

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
9:00 A.M. via Zoom
May 21, 2020 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Tye Menser, Thurston County Commissioner; Dan Wood, City of Montesano; Darrin Raines, City of Cosmopolis; Brian Shay, City of Hoquiam; Steve Lyle, Town of Bucoda; Kris Koski, City of Aberdeen; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell; Ron Averill, City of Centralia; Richard Armstrong, City of Oakville.

Board Members Absent: Shawn O’Neill, City of Napavine; Trent Lougheed, City of Chehalis.

Others Present: Jay Gordon, Chehalis Basin Board; Lee Napier, Lewis County Community Development Director; Scotty Ireland, Parametrix.

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from April 16, 2020
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings.aspx#May2020

1. Call to Order

Chair Raines called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. Introductions

Members made self-introductions as they logged in.

3. Approval of Agenda

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

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

There were no corrections or additions to the April 16 meeting notes and so it was approved by consensus.

5. Discussion: 2020-2024 Chehalis Basin Board Positions

Scott stated that the Flood Authority has three representatives on the Chehalis Basin Board with staggered terms. Last year, the Flood Authority voted Jay Gordon to fill a position from 2019 to 2023. This year two positions are open for election – Commissioner Fund’s and Commissioner Raines’. The Executive Committee asked for letters of interest from anyone wishing to serve on the Board, and both Commissioner Fund and Commissioner Raines submitted letters. Scott stated that if more than two people submitted letters, there would need to be a longer process and a special meeting. There are only two letters to be reviewed. Ron made a motion to approve the two applications. J. Vander Stoep seconded and stated that both Commissioners bring a solid, knowledgeable expertise to the Board. Scott stated that a vote could move forward. There was consensus for both Commissioner Fund and Commissioner Raines to continue serving on the Board and to fill 2020 to 2024 terms.

6. Discussion: 2021-2023 Local Projects Recruitment Process and Schedule

Scott stated that this is the fifth round of asking for local projects. The Projects Committee has made a few changes on the form, and there is a review team to study the requests. Projects are due to the

Committee by July 8. One difference this round is asking sponsors to project beyond 2021-2023 to 2023-2025 and beyond to see what the scale of future projects might be. The Chehalis Basin Board meets on July 9 and Scott will give an update on projects at that time. Most of the work will happen in July and August.

Ron mentioned that the Flood Authority would not be dealing with CFAR projects – those will be through Ecology.

7. Discussion: Local Resolutions

At the meeting in April, Scott stated he would draft a template for a resolution favoring a basin-wide solution. The template was sent to all the member jurisdictions within the Basin. Chehalis, Lewis County, Grays Harbor County all adopted the resolution. Steve stated that Bucoda will do so during its first in-person meeting, hopefully on June 9. Pe Ell will adopt within the next couple of weeks and Centralia will adopt on June 26. Hoquiam, Thurston County and Aberdeen are not adopting.

8. Discussion: Flood Warning System Gage Relocation Schedule

Scott stated that at the last meeting there was material about the rain gage replacement schedule. Scott was looking for extra money to relocate two gages, and while working with RCO, it appears that there is a positive fund balance of \$236,000. Scott talked to the Projects Committee about possibly using that balance to relocate six gages that were identified to be relocated in a few years. The China Creek project is asking for funds, also. The Flood Authority de-obligated funds from China Creek a few years ago which caused a challenge for Centralia. Centralia is asking if there is a way to help them become whole again. The positive fund balance would pay for all the gages, and fund China Creek.

Brian made a motion to fund the gages and China Creek; Darrin seconded. After discussion, the motion passed by consensus.

10. Public Comment

Scotty Ireland stated he has a personal interest in what is being done in the Basin, specifically for habitat restoration and flood control.

11. Financial Report

Lee stated the report is through April 30, the expenses being mostly staff time and consulting services. Ron stated he would like to see the budget reflect expenses for WEST for on-going maintenance that is not part of the RCO contract.

12. Reports

a. Chair's Report

Chair Raines has had questions regarding the timeframe for the North Shore project.

b. Member Reports

Pe Ell – J. Vander Stoep gave some background on the Chehalis Basin plan. He shared and explained some graphs and charts that show the effects of a water retention facility and the airport levee improvements. He stated that in 2016 Ecology did a programmatic EIS looking at water retention and an entire suite of projects. If the impact of the dam is mitigated, it is a big win for aquatic species and for protecting families and communities.

The EIS found no impacts to fisheries except in two reaches from Crim Creek to Rainbow Falls, and there is an opportunity to mitigate these two reaches.

Lewis County – Commissioner Fund stated everything is changing because of COVID-19. There will be a Flood Control Zone District meeting this afternoon, and the group will be looking at a water retention facility and the area around the airport. Flooding is still at the top of the list for Lewis County.

Thurston County – Commissioner Menser stated Thurston County is consumed with cutting the budget and going to Phase II with COVID-19, which might be submitted next Tuesday. The county is also working on a climate mitigation plan, and how to finance because of COVID-19.

Aberdeen – Kris reported Aberdeen is working on its budget and COVID-19 issues. It is looking at a timber master plan. WSDOT is replacing culverts and there may be an opportunity for flood reduction there.

Hoquiam – Brian stated a proposal was submitted on the west levee, and there will be an application for local project funding related to levee projects.

Montesano – Dan stated the resolution will be submitted on Tuesday. He asked if J. Vander Stoep and Jay Gordon would be willing to give their reports at that time.

Bucoda – Steve stated Bucoda is working with Chrissy Bailey regarding flood work, and on a right-of-way to the railroad.

Centralia – Ron thanked the Flood Authority for helping fund China Creek. The city is voting on the resolution on Tuesday.

Cosmopolis – Darrin stated things are starting to return to normal. It is hoped that city hall will open on June 1. The budget has taken a big hit. The city is looking at local projects for culverts and hopes to be ready to submit those for this biennium.

Grays Harbor County – Commissioner Raines stated the county applied for a variance and hopes to hear from the State today. The Office of Chehalis Basin met a week ago and understands the Quinault and Chehalis Tribes concerns regarding water retention. The EIS is very narrow and we have asked to look more into mitigation.

c. Chehalis Basin Board

Jay Gordon encouraged the Flood Control Zone Districts (FCZD) to give a better picture of what a mitigation plan would look like. The second half of the EIS speaks to damage and mitigation, and hopes the FCZD can walk through the mitigation plan to get a more complete picture of the pros and cons. There is also a desire to look at alternatives to see if there is something else out there. A draft paper from the Quinault nation for alternatives is expected next week.

At the last meeting, Jay stated he spoke about a state-level project: water quality trading. The Board had a chance to apply for a grant for Washington and Oregon to have a group that implemented five water quality trading projects. It did get that grant, and Jay asked that the Chehalis Basin will get help for water quality trading.

d. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

e. State Team Report

Vickie asked if Scott would delete the State Team Report from the Agenda.

13. Confirm Next Meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 16, 2020 in Thurston County.