

CLARK COUNTY CLEAN WATER COMMISSION

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

6:30 – 8:30 P.M.

Public Service Center, 6th Floor Training Room
1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Present

Dave Darby, Robert Nichols, Patty Page, Don Moe, Susan Rasmussen, Virginia van Breemen, David Morgan, Nancy Olmsted, Art Stubbs

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Absent

None

Clark County Staff

Kevin Gray, Earl Rowell, Bobbi Trusty, Ron Wierenga, Commissioner Steve Stuart

Public

Kelly O'Tillery, Thom McConathy, Bill Owen

Quorum.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Agenda and material review

1. Agenda
2. November 4, 2009 meeting notes
3. Public Outreach Subcommittee Post Meeting Notes
4. Measure Effectiveness/Identify and Understand Stream Needs Subcommittee Post Meeting Notes

Approval

The November 4 notes were approved as submitted

Communications with the Public

None.

Public Comments

Mr. McConathy met with the Hazel Dell Sewer about working with the community on hooking up to the sewer system within the Salmon Creek drainage basin. He urged the Clean Water Commission (CWC) to approach the sewer agency to form some sort of summit as some failing systems impact surface water. He feels that there are conflicts with the NPDES Permit and others who manage the services. Discussion occurred within the group about how many septic systems are failings and the use of self-composting toilets. It was brought up that the CWC does not have the ability to influence the septic systems within Clark County. Mr. Wierenga stated that the Clean Water Program does respond to all water quality complaints and coordinates with the CRWWD when necessary. A recent success story of this is the Sunnyside neighborhood, which now has the sewer infrastructure provided. We also try to align our program work when they are doing sewer infrastructure work; we look for



opportunities to do stormwater retrofits while the street is torn up to not inconvenience people.

Action Items

Public Outreach Subcommittees

During the subcommittee meeting, the group reviewed past tactics used and how to segment people into targeted groups. Some of the targeted groups mentioned were demographics, watersheds, and stakeholders. The subcommittee also identified the need to hear the perceptions of the program from the public and identify the message the subcommittee wants to provide.

The group discussed next steps and some of the ideas recommended were:

- Make a stakeholders list. Please send all your ideas to Mr. Rowell and he will compile the list for the group. After the list is compiled, the subcommittee can decide which groups to target this coming year.
- Identify the focus. Will the committee discuss only stormwater or include other related topics such as habitat buffers? Possibly review the 2008 Program summary for ideas about how to draft the message.

The discussion revealed that it will be important to stay focused, be clear on what the message is, and redirect when necessary. It is important not get overwhelmed by other related topics that interfere with the message that is being delivered. However, it is equally important to acknowledge and note the other concerns, but get them to the right person in the county to handle them.

It was recommended by the group to make sure the message being delivered is about helping people, just as best practices change over time, educating people will help with understanding the ways clean water is evolving.

Mr. Gray stated that he is tasked with going out and talk to the community about our natural resource priorities, our goals and what the public wants. He has invited the CWC to accompany him to talk and listen to the groups. Recognizing we will need to share consistent messages, and we cannot tackle everyone's priorities, however, we can apply common sense and bring service back to the community.

Measure Effectiveness Subcommittee

The subcommittee determined there were two different ways of defining their focus. The first is the functional effectiveness, looking at how does this facility or treatment method improve stormwater. The second is financial, looking at cost effective ways of doing stormwater treatment and is the program getting what is should be out of the money the program is spending on those projects. The Clean Water program is currently reviewing the performance standards and the subcommittee will receive those documents. Once the subcommittee reviews the documents, they can define a starting point and determine their next steps.

The discussion rose around identifying deliverables, maintaining NPDES compliance, improve the water vs. holding the line, and identify ways to allocate funding based on efficiency and needs. Provide examples to the public on what a particular neighborhood stormwater looks like before it goes into a facility, what is looks like after it comes out of a facility before it hits the receiving water. This is where the subcommittees see themselves come together.

Mr. Darby stated that he has been reviewing the 2007/08 budget summary and is disappointed with the amount of money that has been spent on engineering versus the number of capital projects being

completed. He does not understand why we have so many projects being engineered that the program does not have funds for. He asked for a number of items so he can complete his review:

- Number of projects that are actually being engineered right now
- Number of projects that are funded of those that are being engineered
- Which projects are done by county?
- Which projects are done by private?
- Which firms are involved in private?
- Explanation of each project and why it is being engineered
- How much money is being allocated for each engineering project
- Who decided the engineering of these projects without funds

It was discussed that a certain amount of engineering needs to be done prior to knowing if the project is feasible. Mr. Wierenga will review the capital program at the CWC meeting in January 2010.

New Business

Commissioner Stuart thanked the commission and the public for their support and work in the program for the previous year and wished all a happy holidays.

Elections

Motion 2009-12-02

It was motioned and approved that Art Stubbs elected as Chair and Nancy Olmstead elected as Vice Chair for 2010

2009 Annual Report

Ms. Page and Ms. Olmstead will review the notes from the retreat regarding changing the annual report and begin the work on it.

Clean Water Program Updates

Mr. Wierenga updated the group on program activities

The board has approved a funding agreement with the Department of Ecology (DOE) to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds on the Whipple Creek channel improvement project. It is an \$850,000 loan and half of which is forgivable principle (recovery act, stimulus funding), it is like receiving a \$425,000 grant. The project is a green infrastructure project that stabilizes the channel helping to manage storm water in a more natural way with valley spanning logjams and in-stream placement of wood to help restore floodplains and wetlands.

The program recently applied for a grant for a LID project in the Mt. Vista area. It will be a demonstration project with 26 LID features to reduce run off going into the main facility. Part of the grant includes outreach, so it will be our own green streets tour.

The program was officially offered on December 1, a grant from DOE to do public outreach for private stormwater facility care and protection in the amount of \$240,000.00. This grant is coordinated with all cities in Clark County for unified and joint message and goal. We still need to take it to the Board for approval of the grant agreement, but there are no matching funds for this grant.

The Board of County Commissioners has given approval to go to public hearing on the Agreed Order with Ecology on December 15, at 10:00 a.m. The agreement has not substantially changed since Mr. Wierenga last spoke to this group about it. Compliance documents are posted on the website if you would like to review before the hearing. The Agreed Order says that we are in provisional agreement and mutually agree to do certain things to comply with our NPDES municipal stormwater permit.

Mr. Gray updated us on his new appointment as the Environmental Services Director. The new department is intended to gain efficiencies by combining efforts, funding and focusing on environmental outcomes. Groups involved in the new department are Vegetation Management, Solid Waste, Endangered Species, Legacy Lands, Clean Water, Environmental Review and Environmental Permitting. As the department evolves, we look to combining common functions, like Educational and Outreach and Planning, and focusing more on services rather than regulation. We hope to engage more external stakeholders in natural resource protection. He looks forward to working with this group and tying into the efforts of the CWC.

Mr. Stubbs asked about the Wanke Meadows stormwater facility and what is next on the agenda with them. Mr. Wierenga acknowledged that if the facility functions well through the winter and if the homeowner association still wants to dedicate it to the County in the spring, the County would accept the facility.

Public Comments

Mr. McConathy, on behalf of the Clark County Water Quality Resource Council, honored Mr. Morgan with a scarf in appreciation of his work.

Mr. Owen had a couple of comments on the subcommittees. On the outreach, he asked that the group be purposeful and be clear on what outcomes they want to achieve. Develop those levels of service so the public understands what the clean water does. Possibly incorporate some of the SNAP program work as it might give you some information on watersheds. On the effectiveness committee, be careful to see the forest through the trees – there are many performance standards that are important to the Clean Water Program. However, be careful as some of the performance standards are better to resonate with the county commissioners or the public. He asked that the subcommittee does not get caught up on the numbers too much – keep in mind that if you were not on the commission what would be important for you to hear.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bobbi Trusty

Action Items

- Update from subcommittees on the next steps developed.
- Ron Wierenga – Capital program process update