs if the Flood Authority wishes to participate again next year so there will be presentation materials available at the booths. Mr. Boettcher had 15-20 conversations with the public and topics included: an upper basin retention structure; appreciation of information available to the public about that issue; dredging; and appreciation for the effort over the last several years for small projects on the ground. People are aware that there will be future floods and that there are projects under way. The public appreciates the work of the Flood Authority and feels it is better informed about small projects, a large dam, habitat, etc.

Mr. Boettcher continued to say that although a lot of people were contacted at the Grays Harbor County Fair that does not mean they will attend the public meetings in October. The Outreach and Education Committee has been brainstorming how to generate more interest for the October meetings. Ideas include: advertise more; tap into distribution lists beyond the general Flood Authority list; email realtor associations, agricultural distributions lists, etc. The Fair was a good thing to do and conversations were worthwhile. He asked for others' input.

Commissioner Fund stated she was at the Southwest Washington Fair most days. Friday was busy, with two sides of the booth available for conversations. She would have liked to have more slides because it was a good way to talk about what the Flood Authority is doing. She thought the Flood Authority should go again next year and if it does, be selective about the days that the booth is manned.

Mr. Thompson stated he was at the Grays Harbor Fair five days. Chair Raines, Commissioner Fund, Mr. Estes and Mr. Ogden all helped. Mr. Thompson provided a banner for the booth and as people approached they seemed surprised and pleased that they could talk to people. Many people in the lower basin feel cut off so the booth was a good experience and the people liked it.

Mr. Haberstroh stated he was in the booth at the Southwest Washington Fair on Friday. He and Commissioner Fund spent a lot of time educating the public and he felt that it was a better way to reach people than through the open houses.

Mr. Estes stated Mr. Thompson is very devoted to the Flood Authority and he appreciated all of his hard work.

Mr. Willey enjoyed working with Mr. Boettcher. He stated he came away with information and a better understanding of what the Flood Authority does.

Mr. Averill stated there is a noticeable change in people's attitudes. The Flood Authority is doing a better job of getting information out and letting people know what it is doing. A couple of years ago it would have gotten criticism for a water retention project and instead people are saying the [proposed] dam is good, it is the right thing to do; it is supported. This speaks well that whatever outreach we do will get better affirmation of our project.

Mr. Boettcher asked for thoughts on getting a better turnout at the October meetings. Suggestions included an op-ed to newspapers through the Chair; email distribution lists; Chambers, Rotary Clubs. There was discussion about who should author the op-ed and when to send out mailings, emails, etc.

Mr. Kramer recommended sending a "save the date" message with an op-ed piece closer to the meetings. Commissioner Valenzuela stated each jurisdiction can do what they think is best for their area. Mr. Kramer stated the Outreach and Education Committee would come up with a recommendation and build a strategy. Mr. Boettcher will send out an email soon and the Committee can bring the op-ed recommendation.

6. City of Aberdeen Local Projects

Mr. Boettcher stated that Ms. Hoder had arranged for him to attend the Aberdeen City Council workshop. The Public Works Director, Malcolm Bowie, provided a presentation for comprehensive flood hazard reduction in the city. Aberdeen has three projects that they are working on which were advanced from a previous Public Works Director. Mr. Bowie has ideas to share with Council and the

Outreach Committee. It would be helpful if he could attend the September Flood Authority meeting and give the same presentation.

Ms. Hoder thanked the Flood Authority for attending the council meeting. There was great conversation and the council now has more knowledge. Everyone participated. She also stated that flood insurance is skyrocketing. This needs to be faced head-on as real estate sales will be severely impacted.

Mr. Averill stated the next agenda item is small project recruitment and the Project Committee is planning on going to the September meeting with rankings of projects. If Aberdeen's small projects are going to change dramatically then decisions need to be made.

Mr. Kramer stated if there are significant changes in the Aberdeen projects then we need to talk about it and a briefing with Mr. Bowie is a good idea. Mr. Averill stated projects will be re-submitted with the new forms.

Mr. Boettcher stated Mr. Bowie would be invited for an informational workshop. The Flood Authority will work on projects then and between now and then Mr. Boettcher will work with Mr. Bowie to get his thinking on the new format.

7. 2015-17 Small Projects Recruitment Form and Criteria

Mr. Boettcher stated the Projects Committee would like the projects recruitment form to go out to Public Works directors as the vehicle to collect information for possible future small projects in the next biennium. The form should go out today or tomorrow with responses back by September 10. The Project Committee would work on it before the September 18 meeting by sifting, sorting and ranking projects and bring that back to the Flood Authority for recommendations. They will be developing a scoring instrument (on merit) and also looking at how much funding is asked for and how much might be available. Since the amount available is unknown, perhaps around \$10 million, how should projects be funded if we get only \$5 million? Should it all go on one project? The Flood Authority will make a recommendation to the work group. Small projects are usually to be done in a relatively quick time-frame and not get hung up on litigation or red tape, and should be completed within the funding cycle. Also, projects already started – design, funding, known costs – have higher over-riding criteria.

Mr. Vanell asked how these projects relate to any DOT projects that might interface with what the Flood Authority is doing. Mr. Boettcher stated HDR and WSE are interfacing with DOT and projects that they have their hands on (about 10 or 11) and are being briefed on the process and they know the form is coming. Once all projects are in the Project Committee will interact with DOT to see if there is an overlap or redundancy. The Flood Authority is on a parallel track with DOT and DOT will not know if they have a project until they get the funding.

Mr. Kramer asked if Mr. Averill's statement about the form related to all projects or just projects that have changes in funding. Mr. Boettcher stated if projects are requesting funding it has to come through on this form. Mr. Kramer assumed that based on the Flood Authority discussion at the last meeting that the projects already funded are first priority and that they will be reflected in the Project Committee's recommendation.

Mr. Averill stated many projects originally submitted for design and cost turned out later to have changed significantly in the construction process. We would not ask that they resubmit for design and cost but we need a new submission for what the cost will be. Examples are Cosmopolis and Wishkah.

Both had big changes in cost. We are looking at consolidation in Aberdeen. He thought this would be the way to go – new money involved for the new budget process, even though they have a place in line.

There was approval for the form and ranking and providing a preliminary recommendation.

8. Financial Report

Ms. Napier stated there is a change on the report for total expenditures. A new column has been added showing current monthly expenses. That shows by category how much is being spent each month. There no questions regarding the Financial Report.

9. Public Comment

Ms. Zieske stated she has worked quite a bit with non-profits and they have found that a notice that reaches the public three times before an event or deadline is highly effective. She suggested this approach for the public meetings in September and October. Mr. Kramer stated the Outreach and Education Committee would take that into consideration.

10. Reports

a. Chair's Report

The Chair had nothing to report.

b. Member Reports

Lewis County – Commissioner Fund reminded everyone of the upcoming FEMA training in Lacey. She stated Lewis County would be sending someone and asked about the other counties. Commissioner Valenzuela stated Thurston County will be sending someone. Chair Raines stated Deborah Farmer will be meeting with elected officials, the public, lenders and insurance companies.

Commissioner Fund stated there is a 4-day flood management course, also. Mr. Kramer stated this is geared more towards Public Works, permits and land use ordinances. That will be on September 29 through October 4.

Centralia – Mr. Averill stated the good weather has helped the DOT project on Mellen St. The overpass may be open by mid-September if the good weather holds – about 1 1/2 months ahead of schedule.

Montesano – Mr. Estes reported some problems with the Mary's River project. The pile driving is about 2/3 complete but they have run into concrete and the pile driver they are using will not drive rebar through concrete. Another driver will increase the cost so the unused money will be a little less than originally anticipated.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

There was no State Team Report.

11. Confirm next regular meeting

The next meeting will be on September 18 in Thurston County at the Rochester Community Center (ROOF Community Services, 10140 HWY 12 SW, Rochester, WA 98579, 360-273-6375). The focus will be

on small project recommendations; communications for public meetings; and preliminary reports and findings from the work being done by French and Associates on floodplain management regulations.

The meeting adjourned at 12:08.