

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Telephone Meeting 11:00 a.m.

February 21, 2013 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; Wes Cormier, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Arnold Haberstroh, City of Chehalis

Others Present: Jim Kramer, Chris Hempleman, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Tommy Bauer, Lisa Broadt, Mark Swartout, Perry Lund, Ken Fellows, John Donahue

1. Call to Order

Chairman Raines welcomed everyone at 11:05.

2. Introductions

The callers identified themselves.

3. Approval of Agenda

The meeting notes were added to the agenda and the agenda was approved with that addition.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

Mr. Averill made a motion to approve the meeting notes from January 26; Mr. Cook seconded. There were no corrections or additions and the notes were approved.

5. Update on Legislative Communications

Mr. Kramer stated the Legislative team consists of Jeff Warnke, Jay Gordon and Cindy Zender. They have done a great job reaching out to the legislators and staff and getting a positive response. In January the work group put on a basin briefing chaired by Chairman Burnett and Chairman Raines. The highlight was when Senator Dunshee said it was in his budget and asked if Representative DeBolt would vote for it. The Legislative team has talked to all of the Basin legislators and they are supportive. Mr. Kramer understood they are putting together a letter to be signed by the Basin senators and the Ways and Means committee but he has not heard back on that yet.

The Legislative team is also in the process of briefing each Legislator on the House Capital Budget Committee and Ways and Means Committee as to what goes into the Capital Budget. They are about half way through and have received positive responses and there is no perceived opposition at this time. It is the expectation that the Chehalis Basin capital budget will be at the end of the process and there will be a lot of horse trading before conclusion. It is important to stay vigilant in keeping the dialogue going.

Commissioner Valenzuela stated Representative Gary Alexander attended the Thurston County Commissioners' meeting. She asked him if he had any questions about the \$28 million budget request. He said he would like to learn about the content of the budget request and that it would have his support.

Mr. Averill stated that Senator Hargrove is supportive. Senator Honeyford is championing the Yakima water project which is competing with the Chehalis flood projects. We may not get all the money we want but he is supportive. Chairman Raines stated that Senator Sheldon is also supportive.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe asked if there has been any word from Governor Inslee on the final budget. Mr. Kramer stated he had no information about that. The work group and the Tribe have requested to meet with the Governor to brief him and get positive support. Mr. Kramer stated he understands that if there is not a proposal from Governor Inslee soon that the Senate and the House will have their initial budgets and will be moving on those.

Mr. Kramer stated the effort is going very well based on responses. We have agreed in the past that the proposal is for the entire package and everyone should be supportive of the package. If there are questions, the response is: this is the package and any changes must go back through the work group and the Flood Authority.

5. Update on Outreach to Basin Governments

Chairman Raines asked Commissioner Fund to report on the Outreach in Mr. Boettcher's absence.

Commissioner Fund stated that Mr. Boettcher has done a great job of putting dates together and she thanked everyone who has signed up to participate; it was good to see other Flood Authority members in the audiences. She stated the updated schedule went out in an email today.

Mr. Cook stated Aberdeen has scheduled March 13. Commissioner Cormier, Chairman Raines and Mr. Estes will be attending that one. Mr. Averill stated that he would be at the Centralia meeting on April 15.

Commissioner Fund stated there are some community groups that want updates. These include the Olympia Master Builders, the Twin Cities Chamber. If anyone knows of another group, please forward the name to Mr. Boettcher. Chairman Raines stated the offer has been made to the Tribe, also.

Commissioner Fund asked for feedback from anyone who had attended.

Mr. Pinn stated Napavine's meeting went well and comments were shared in an email with those who were in attendance. Chairman Raines felt that Thurston County's was long but perhaps it was because she had been through three others. She thought the PowerPoint could be provided in advance and perhaps ask Mr. Boettcher to hit on two bullets on each to shorten the presentation. Commissioner Valenzuela stated there were questions about the fish slide because it is preliminary and she questioned whether this should be included in the future.

Mr. Averill stated that what was not covered in the briefing was the amount of local share that has gone into the studies already. That was in response to a Senator's question about what the local people are doing. A lot of time and effort has gone into that.

Mr. Vanell asked about the possibility of having a live website demonstration of the areas that are concerning the local jurisdictions, to show things in a local area so they understand things that are happening. Commissioner Valenzuela suggested doing that in Bucoda.

Mr. Pinn asked if there was proper notification about the meetings. He heard a complaint from someone in Napavine that the meetings were not advertised. He was assured that the announcements go out in all the County agendas and are on the websites.

Mr. Thompson reported that the presentation has changed the attitude of the Oakville council about the Flood Authority. Chairman Raines stated that some comments from Oakville led to changes in the presentation.

6. Update on Jobs Now Projects

Mr. Kramer would like to walk through the projects with the sponsors at the March meeting to understand where the projects are and if there are issues with construction or money being funded by the end of the biennium. The project sponsors were asked that early design work be completed by March. Mr. Boettcher will be in contact with project sponsors to set up a briefing on various projects.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Reports

a. Chair's Report

The Chair had nothing to report.

b. Member Reports

Centralia – Mr. Averill stated the Basin briefing will be at Centralia City Council on March 12. He may not be able to attend the meeting but he will prep them for the update.

There were no other Member reports.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

Mr. Donahue stated a request was made to the US Army Corps of Engineers to defer the decision on the Twin Cities project and keeping it open until December 2014. They have forwarded that determination to Division Headquarters. There is also work being done on a process in which state expenditures included in the \$28 million might qualify for a federal match. A letter was sent to the Corps last week to kick that off. The federal match will be for studies for environmental work or updating the benefit cost information for one or the other federal projects in the basin.

Mr. Averill stated there is still the GI study that is open and working. Mr. Donahue stated it is still too early to know how that will look but a staff person is being kept in Seattle for that.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated that a lot of the work that is in the \$28 million package is time sensitive and has an aggressive schedule to get work done by July 1. Sometimes the Federal clock runs slower and he wants to make sure that if we are receiving federal money it doesn't come in so slowly that it won't benefit us. Mr. Donahue stated federal money is not being secured at this time but he wants to ensure that the state money qualifies for a match later if the federal funding should show up.

Ms. Hempelman spoke to the Jobs Now Projects and reminded proponents to work with State Agencies on permitting early. They can help avoid stumbling blocks, especially with the pressure of the deadline. So far no one has.

Commissioner Valenzuela stated Mr. Lund said the same thing about the Sickman Ford Bridge. She is concerned about whether or not DOE has a role in that project. Mr. Lund made a point that he had not heard anything.

Mr. Kramer stated he would ask Mr. Boettcher to check with project proponents about permitting.

9. Financial Report

Ms. Napier was not available to answer questions. Mr. Averill stated the report is confusing at times because the Expenditure summary is from July 2011 to present. The Balance Sheet shows Task 7 has just over \$10,000 spent and Task 8 with \$1,000 expended since January 1. Those are the recent expenses.

Mr. Kramer stated the Flood Authority is on track to meet the budget that was formerly discussed.

10. Confirm next regular meeting

The next meeting will be on March 21 in Montesano starting at 9:00 a.m. Some topics will include the Jobs Now Project update and legislative communications. Chairman Raines stated she just learned that the Governor will submit the budget after the economic forecast next month.

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.