



CLEAN WATER COMMISSION

For the Department of Environmental Services

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, September 3, 2014

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

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

Members Present: David Meyer, Brian Peck, Susan Rasmussen, Dick Rylander, Gary Schaeffer, Virginia van Breemen, Melanie Wheeler

Members Absent: Jim Carlson, Rob McKinney

Staff Present: Earl Rowell

Partner Agency Staff Present:

Public Present: Art Stubbs, NACCC; Jennifer Halleck, Vancouver Public Schools; Thom McConathy, Clark County Water Quality Resource Council

I ROLL CALL

The August 6, 2014 meeting summary was approved as submitted

II PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. McConathy from Clark County Water Quality Resource Council (CCWQRC) stated that members of the CCWQRC were canoeing on lower Vancouver Lake near the confluence where Salmon Creek flows into Lake River. There are lots of blue-green algae and suds associated with dead bacteria present. A similar condition is occurring in lower Burnt Bridge Creek that also flows into the lake. The condition is bad and he urges the commission members to individually write letters to the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) to conduct a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs) to find out the source of the nutrient problem in the area. The nutrient levels need to be reduced or Vancouver Lake will never be saved. There is already a court order that requires Ecology to systematically do TMDL's and they have not completed them in over two years. Mr. McConathy hopes that with enough pressure Ecology will start doing them again.

The commission asked Mr. McConathy for clarification of the water quality problems in the Salmon Creek Watershed? Mr. McConathy said there would have to be study to identify the primary source of the water problems. Studies in the 1980s and 1990s examined the agricultural impacts to the watershed. In addition, those studies found that on-site septic systems have an impact on water quality.

The commission asked Mr. McConathy to explain the TMDLs. He that both Salmon Creek and Burnt Bridge Creek have TMDLs. In Salmon Creek the TMDL is for pH, oxygen, and temperature. The city of Battle Ground is doing nothing to address this issue, Clark County is doing little better, and Clark Public Utilities is only one doing anything to address the temperature issue.



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III. CLEAN WATER COMMISSION – COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC

Mr. Meyer called the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) about their maintenance and removal of cattails in stormwater facilities near Highway 14 and 164th Street Exit. He discovered that after a period of time these facilities require maintenance to restore them to original design function. WSDOTs process for maintenance includes steps to ensure the environmental and ecological factors are being reviewed.

Mr. Peck commented that it was brought up in the last meeting how bad plastic bags are on the environment and our stormwater facilities. He wonders how many plastic bags are put on newspapers per year when it is raining. Ms. Wheeler also commented that she wondered about the composition of the plastic, is it biodegradable or similar to a grocery bag?

Mr. Rylander attended the Clark County Comp Plan open house at the Community Center in Battle Ground. He was able to meet the new Battle Ground Planning Director Erin Erdman and now she is aware of the Clean Water Commission. Ms. Rasmussen also attended the Comp Plan open houses.

Mr. Rylander met some folks in a community of 84 homes who are in process of forming a home owners association (HOA). He provided them with suggested contacts at the City of Battle Ground and at the county to ask questions to understand the requirements and expectations of an HOA.

IV PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

Mr. Meyer conveyed that he agreed to lead the Stormwater Pollution Fee study and apologized for not getting more accomplished during the past month. He then provided an outline regarding his ideas on the primary objective and data collection. Mr. Rowell provided the commission information about what Clark County has discovered in regards to what pollutants in stormwater.

Ms. Rasmussen stated that having community meetings helps build a record via the public that will support the recommendations from the commission to the Board of County Commissioners. The commissioners discussed how to encourage stakeholder participation, to keep the process interactive and how to reach consensus on best approaches for implementation. Mr. Meyer suggested if the process is created properly then it can be used to continually evaluate how the fee follows the land use and population changes.

The commissioners discussed septic systems; who tracks them, how they are evaluated and what happens when they fail. Mr. Meyer said that this discussion illustrates how complex a lot of these issues are, how challenging it will be to come up with an effective solution that is going to result in an equitable fee.

Motion 2014-12

Mr. Meyer made a motion that the task force will take the information provided by Mr. Rowell and at the subcommittee's next meeting evaluate and develop a project framework. Then that framework will be presented to this commission for consideration to present to the department. It was seconded and approved. Motion passed.



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Potential Projects

Mr. Rylander discussed identifying up to three projects that the commission could initiate and report their progress back to the Board of County Commissioners. He asked for some project ideas and wrote them on a flipchart. Brainstorm items brought up:

- Plastic bags
- Building coalitions – public education and engagement
- Microbial enhancement (using organics instead of chemicals to control weeds)
- Identify the top 5 pollutants in the county
- Look at issues between septic tanks and sewers and how they impact groundwater
- SWAMP (Stormwater Association Multiuse Project)
- Pollutant fee assessment
- Education and Outreach – Public, Home Owners Associations and Neighborhood Associations
- Interaction with Parks and the Arts Commission
- Help fund sewer connections for septic owners

Mr. Rylander agreed to compile the list and email it to the commissioners. He asked the commissioners to pick three projects they think will be most useful and valuable and bring to the next meeting.

Discussion occurred regards to scheduling a meeting for October 1, 2014 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.

Motion 2014-13

Ms. van Breemen made a motion to have a meeting on October 1. It was seconded and approved. Motion passed.

V PUBLIC COMMENT – feedback

Mr. McConathy urged the commission to only adopt two projects as he doesn't want them to become sidetracked. He also recommended the group contact Mr. Wierenga as there is much more county monitoring information available. The Stream Health Report was a very useful report, but where the county failed is when they referred the information to another agency there was no mechanism for follow-up. Final thought to consider, partnerships can be private and not just public.

VII ADJOURN – 08:31 PM

Summary provided by: Bobbi Trusty / 360-397-2121 x 5268