

**CLARK COUNTY
CLEAN WATER COMMISSION
Meeting Notes**

Wednesday, September 6, 2006
6:30 – 9:00 P.M.
Public Works Operations Conference Room B-1
4700 NE 78th Street, Vancouver

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Present

Tim Crawford, Robert Even, Don Moe, Bill Owen, Patty Page, Susan Rasmussen, Art Stubbs, Virginia van Breemen, Ron Wilson

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Absent

None

Clark County Staff

Trista Kobluskie, Earl Rowell, Cindy Stienbarger

Public

Thom McConathy

A quorum was achieved.

Call to Order

Introduction

The members of the Clark County Clean Water Commission, the public, and Clark County staff introduced themselves. The meeting was then called to order.

Agenda and material review

The packet includes:

1. Agenda for the September 6, 2006 meeting
- 2a. Notes from the July 5, 2006 meeting
- 2b. Notes from the August 2, 2006 meeting
3. Introduction to the Orientation Packet (8/29/06)
4. Investigate the Impact of Septic Systems on Local Water Quality
5. Low Impact Development Overview (9/1/06)
- 6a. Email regarding the Sole Source Aquifer Federal Register
- 6b. Notice from EPA designating the Troutdale Aquifer “Sole Source”
7. Clean Water Program Events Calendar September – December 2006
8. Clean Water Program Service Fee Call and Correspondence Statistics 2006 (9/6/06)
9. Clean Water Program budget as of July 31, 2006
10. Big Board and Project Activity Reports (August 2006)
11. Education Program Update (9/6/06)



Approval

The August 2, 2006 Meeting Notes were approved as written.

Communications with the Public

Mr. Rowell stated that the Salmon Creek Watershed Council is looking for participants. Mr. Wierenga, one of the county's Water Resources Scientists, will participate. Mr. Owen will participate. The Clean Water Program may work with the council if there is overlap.

Mrs. Rasmussen asked who funds it. Mr. Rowell responded that the council is seeking funding. Mr. McConathy stated that it has applied for funding from the EPA Rivers Council, which will pay for a facilitator and some staffing. Mr. Owen stated that the council is filing for 501c3 status.

Mr. Rowell stated that Mr. Even, Mr. Moe and a couple of staff will attend a 2-day LID Implementation workshop in Vancouver on November 15-16. Mrs. Rasmussen requested a presentation by those who attend.

Mr. Rowell and the group discussed the Clean Water Program's intent to apply for grant and loan money from Ecology for water quality protection for 2008, which would enhance water quality efforts outside the NPDES permit. Mr. McConathy complained that the program missed an opportunity to apply for monies for 2007. Mr. Owen asked if these grants and loans are available every year. Mr. Rowell: yes.

Mrs. Rasmussen asked if the county has a grant writer on staff. Mr. Rowell replied that he does not know if the county still employs a grant writer. He indicated that program staff has little extra time to devote to grant writing, but is aware of how to apply for the monies from Ecology.

Mr. Rowell noted that NPDES permit activities would not be eligible. Mrs. Stienbarger stated that winning these grants for education programs might be difficult because permit requirements are so broad.

The group discussed how to get Ecology to disperse more monies to southwest Washington.

Public Comments

Mr. McConathy made three comments:

1. Please hold all meetings at a single location and advertise better. When meetings move from one location to another, the public is prevented from easily attending. The Commission should advertise its meetings in the *Sunday Columbian*.

Mr. Owen replied that the Commission might hold all meetings at a single location next year.

2. The packet is too large to properly review when it is received just before the meeting. Commissioners should receive materials at least a week or two prior to the meeting.

Mr. Rowell responded that packet items 9 and 10 are for future reference and that several items from the August packet were for discussion at the September meeting. Much of the information is being provided in advance.

Mr. Owen took responsibility for reminding other Commissioners what items to review prior to the meetings. The group agreed.

3. The grants discussed previously tonight should have been disclosed to the Commission earlier. It is unfortunate that Clark County is not going to attempt to get money from this grant program for 2008.

Mr. Rowell responded that the Clean Water Program currently has no activities outside of NPDES requirements that would qualify for the Centennial Grants. Staff is aware of the requirements and capable of applying for the grants, if warranted. Future program activities may qualify.

Ms. Page stated that she thought the Clean Water Program undertakes only NPDES permit implementation. Mr. Rowell replied that funds collected from the fee can only be used for NPDES permit implementation, however the program can expend other monies on related non-permit activities.

Mr. Owen asked if staff keeps a list of ideas for projects that fall outside the permit requirements but that would be beneficial to water quality. Mr. Rowell replied that the funding the program provided for Japanese knotweed removal is a good example. Mr. Owen asked why projects such as that would not qualify currently for grant funding? Mr. Rowell replied that the deadline is approaching too quickly to apply for this cycle.

Mrs. Rasmussen noted that the Commission discussed hiring a grant writer for these grants in the past. Mr. Owen asked which grants the program has received in the past. Mr. Rowell: Centennial, and 319. Other programs have won Clark County Groundwater Management Program, Wellhead Protection 1 & 2, Aquifer Vulnerability, Watershed Characterization for Clark County, Monitoring Coordination & Resources Program Project, etc.

Program Updates

Public Education and Outreach

Mrs. Stienbarger passed around the Clean Water Program Education Update – September 6, 2006. She gave the following update about the Public Education and Outreach program element.

Mr. Armstrong updated the Education Subcommittee in August about the kinds of problems he sees: paint dumping and concrete hosing. The subcommittee was in favor of producing a guide for homeowner's associations on stormwater facility maintenance. Also, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a baseline knowledge survey will go out in fall.

The River Heroes program is complete for 2005-06 school year. The program will have new stories next year, and probably new visuals. She passed around prototypes of posters for next year's presentations.

The next Watershed Stewards course begins September 12 and should enroll approximately 20 people.

Mr. Stubbs stated that he recently asked a group of kids at a carwash if they were using biodegradable soap. Mr. Owen asked if the program would revive the carwash outreach program, in which community groups would be encouraged to hold their fundraising carwashes at participating car dealerships, which would contain the suds in one location. Mr. Rowell noted that community groups had not been receptive.

Mr. McConathy complained that commercial car washes contribute significant surfactant pollution to the storm system.

Mrs. Rasmussen showed the Thursday *Columbian* Home Section, which had a Q & A dedicated to water conservation. She complained that the only water quality answer concerned washing cars with a bucket instead of a hose. Mrs. Stienbarger stated that the editor of that column sometimes writes incorrect

responses to the questions and that she is not sure the column has ever received a true question from the public.

Mr. Owen asked if the countywide survey would be part of the new permit requirements? Mrs. Stienbarger: yes.

Mr. Even noted that contractors are required to stencil storm inlets; could contractors pay volunteers coordinated by the Watershed Stewards to do the stenciling as a fundraiser for the group? Mrs. Stienbarger replied that past efforts to coordinate a partnership had been unsuccessful. Mr. Even offered to coordinate this with Stewards.

Ms. Page asked if the Rain Barrel and Rain Garden workshops could be taken to other groups, like churches and the Rotary. Also, could the workshops promote particular commercial products, such as the non-toxic chemical manufacturer in Vancouver. Mrs. Stienbarger replied that the workshops could provide a list of manufacturers or retailers, but could not promote a particular one.

Mr. Owen stated that he would like the program to place a kiosk of (updateable) informational on one of the park trails to advertise work done with Clean Water Fees. Salmon Creek trail would be a good location. Mrs. Stienbarger stated that the kiosk at Lacamas Lake Park is updateable, but staff does not have time to update it frequently.

Old Business

Orientation Packet for New Commissioners

Mr. Rowell stated that the page in the packet is an overview. The orientation packet itself is:

- Current NPDES Permit
- Overview of the Clean Water Program
- Contacts
- Organizational chart of Clean Water Program (including other departments that do NPDES work)
- Commission Bylaws
- Latest Annual Report

Staff would meet with the new Commissioner, answer questions, and introduce him or her to the website, where past notes and much information is located.

The group discussed appointing a mentor or holding a small group session before a new Commissioner's first public meeting. Mrs. van Breemen and Mr. Moe agreed that their one-on-one sessions with Mr. Rowell had been informative. Ms. Page noted that a person from the construction or engineering industries needs less orientation than a person with no water resources background. Mr. Stubbs stated that the perspectives of somebody with no experience in the field are very valuable.

Mr. McConathy suggested codifying the orientation procedures in the Bylaws. Mr. Owen and Mr. Stubbs disagreed.

Mr. Owen asked the Commission to send any remaining comments on the orientation document to Mr. Rowell by September 13th, 2006. Mr. Rowell will email the final version prior to the next meeting, and the group will vote on it in October.

Septic Tanks/Sanitary Sewer: Next Steps

Mr. Crawford volunteered to write a one-page summary for the Board of County Commissioners on the impact of septic systems on local water quality. Mr. Rowell noted that the original question posed by the BOCC is reviewed in the Memorialization of the June work session. Mr. Owen set a deadline of September 20, 2006 for the document to be sent to Mr. Rowell. He noted that he would like the draft to be available at the October Clean Water Commission meeting.

Mr. Stubbs reiterated his point from a previous meeting that government should find a way to subsidize sewer hookups for those with failing septic systems.

Low Impact Development Update

Mr. Rowell indicated that he wants to finalize the document with Mr. Owen. It has undergone several revisions in the last several days. Mr. Owen asked for any comments to be sent to Mr. Rowell ASAP.

Mr. Owen listed the cost comparison and the proposal as the other two items requested by the Board of County Commissioners.

The group discussed varying levels of support for LID options among the BOCC, county staff, citizens and the development community. Mr. Rowell noted that the new NPDES permit has LID options in it. Mr. McConathy noted that when the new NPDES permit goes into effect, a developer who wants to implement LID and is turned down by county Development Review staff could sue the county.

The group discussed if it has to wait for buy-in from Community Development and from the community in order to make a proposal to the BOCC regarding implementing LID.

Ms. Page stated that the Commission could take advantage of the confluence of happenings, including the new NPDES permit, the resultant updating of building codes, the resultant updating of the stormwater manual, and increased interest in LID among the building community to figure out how to pull it all together.

Mr. Owen asked what exactly the Clean Water Commission should recommend to the BOCC regarding LID since building codes and the stormwater manual must be updated under the new permit, anyway. Mr. Stubbs asked if the BOCC is looking for a recommendation from the CWC to allow LID. Mr. Rowell: yes.

Mr. Rowell suggested that the Commission provide the BOCC with the following: an overview of LID, a FAQ, and a proposal for “baby steps” LID that would fall within the experimental best management practices provisions (developed in cooperation with Community Development). Mr. Owen stated that he would prefer to propose an LID project directly to the BOCC; the BOCC would need to direct the appropriate departments and entities to work together to make it possible.

Mr. Even and Mr. Moe will make a cost comparison for a subdivision in the Orchards area – LID vs. conventional. Mr. Rowell asked for a very simple comparison. Mr. Moe wants more information about using pervious pavement, since it does not treat water before it infiltrates.

Ms. Page wondered why the BOCC seems reluctant to make decisions about LID when plenty of information is available. Mr. Stubbs noted that the BOCC may be waiting for a recommendation from a citizen group.

Mr. Rowell asked the group to avoid distributing the draft LID Overview packet until it is finalized.

Mr. Moe wondered why anybody would be against placing LID options in the code.

New Business

Open Forum for Commissioners

Mr. Stubbs will invite the Commissioners to a potluck soon. He complimented the county on a good volunteer appreciation BBQ a couple of weeks ago.

Adjourn

Mr. Owen tabled the discussion of the Clean Water Fee. Mr. Rowell urged the Commissioners to review the *Clark County Clean Water Funding Task Force Final Report and Recommendations, September 15, 1999* that was included in the August meeting packet prior to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Action Items

- Send comments on the orientation document to Mr. Rowell by September 13th – Commissioners
- Email final version of the orientation document to Commissioners prior to the next meeting – Ms. Kobluskie
- Draft one-page summary on the impact of septic systems on local water quality by September 20 – Mr. Crawford
- LID vs. conventional cost comparison – Mr. Even and Mr. Moe
- Review the *Clark County Clean Water Funding Task Force Final Report and Recommendations, September 15, 1999* that was included in the August meeting packet – Commissioners

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Clean Water Commission will be held on Wednesday, October 4, 2006 from 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M. The location is the Clark County Public Works Operations Conference Room B-1, 4700 NE 78th Street, Vancouver.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trista Kobluskie

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