



10:00 a.m. via Zoom

September 16, 2021 - Meeting Notes

Flood Authority Members present: Edna Fund, Lewis County; Steven Lyle, Bucoda; Ron Averill, Centralia; Brian Shay, Hoquiam; Kris Koski and Rick Sanger, Aberdeen; Darrin Rains, Cosmopolis; Dan Wood, Montesano; Brandon Rakes, filling in for Chehalis; J Vander Stoep, filling in for Pe Ell; Tye Menser, Thurston County.

Flood Authority Members absent: Richard Armstrong, Oakville; Don Webster, Napa vine; Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County.

Others Present: Scott Boettcher, Chronicle, Jay Gordon, Carson Coates, Kaitlynn Nelson, Sarah Kohout, Pete Krabbe, Lee Napier, David Curtis, Megan Sathre.

1. Call to Order

Edna Fund called the meeting to order at 10:04.

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made as members logged in. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of September 16, 2021 Agenda

Edna asked for any objections to approve the agenda. There were no objections. There was consensus to approve.

4. Approval of July 15, 2021 Meeting Notes

Edna asked for any objections to approve the meeting notes. There were no objections. There was consensus to approve.

5. Meeting Materials

In addition to Agenda and Meeting Notes, all other meeting materials can be found at https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings.aspx#Sept2021.

6. Flood Warning System – “Getting Ready for the 2021-22 Flood Season”

David Curtis gave an annual presentation update on the Chehalis River Basin Flood Warning System. Routine maintenance activities for the Flood Warning System include weekly remote monitoring of Flood Authority gauges. Additionally, there are quarterly visits to the sites to check the health of the gauges. As needed, emergency responses to gauge sites are performed in the event of low batteries, communication failure, or vandalism.

The following permits have been secured for gage site locations: Cedar Creek (DNR) through 2026, Haywire (Green Diamond) through 2025, Weyerhaeuser permit for multiple gages through 8/3/2023. ROCK-WEYCO rain gage has been removed and replaced with MASON FD13 at Cloquallam. Haywire Ridge rain gage has also been moved. Fire conditions permitting, the following gages will be relocated next: Brooklyn rain gage, Skookumchuck rain gage, and the Chehalis River below Thrash Creek.

Next, David addressed webcams. The webcam at Monte-Elma Rd Bridge has been removed due to vandalism as of May 2021. A new webcam location on the Lower Satsop has been investigated and is ready for deployment when landowner permission is secured. Scott noted that the webcam will be placed on a mobile unit so that it can be moved out of harm's way if an emergency situation arises. The USGS reports that the Montesano gage will be operational by the end of September.

Rainfall Outlook – an atmospheric river event is predicted for this coming weekend, which may bring 1-4 inches of rain into the Basin and 8-10 inches to the peninsula. David noted that this is pretty big event for the first of the year and may indicate the outlook of rainfall for this year. Long term projections indicate that this will be a wetter than normal year for the PNW based on a three-month forecast.

David addressed Highwater Alerts – if the water is getting close to flood stage, an alert is sent. At this time he is looking at advancing these alerts by giving an hourly estimate of when the river will exceed flood stage. In an effort to make this advancement, he is looking for volunteers interested in piloting the project to get these automated alerts. Please note, there will be some variability in the accuracy of these alerts. Scott stated that he will send out a follow up email for interested parties.

Finally, David announced an upcoming training on October 25th from 1-5 pm at the Jester Auto Museum. He would also like to conduct some virtual training on how to better utilize the Chehalis River Basin website.

Scott commented about how it would be really great to do a training on the Flood Warning System to explain how to get on the alert program and show what is on the website. He requested that people think about how we can get the word out about hosting a zoom training.

Edna thanked Dave for his presentation and for giving the Flood Authority a good perspective. She noted that folks on the street want to know what it means to them.

7. Local Projects -- 2021-2023 Projects Update/Discussion

Scott stated that the Chehalis proposed \$4,050,000 allocation was approved. Implementation of this funding requires amending previous agreements with RCO or setting up new agreements. At this time, the amendments are in the administrative stage to get the money into agreements. RCO is busy with habitat projects and other projects so there is a certain amount of speed in which they can move. There are currently ten funding projects, which are described in 2021-23 Local Projects Update (EZview).

Ron thanks Jay Gordon, J Vander Stoep, and Edna Fund for helping get the funding through the Chehalis Basin Board. J Vander Stoep responded that he was sorry that amount ended up being less the originally planned, but felt it was necessary. Edna replied that they would lobby as additional opportunities came forth.

Scott announced that he was hopeful that the pump planning and permitting will be done by next summer. Then, we can go back to the Basin Board to ask for more funding. He said he will continue to watch the budget process and thanked the board members for doing the same.

8. Flood Authority Member and Staff Changes

Scott announced that Pat Anderson has now retired and displayed the certificate of appreciation that was given to her on behalf of the Flood Authority. Pat has been replaced by Megan Sathre. Many other members of the Flood Authority expressed their appreciation for Pat including Edna, Ron, and Lee.

Another member leaving the Flood Authority is Kris Koski. Scott spoke on his history working with Kris and noted many of his great qualities. Other members of the Flood Authority also thanks Kris for his work and wished him the best in his new role.

Scott stated that an updated contact list can be found on the EZview site.

9. Chehalis Basin Board

Jay Gordon thanked J Vander Stoep for his assistance with the budget. He said we did a really nice job of working on coming to the same consensus. J offered his kudos to Vickie for her leadership. Edna seconded the kudos to Vickie and J saying it was a wonderful product that came out of the negotiation. J said he has been around Vickie since the Flood Authority started and she talks herself down because she does not get into the weeds on the technical information, but her skill level and trust level on that board is remarkable. She is a gift to all of our communities that are involved in this process.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Financial Reports

Lee reported that expenditures for July were \$9,250.70 for salaries, wages, and consulting services. Expenditures for August were \$8,384.82 for the same budget lines.

The budget is currently operating under an extension from RCO and will be in the process of granting us additional budget. The Board authorized Lewis County to be the fiscal agent to secure additional budgeting.

12. Reports

A. Chair's Report

Commissioner Gary Stamper is in the hospital due to COVID, Commissioner Swope is in quarantine.

B. Member Reports

Centralia - Ron stated the city is finishing Phase II China Creek in the next few weeks.

Montesano – Dan stated he sent J Vander Stoep and Jay Gordon emails regarding Food Policy Forum – recommending the creation of Office on Western Washington Basins. Dan now paused his recommendation as of yesterday because he does not want to have any negative impact on Chehalis Basin. Dan requested that members please email his with thoughts/considerations.

Hoquiam – Brian stated that Aberdeen and Hoquiam are getting the North Shore Levee to the finish line. They submitted an application to apply for the Brick Program Federal Funds for the NS Levee. They hope to have it ready by 2023. Brian also took time to thank Kris for his work and noted the lasting impact that his work will have on the generations to come.

Aberdeen – Rick addressed Aberdeen and Hoquiam working together and the positive impacts it has had. Kris added that the city of Aberdeen passed a resolution for seven million dollars from the insurance settlement to fund the NS Levee.

C. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

13. Confirm Next Regular Meetings, Topics and Location

The next meeting will occur on November 18, 2021, 10:00 A.M. via Zoom.

Adjournment was at 11:15.