FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
June 21, 2006
Richland, WA

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Welcome and Introductions

Norma Jean Germond, Public Involvement and Communications Committee (PIC) Chair, welcomed the committee and introductions were made. The summary of the May committee meeting was adopted

Norma Jean said the purpose of the meeting was to discus the committee's advice from the June Board meeting and establish a format and agenda for the Hanford State of the Site (SOS) meetings. Norma Jean developed a draft format for the SOS meetings for committee review and discussion.

Committee Discussion on State of the Site Meeting Advice

The committee reviewed the SOS meeting elements developed during the previous committee meeting in May:

- Accountability
- Strong facilitation
- Full agency representation
- Meetings focused on principles, priorities, and values
- Problem identification
- Mutually agreed upon problem-centered
- Limited formal presentation length (agencies and interest groups) in time and number, to provide public ample opportunity to speak.

Given there is general agreement from the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies and the committee that the goal is to have a successful SOS meeting, Barb Wise, Fluor Hanford (FH), said the criteria for measuring success needs to be defined.

Committee members expressed interest in the agencies' perspective on the proposed SOS meeting format.

Agency Perspective:

- Karen Lutz, Department of Energy – Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL), said the TPA agencies explained what was important to the agencies as well as the public during the previous committee meeting. She said a successful public meeting enables DOE to engage in dialogue with both communities impacted by Hanford activities and anyone interested in Hanford issues. The meetings are also a means for the agencies to make information available and to provide avenues to make people more comfortable to talk. She said the agencies expect to receive hard questions at SOS meetings.
- Nolan Curtis, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), said there are a couple of important things to consider for the SOS meetings. First, it is important for the agencies and stakeholders to be able to provide information about Hanford to a variety of audiences. Second, direct dialogue between the public and stakeholders is essential. It is important for people to talk directly with decision-makers. He indicated a need to develop a process for documenting dialogue between the public and decision-makers, and for managing responses from decision-makers.
- Dennis Faulk, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has not formally discussed the committee's advice regarding the SOS meetings. He noted that the advice is important since it identifies specific interests and concerns. He agreed it is important to be able to determine the success of SOS meetings, but that historically there has been no way to gage success. He explained that SOS meetings provided a means for introducing ideas from the cleanup, constraints and challenges (C3T) process, which focused on what could be done to accelerate cleanup. The SOS meetings were very successful during this process, but that does not mean SOS meetings cannot be effective and important independently.

  Dennis noted that Hanford will face some of the most difficult cleanup work in the future (e.g., Waste Treatment Plant, Central Plateau cleanup, etc.), and the agencies want to demonstrate progress, which often gets overshadowed by negative aspects. It is also very important to have public dialogue about these important issues. He said one of the purposes of the SOS meetings is to make sure the importance of Hanford cleanup is not forgotten at the state and national level. Serving this purpose, the SOS meetings are a way of moving cleanup forward.

- Sharon Braswell, Nuvotec / Department of Energy – Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), said successful SOS meetings provide opportunities for the public to come talk with the agencies and stakeholders about Hanford activities. She noted this is the reason SOS meetings are held in several communities throughout the region.

Committee Discussion:

The committee discussed the proposed open house format for the beginning (first hour)

of the SOS meetings, which includes the four agency managers at their individual display stations to talk with interested members of the public. The public interest groups, tribes, and local communities would also have the opportunity to represent their interests and share information with the public.

- Norma Jean said the SOS meeting format should adhere to the existing Public Communication Plan.
- If decision-makers have one-on-one discussions with the public at SOS meetings, Norma Jean suggested a formalized process needs to be developed to capture the public's concerns, so that information is not lost. Decision-makers need to be able to document and articulate the concerns and issues they heard from the public.
- Steve Hudson, said people come to SOS meetings to deal with specific concerns. He expressed concern with trying to combine specific issues with general issues in the same meeting. He suggested a need to structure the meetings so people know what is being discussed at different points during the meeting.
- Karen said SOS meetings are not the only avenue for people to learn about Hanford issues. Perhaps agencies need to do a better job announcing those other opportunities.
- Norma Jean said the agencies have useful informational displays for the SOS meetings, and should have agency managers and other staff available to explain the information and answer questions. She believes SOS meetings can accommodate people with both specific issues and more general information needs.
- Steve said a decision should be made whether to have the public question and answer session be an open forum or focused on a few key areas that the agency managers are prepared to discuss.
- Helen Wheatley said one of the sources of frustration with recent SOS meetings has been that they are unfocused and the public does not receive a clear sense of what should be learned. Focusing SOS meetings on a few key issues might help the public know what to expect and enable agency managers to provide more substantive information and answers to the public's questions.
- Norma Jean agreed with Dennis that SOS meetings are a good venue for the agencies to publicly share cleanup difficulties and bolster support from the public and Congress to fund Hanford cleanup.
- Barb emphasized making SOS meetings a constructive dialogue, to make agency managers want to engage with the public. Shelley Cimon said SOS meetings are an opportunity to engage the public in Hanford decisions, but the agencies do not view it as an opportunity. She suggested framing the meeting issues as what the Hanford Advisory Board (Board) works on since the Board has some credibility. The SOS meetings are a way to expand the discussion to the general public. The agencies should discuss what has gone well, what the challenges are, and inform people of the opportunities to help the agencies ensure Hanford cleanup funding. Jeanie Sedgely expressed concern with framing the SOS meeting issues as the work of the Board, since there are several members of the public that are concerned about Hanford who may not be familiar with the Board.

Dennis added that EPA believes cleanup has serious issues that need to be addressed to be successful, but he is unsure whether DOE agrees with these issues. He said it is hard to say whether DOE views cleanup issues the same way as EPA, Ecology, and the public. Given the potential for disparate views on some issues, he expressed concern about what the public might think when they hear several diametrically opposed perspectives at SOS meetings. Norma Jean believes it is important for the public to hear different perspectives on Hanford issues. The regulatory agencies would be at the SOS meetings, and can say things DOE might not be able to say, so the public is not just getting one perspective. The complexities of Hanford cleanup are important for the public to understand, and may pique interest and motivate them to maintain their interest and become involved. Jeannie added that the agencies gain credibility with the public when they express cleanup challenges.

- Some committee members believe the public does not think Hanford cleanup is progressing. The challenge for the agencies is to show progress, but also to help people understand the scope and longevity of the process. Public support is necessary to keep the process moving forward.
- Helen said SOS meetings could be useful for informing the public about how to express concerns and directing them to the appropriate channels. She believes this would be helpful as long as public interest groups are involved in the dialogue at SOS meetings. Sharon said the agencies believe that has always been part of the SOS meetings.
- Shelley emphasized the success of SOS meetings is dependent on the agencies being open to hearing the public's concerns.
- Shelley said the open house portion of the SOS meetings should be in a separate room from the meeting room.

The committee discussed the group dialogue concept and the station concept for the beginning of the SOS meetings.

- Helen expressed concern with calling the beginning of the SOS meetings an "Open House" or a "Marketplace of Ideas." Jeannie suggested calling it something like "Meet the Insiders". The committee agreed this is something to work on. Dennis agreed that moving away from the "open house" title is good. He emphasized focusing on calling it something that people will come to.
- Karen said it is important for managers to sit down and hear directly from the public what is important to them. It would be valuable for the managers to hear several perspectives from people before moving to the public questions and answer session. Helen said the session needs to be focused if the agencies want people to obtain information and provide feedback. Karen expressed concern about the meeting becoming an "us-against-them" game.
- Helen said it is important to the public that everyone at the meeting has the opportunity to hear the discussion with the managers. Karen said it is important to the agencies to have small session dialogues, and then a larger, broader public dialogue.

- *Who would be part of the small group discussions?* Karen said the agency managers would be spread out in the group circle, and the public could come and go as they please. Helen suggested an alternative circle, where a group of knowledgeable people interacts with the agency managers, and public is allowed to hear the discussion. She said it would be good to have the agency managers engaging in dialogue with the public, but the public interest groups would also like to be official members of the discussion. In the interest of not keeping anyone from participating, Sharon expressed concern about predetermining the participants in the discussion circle. Norma Jean also expressed concern about having members of the public trying to listen or participate in a one circle dialogue. Nolan emphasized that the idea for the beginning of the SOS meetings was simply to provide an opportunity for members of the public to talk with agency managers one-on-one.
- Tim Hill, Ecology, said the agencies were considering having agency managers at individual stations for one-on-one discussions with the public, and then moving to the large meeting format.
- Several committee members expressed concerns about the group dialogue concept.
- The committee generally preferred having SOS meetings begin with individual stations of multiple perspectives, including the four agencies (DOE-RL, DOE-ORP, EPA, and Ecology) and public interest groups. After the first hour of stations, the meeting would move to another room for agency presentations and open public dialogue.
- *Is there any way to eliminate agency presentations, or supplant them with other information materials?* Helen commented that information materials might supplement agency presentations, but the agency presentations are an important piece of the SOS meetings. The committee agreed the presentations should be shortened. Helen suggested the presentations could be eliminated if the information stations were focused on predetermined key issues. Todd said he believes the presentations tend to no longer be useful, and the more agency managers and public interest groups talk, the less successful the meeting is.
- If the agencies agree on issues to focus on for the SOS meetings, then the agency managers need to limit their remarks during the presentations to their perspectives on those issues.
- Dennis suggested having the agency managers make opening remarks to set the context for the meeting before sending the public to the information stations, and then also having a session for agency managers to report-out what they heard at the information stations.
- Barb said the SOS was an opportunity to show the public what is being done with Hanford cleanup. The SOS meetings need to balance the agencies' need to be able to discuss Hanford cleanup progress with the need for stakeholders to voice their concerns. Helen suggested the agency managers could do the positive messaging at the stations, and the presentations and public dialogue could be focused on the agreed-upon key issues. Norma Jean agreed the agencies could provide their perspectives on each of the issues at their stations to the public.

- *What are examples of potential "key issues"?* Todd suggested the WTP and Central Plateau are currently the two significant Hanford cleanup issues. Gerry Pollet said there were four large issues that were agreed upon for the Seattle SOS meeting, which were disregarded by the agency managers.
- *Do the agency managers believe the last SOS meeting in Richland, where the public brought up several unexpected issues, was a good meeting?* Sharon believes it was a good meeting, because issues were raised, and a response from DOE was issued. Karen said the meeting also brought up an internal issue regarding how concerns are dealt with between the management team and the agency manager. Gerry commented that the issues raised at that meeting needed to happen in a public forum, because a mechanism for making the concerns known did not exist.
- Shelley believes the agencies need to identify the key issues for SOS meetings, which could be as simple as the priorities provided to the Board. Gerry said the agencies need input from the Board, otherwise concerns such as groundwater protection would not have been identified as an important issue by the agencies. He emphasized the need to make it clear the public can express concerns outside the predetermined key issues for the meeting. Norma Jean said she expects meeting advertisements would list the important issues that will be addressed, and indicate that other issues can also be raised.
- The committee discussed whether the agencies would like input from the Board to help identify issues for the SOS meetings. Dennis said the key issues tend to be identified by the Board's technical committees.

In addition to the agency presentations, the committee discussed also providing the opportunity for presentations by public interest groups, the State of Oregon, and the tribes.

- Tim expressed concerned about opening the presentation portion of the agenda up to interests other than the four agencies. Dennis agreed that a multiple presentation format does not work well.
- *What is the problem with the tribes and public interest groups being part of the presentations?* Dennis said the problem is that if all these groups are included in the presentation portion of the meeting, the meeting agenda becomes more like format the Board is currently trying to restructure. In addition to their presentations, he noted that the agency managers will have to make opening remarks and report-out what they heard during the information stations.
- Todd noted that when the SOS meetings used to be successful, the Board was part of the presentations; however, he does not believe the Board should be part of the presentations, since the presentation portion of the agenda is already too long.
- Helen said having strong facilitation might help keep the presentation portion of the meetings on track.
- Dennis suggested the public interest groups, the State of Oregon, and the tribes could present their perspectives on the issues during the open public dialogue following the presentations. Helen said she is not comfortable giving up the role of the public interest groups in the Public Relations Plan unless there is trust that public interest

group and stakeholder perspectives will be covered by other portions of the meeting. Helen believes there has to be a way to make public interest groups integral to the meeting. She said this would likely also require strong facilitation.

- Gerry said it does not work to just have the agencies present opening remarks and their perspectives, since that is too similar to the current SOS meeting format.
- Barb indicated that the Community Relations Plan says SOS meetings should try to involve an alternative perspective. *Is this still viable?* Shelley said the reason why the SOS meetings have not tried to do that is due to the many alternate perspectives, making the presentations too long. Gerry suggested asking the tribes to coordinate and provide one presentation. Barb said that puts the agencies in the difficult position of having to approach the tribes with the request. Dennis said he has noted the need for an alternative perspective, and will take it back to EPA's managers to try and build it into the meeting agenda.
- Sharon expressed concern about negative feedback received on the past meeting facilitator, so she said it is important everyone understand what strong facilitation means. Todd said as the meeting format and agenda develop, the facilitator's role needs to be defined. Norma Jean emphasized the need to work with a facilitator early on so they understand what the agencies want. Tim requested people provide him with any ideas on appropriate facilitators for the SOS meetings.
- Erik Olds expressed concern about agency managers recapping what they heard during the information stations. Todd suggested agency managers provide a recap of the issues from the previous year's SOS meeting and what action DOE took as a result. The committee agreed this was an appropriate approach.
- Norma Jean said she hopes the agencies consider working with the Board to develop key issues for the SOS meetings.

The committee agreed on the following format and agenda for the SOS meetings:

I. Stations / Multiple Perspectives
- Includes stakeholder groups and four agency managers
- Facilitator in each agency group
  - Strict on time
  - Report out
- Newcomer station
  - Allow public to ask questions not previously identified
- Preferably in separate room
- Focus on two-four issue areas – have information available on these issues
- Proposed one hour

II. Public Interest / Agency Presentations
- Four agency presentations
- Opening comments / remarks
  - Recap of concerns and issues heard during previous SOS meeting
  - Short time – 180 seconds per agency
- Trust that other stakeholder perspectives will be heard during public dialogue

- Strong facilitation needed to manage time and ensure other viewpoints are heard.

- Dennis said the committee's discussion of the format and agenda for the SOS meetings goes a long way to meeting the Board's advice, and is something palatable that can take back to management.
- *Would the SOS meetings include a comment card, contact information, etc?* Barb said comment cards were not provided at any previous SOS meetings, but the public was asked to identify issues they would like to share with the agencies.
- *Is there a desire to have the agencies provide formal comment response documents for SOS meetings?* Helen said Ecology is the lead agency charged with assessing SOS meetings, which is different than requesting a formal response document.
- *When will the committee hear back from the agencies?* Dennis said the goal is to try and arrange a discussion with agency management by the end of July. Norma Jean said it would be good to hear from the agencies whether the committee should be doing more to define the SOS meeting format and agenda. She said it is important to keep in mind the need to determine an SOS timeframe and make facility arrangements. Tim said he would like to have the timeframe and facility information as soon as possible.
- Tim said the committee previously recommended holding SOS meetings in Portland, Seattle, Richland, and Hood River. Gerry said an additional meeting should be held in Spokane. Dennis said the agencies are thinking about scheduling the SOS meetings in October.

Committee Business

- The committee agreed to tentatively plan on an August conference call.
- The committee expects to hear from the agencies by the time of the August committee call.
- The committee will provide additional feedback and support regarding the SOS meetings to the agencies as needed.

Handouts

- Proposed draft State of the Site Meeting format and agenda, Norma Jean Germond, 6/21/2006.

Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Shelley Cimon	Helen Wheatley	
Norma Jean Germond		
Steve Hudson		
Todd Martin		

Gerry Pollet		
Jeanie Sedgely (phone)		

Others

Steve Chalk, DOE-RL	Nolan Curtis, Ecology	Cathy McCague, EnviroIssues
Karen Lutz, DOE-RL	Tim Hill, Ecology	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, EnviroIssues
	Tanya Williams, Ecology	Barb Wise, FH
Erik Olds, DOE-ORP		Sharon Braswell, Nuvotec/ORP
	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Lori Gamache, Nuvotec/ORP