

MEETING SUMMARY

Advisory Committee Meeting #21 Flood Control Zone District May 17, 2010 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Location

Skagit Room, Skagit County Administrative Building, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA

Meeting Purpose

For the Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) Advisory Committee (AC) members to conduct normal business and:

1. Discuss County Finances with the Budget and Finance Director
2. Continue Conversation Regarding Funding to Complete Planning Process
3. Discuss and Possibly Fill Vice-Chair Position
4. Review Agenda Process
5. To determine next steps and Technical Committee assignments (if any)

Introduction

Chairman Bob Boudinot opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to AC meeting #21.

Public Comment

Carol Ehlers suggested the FCZD establish a restricted fund similar to the Drainage Utility (DU). Like the DU, the FCZD could charge a fee per household and acre. This source of funding could help support flood projects. Certain federal costs would not apply, and the sewer treatment plants could be protected first. Any other flood project costs could be paid for by another tax.

Acceptance of April 19, 2010 AC Meeting Summary

Larry Kunzler corrected the "Flood Historian" section of the previous summary. It should state the Skagit River used to flow south through the Sauk River down into to the Stillaguamish River. Jason Easton moved to accept the meeting summary with this correction. Todd Carlson seconded the motion. Motion carried 13/0/0 with Shirley Solomon acting as Dave Pflug's proxy, and Todd Carlson acting as Bob Carey's proxy.

Discuss County Finances with the Budget and Finance Director

Boudinot began the discussion with the question: Where will the County get its match of approximately \$3 million, should the County receive congressional funding for the Skagit River General Investigation (Skagit GI)? He went on to introduce Trisha Logue, the Finance and Budget Director for Skagit County. She was not posed that particular question prior to the meeting. However, she was able to provide more information regarding the County's budget as a whole.

Logue explained that the County's largest funding source is the general fund, which is primarily funded by property taxes. The general fund can be used for many things, because it has the fewest restrictions. It has shrunk from \$50 million to \$47 million over the last year due to a drop in revenue.

Historically, funds used to match river improvement federal money have come from transfers from the road fund or grant sources. The road fund can pay for such purposes, because the

County's roads are its biggest asset and at the most risk of being damaged by flooding. Money could be realized if a taxing assessment was put into place solely for FCZD purposes. This process would have to go through the Auditor's and Treasurer's offices.

Regular Report Outs

County Engineer: Dan Berentson stated the County is still searching for a new Public Works Director. He added that he, Lorna Ellestad, Chal Martin (City of Burlington), Malcolm Leytham (nhc), and Albert Lieu (PIE) met with USGS staff as a follow-up to the Technical Conference that took place in Washington, DC. They discussed what steps can be taken next. The matter of elevations continues to be discussed. Berentson also attended a meeting with Ellestad, Martin, and Esco Bell (City of Mount Vernon) at the University of Washington regarding the effects of climate change on the Skagit River basin. Martin added they are specifically looking at how climate change affects flooding and low flows. Bell continued by saying they were warned the data is still new and should be used cautiously – trends should be reviewed rather than absolute values.

Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan (CFHMP): Meghan MacMullen has begun compiling Chapter 9 of the CFHMP, which focuses on the alternatives. She has also been reviewing Washington State Department of Ecology's CFHMP checklist to assure the plan is meeting the State's requirements.

Blueprint Meeting: Todd Carlson briefly mentioned the group came up with some basic recommendations regarding the Skagit GI and the CFHMP. Those in attendance included Carlson, Bell, Leonard Halverson, and Bob Carey (TNC). The general feeling is that there is no clear picture of milestones and deliverables for the Skagit GI and CFHMP, and that one person should be in charge of the entire study. This meeting will be discussed further at the next FCZD AC meeting.

Skagit River General Investigation (Skagit GI): Ellestad had three major points to share. The County is updating: the Corps' hydrology Flo-2D model – some inconsistencies have been identified, the economic section of the Skagit GI – specifically the cost of each measure, and the Corps is trying to complete its levee reliability geotechnical work. Documents received to date include the FY11 Project Management Plan (PMP) and revised Feasibility Scoping Meeting Read Ahead. Lastly, the Skagit GI is waiting to be vetted under the Energy and Water Bill by congressional delegates.

Dike and Drainage Technical Committee (DDTC): The DDTC did not meet; no report.

Environmental Technical Committee (ETC): The ETC did not meet; no report.

Land Use Technical Committee (LUTC): The LUTC did not meet; no report.

Flood Historian: Flood Historian: Kunzler addressed the previously expressed notion that a flood reduction project put to a vote of the people would not pass since most people live outside the floodplain. He shared an excerpt from a newspaper article that may prove otherwise. In 1979, voters in Burlington rejected a 100-year flood level protection project by 65.9%. The majority of Burlington lives in the floodplain. Therefore, where a voter resides may not always be the determining factor in a vote. Also, Kunzler shared a piece from the USACE Captain Harry Taylor report in which Captain Taylor stated, "It appears to me that the proper solution of this problem requires the formation of the entire part of the Skagit Valley needing dike protection into a single diking district and the appointment of a competent experienced civil engineer to take

entire charge of the building and maintenance of all the dikes on the river. (**Source:** *USACE Survey of Skagit River from its mouth to Sedro, Washington, December 11, 1897*) Kunzler added that a similar concept was discussed in the "blueprint" meeting". More flood historical information can be viewed online at www.skagitriverhistory.com.

Continue Conversation Regarding Funding to Complete Planning Process

Boudinot recapped the recent conversation regarding funding for the Skagit GI. Property and sales taxes have been raised as possible ways to fund it.

Ellestad estimates the cost to finish the study is approximately \$3 million. The County's match thus far has been met by contracts with technical consultants, county staff time, and funding from DOE. The County is reviewing the PMP and is negotiating to be responsible for tasks that have obvious "added" value to local cities and dike districts in order to complete them in a timely manner. Identified match for the Skagit GI will be submitted as part of the projected Fund 110 budget and vetted through the county budget process for approval.

It was decided to not request funding for the CFHMP. However, the AC agreed to send a letter to the Board of Skagit County Commissioners to ensure their monetary support of the Skagit GI.

Discuss and Possibly Fill Vice-Chair Position

Boudinot stated the position of Vice Chair has been vacant since Mayor Ramon Hayes left his position on the AC. Mayor Bud Norris nominated and motioned Daryl Hamburg fill the position of Vice Chair. Mayor Mike Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 13/0/0.

Review Agenda Process

The AC did not discuss this matter.

Suggested Next Steps and Meeting

1. Discuss the "blueprint" submitted by Todd Carlson, Bob Carey, Esco Bell, and Leonard Halverson
2. There were no assignments for the Technical Committees.

The next AC meeting will be on Monday, June 21, 2010, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

PRESENT AT FCZD ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 17, 2010:

ADVISORY COMMITTEE						
Name	Representing	Affiliation	Present	Absent	Proxy	Position Vacant
Anderson, Mayor Mike	Cities and Towns	City of Sedro-Woolley	X			
Boudinot, Bob	ETC	Skagit Land Trust	X			
Brunz, Mayor Ed	Cities and Towns	City of Burlington	X			
Carey, Bob	ETC	The Nature Conservancy			X Carlson	
Carlson, Todd	LUTC	WA Dept. of Transportation	X			
Easton, Jason	LUTC	Washington Realtors	X			
Flaig, Dean	DDTC	Drainage District #21	X			
Halverson, Leonard	At-Large	Sterling Area		X		
Hamburg, Daryl	DDTC	Dike District #17	X			
Hughes, Robert	LUTC	Ag. Adv. Committee	X			
Kunzler, Larry	At-Large	Skagit River Flood Historian	X			
Nelson, Stanley	DDTC	Dike District #22	X			
Norris, Mayor Bud	Cities and Towns	City of Mount Vernon	X			
Pflug, Dave	ETC	Seattle City Light			X Solomon	
Solomon, Shirley	ETC	Skagit Watershed Council	X			

OTHERS PRESENT AT FCZD ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 17, 2010:

STAFF	
Name	Affiliation
Berentson, Dan	Skagit County Public Works
Ellestad, Lorna	Skagit County Public Works
MacMullen, Meghan	Skagit County Public Works
Symonds, Kara	Skagit County Public Works

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES	
Name	Affiliation
Bell, Esco	City of Mount Vernon
Chesterfield, Blaine	City of Mount Vernon
Doyle, John	Town of LaConner
Ehlers, Carol	Citizen
Ertel, Cory	Skagit and Island Counties Building Assoc.
Helton, Bob	Citizen
Jones, Gary	Dike District 3
Loop, Teresa	Puget Sound Energy
Martin, Chal	City of Burlington
O'Donnell, Dan	Citizen
Shultz, John R.	Dike Districts #1 and #12
Watkinson, Mark	Skagit County Emergency Management