

**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD  
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE**

*September 4, 2013  
Kennewick, 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.*

**Opening<sup>1</sup>**

Liz Mattson, Hanford Challenge and Hanford Advisory Board (HAB or Board) Public Involvement and Communications (PIC) Committee Chair, welcomed the committee and introductions were made. The committee approved the June meeting summary.

**Public Involvement Strategic Planning**

*Introduction*

Liz Mattson introduced the topic of Public Involvement Strategic Planning. Liz explained that the purpose of the topic is to consider what makes public involvement successful, what about public involvement at Hanford is unique, what public involvement tools have been working at Hanford, and what the PIC committee can do to increase public involvement at Hanford Site. The topic and strategic planning activity discussed in the summary below implements the final bullet section in HAB Consensus Advice #239, Adopted: Nov. 5, 2010 (Attachment 2).

*Interactive committee and agency discussion*

<sup>1</sup> Please see Attachment 1 – Transcribed Flip Chart Notes for key points/follow up actions recorded during the committee discussion.

The committee completed an interactive activity to prioritize planning, timing, and sequence for probable 2014 public involvement topics. Colored dots were placed next to topics to indicate priority. The items with the most dots were considered higher priority. Topics were ranked for priority in two categories: for discussion during the meeting and as important future topics to discuss on the PIC 2014 work plan. With respect to each topic, the committee discussed innovative tools and techniques for broadening and engaging the audience in 2014. Timing priority was considered on a quarterly basis: Q1 (October – December), Q2 (January – March), Q3 (April – June), Q4 (July – September). The full list of topics ranked is shown below. The committee discussed the two highest –ranked topics: 100 F Proposed Plan and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Record of Decision (ROD) for the Tank Closure and Waste Management EIS (TC & WM EIS).

- 100 F Proposed Plan, Q2
- NEPA ROD for Tank Closure and Waste Management EIS (TC & WM EIS), Q4
- Draft Land Conveyance Environmental Assessment, Q2
- Natural Gas Pipeline Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Q3
- 2014 Budget meetings (2015 & 2016 Budgets), Q3
- Site-wide Permit, Q4
- 2014 State of the Site, Q3/Q4
- Air Operating Permit, Q1

The following topics were not noted by committee members as PIC priorities for the 2014 work plan:

- Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) permit models
- 242-A Evaporator
- East Tank Farm (ETF) Permit
- ERDF ROD Amendment

### *100 F Proposed Plan*

The committee developed a list of goals for public involvement for the 100 F Proposed Plan, the second proposed plan to be released after the 300 Area and the first major site with a reactor. The committee subsequently discussed innovative tools to achieve the goals and broaden and engage the audience.

- Public education about cleanup options, alternatives, and potential short and long-term effects, communicating the “why should I care?” factor
- EPA’s goal is to receive input from the public on cleanup alternatives
- Ensure public values are incorporated in the decision-making process
- Prepare the public to participate in future river corridor decisions and help the public understand how this piece fits into the larger Hanford cleanup process

Committee members agreed that public meetings and public comment periods, with comments accepted by mail and email, should be used to support public involvement for the 100 F Proposed Plan per the standard EPA practice. One committee member noted that these standard tools do not engage populations specific to geographic area and that it might be helpful to target audiences as a means of broadening the typical participant groups and reach new groups. One committee member noted that it would be great to incorporate information on the 100 F Proposed Plan into general engagement opportunities, including presentations, social media updates, traveling displays, and references to the plan during Speaker's Bureau programming.

It was noted that cleanup contractors could be tasked with developing creative materials and activities to share information on cleanup progress status. If DOE is unable to implement the suggestion, the contractor may be able to implement it. For example, there needs to be consensus for messaging for proposed plans; language must be agreed-upon among the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies. Communications could incorporate language that is more commonly used and easy for members of the public to grasp.

Committee members agreed that an evening meeting or workshop separate from Board evening meetings could help increase public involvement. An evening meeting on the 100 F proposed plan could feature a sounding board and informal discussion to hear from more members of the audience in a less-formal setting than a Board meeting. The workshop could take place at an existing venue or event in order to bring information to people where they already are. One committee member also suggested posting information advertising Board meetings and public involvement opportunities on electronic billboards.

#### *NEPA ROD for TC & WM EIS*

The committee developed a list of goals for public involvement for the NEPA ROD for the TC & WM EIS. The NEPA ROD will impact tank closure processes and decisions, and several committee members agreed that this topic is on peoples' minds when they think of Hanford cleanup. It was noted that public involvement is mandated through the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and Comprehensive Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) decision processes; EPA has no role in NEPA RODs. Committee members agreed that it will be important for the committee to understand the topics covered in the ROD and whether or not it will be a single or multiple RODs. Once these are known, it will be possible for the committee to understand DOE priorities.

Committee members agreed that it would increase opportunities for public involvement if DOE were to issue a "draft ROD" for public comment prior to issuing the final ROD. This would help people to understand how the NEPA ROD fits into the decision process, which in turn determines whether TPA milestones can be met as currently written. To date, and based on current happenings and cleanup progress, milestones are at risk of being missed. The PIC is interested in how the public can push for environmental protection and understand the issues in order to be prepared to participate and engage during the permitting process.

The committee agreed that educational components are key to engaging members of the public and promote an open and transparent decision-making process. Increasing awareness of the issues in the environmental analysis process prepares people to participate. There could be educational public engagement opportunities pre- and post- ROD and, if possible, on the "draft ROD," though this public review would not be mandated by law. The committee would like adequate resources and a commitment to fund public involvement around this. In the past, DOE has been reluctant to amend RODs. For this

reason, a review of a draft version of the ROD would allow the public to be able to weigh in before the ROD is no longer amendable.

One committee member suggested that workshops could be held in nearby communities in order to help people understand the HAB's concerns about the ROD and next steps for what needs to be accomplished. Sharon Braswell, Mission Support Alliance (MSA) noted that DOE held a meeting that focused on ROD finalization coordination between DOE-RL and DOE-HQ. DOE intends to discuss with the committee what the ROD will include, and it will be helpful to hear from the committee its specific ideas for how best to present that information to the public. This discussion would occur after the ROD is issued.

#### *Next steps*

Liz noted that the committee will continue to flesh out the 100 F public involvement opportunities and develop innovative ways for the agencies to incorporate them into their standard public involvement practices. The agencies are particularly interested in innovative meeting design and public notification to reach people in communities where the agencies are not physically present. The committee will begin to compile a document with potential outreach tools that will include how the tools are implemented, the type of messaging used, and associated costs.

### **300 Area Public Meetings Debrief**

John Howieson, provided an introduction on the 300-Area public meetings debrief topic. John noted that the meetings were held in the following locations on the following dates:

- Tuesday, July 30, 2013 – Richland, WA | 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 31, 2013 – Seattle, WA | 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- Thursday, August 8, 2013 – Hood River, OR | 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

John provided a brief presentation (Attachment 4). In addition to the information provided in his presentation slides, John noted that the PIC committee requests that DOE and EPA to provide an overview on the public comments and input provided at the public meetings. The meetings were structured with an open house, presentation, alternative perspective, question and answer session and formal comment period. Meetings were advertised in the Tri-City Herald, via an email notification distributed to the Hanford listserve, Twitter and Facebook social media updates, and through a rolling banner advertisement on the Hanford.gov website.

Larry Gadbois, EPA, noted that the agency received comments at the meeting in addition to by mail and email. Comments are being organized by topic, and the agencies are considering the most effective way to provide response to comments. Larry noted that the logistics of the Richland meeting were very well planned, and the meeting went smoothly. Larry said the agency presentations were too long during the Seattle and Hood River meetings, with the presentation during the Seattle meeting lasting the longest. Between 65 and 70 people attended the meetings in total, with between 10 and 12 attendees in Richland, about 35 attendees in Hood River, and approximately 27 attendees in Seattle.

Dieter Bohrmann, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), noted that it was challenging to adapt to specific audience interests on the fly. For example, during the Hood River meeting, the audience was interested in understanding how the 300 Area fits into the overall priority of Hanford cleanup. It is

difficult to isolate this topic without talking about all Hanford cleanup priorities and how they are established. Different audiences require different amount of background information, and that is not something that can be predicted based on the meeting location or prior to meeting the audience.

Larry reported that the major issues of concern attendees voiced at the meetings included the desire for the agencies to consider removal, treatment, and disposal (RTD) of the waste. Meeting attendees were also concerned with industrial land use and site restrictions as well as tribal rights, particularly along the River Corridor.

*What worked well and why?*

The committee compiled the following list of accomplishments and things that worked well during the public meetings:

- New faces present at the Richland meeting
- Structured and flexible format allowed the audience to determine the order of how questions were asked during the Richland meeting
- Good presentations at Richland meeting in terms of clarity of information and presentation length
- Agencies took action on comments received after the Seattle meeting, shortening presentations after the Hood River meeting
- Presentations were made available online
- Participants were encouraged to provide further comments following in-person meetings. John Howieson noted that he received input unique to comments made during the Hood River meeting.
- Attendees represented diverse constituencies
- Many meeting attendees were well versed technically in Hanford cleanup
- Cake enticed attendees to take the public involvement survey
- The public comment sign-up process was facilitated smoothly. Attendees were asked to mark if they would like to provide public comment as they signed into the meeting at the entrance. This helped to keep the process organized and maintain an order in which people could provide public testimony. Once everyone on the list had provided comment, comment was opened up to anyone in the room who would like to speak and did not yet have the opportunity.

*What did not work well and why?*

The committee developed the following list of items that could be improved upon in future public involvement efforts:

- Presentations' balance between setting the stage with background information and focusing in on a specific topic
- Attendees did not seem very interested in the open house portion of the meetings

- Meeting notifications could have more clearly indicated timing of the meeting and meeting structure
- Emphasis on open house (poster session) could be improved to inform people that there will be educational materials to provide background and detailed information on the topic as a means of generating interest prior to the meeting
- The call-in portion of the webinar was not audible during the Richland meeting; due to the size of the room, a microphone was not used
- The start of presentation sessions tended to interrupt the flow of productive and thoughtful group conversations started in the open house/pre-meeting session
- The DOE presentation at the Seattle meeting was too long and included unnecessary jargon that was difficult to follow. Like the Seattle meeting, the Hood River meeting also ran late, but in this meeting instead of having a longer presentation session, there was a longer question and answer session.
- The TPA agencies were not forthcoming with their disagreement with each other on some topics, which could have mislead the public to believe the agencies agreed with each other's view as it was presented; it is a disservice to the public for the agencies not to clarify their viewpoint on topics if it is in contrary to a viewpoint stated in a different agency's presentation.

*Lessons learned for future public involvement activities*

The committee noted the following ideas as lessons learned for future public involvement activities:

- Having an earlier start works well for the Tri-Cities
- Using a microphone for the webinar would have helped for people calling into the Richland meeting
- Including a call-in option would have been helpful for the Seattle meeting; the questions and concerns people voice at the meetings vary by location
- Actively engaging people one-on-one who are less knowledgeable about Hanford cleanup tends to increase their levels of engagement in the project and with the topics presented
- Allow more time for an alternative viewpoint. At the Seattle meeting, for example, Gerry Pollet's presentation generated excitement, but people needed to stop talking in order to begin agency presentations
- Allow more time for question and answer session proportionate to time allowed for presentations.
- Passing the microphone around the room encourages people to speak who may otherwise be intimidated to stand at the front of the room
- Build in a mechanism to pause during the comment period and explain the sign-up process to encourage people who may not have signed up previously to do so and provide public testimony

- Provide the public with information and context (something to read) before they arrive at the meeting

## **Frequently Asked Questions: Public Understanding of Waste Definitions**

### *Introduction*

Becky Rubenstrunk (via phone call-in) provided an introduction to the topic of frequently asked questions (FAQ) related to the public understanding of waste definitions. Becky noted that due to a recent permanent relocation to Washington, D.C., she will be stepping down from the Board and will no longer be able to serve on the PIC committee. Liz Mattson provided background and noted the FAQ document (Attachment 5) is currently in draft form, and the Board will need to determine how it will be best used once it is in a more finalized form. Liz noted that it might be helpful for the Tank Waste Committee (TWC) to provide input on the document to make sure that the questions and answers are fully developed. Becky advised future issues managers for this topic that using software other than Google Docs may be helpful in order to accurately attribute changes and additions made.

### *Committee discussion*

The committee discussed how the FAQ document might be best used once it is finalized with full input from the PIC and TWC. One committee member noted that the document could be posted on the Hanford.gov website, distributed to members, and could ultimately become an open source document that could be modified at any time. This idea also includes the FAQ serving as a reference document, and if people want full technical review they can look elsewhere for more detailed information. A second option would be for the Board to approve the FAQ in the form of a joint committee white paper. In the past, the Board has approved summarized HAB advice in the form of fact sheets. An alternative step forward would be to present the FAQ to the Board as something that was developed by the committee but not put it forth for consensus. Committee members agreed that the document should be more Hanford-specific and include, for example, where the Transuranic (TRU) waste is located.

Committee members agreed to ask for agency technical peer review and request feedback on what might be misleading or where edits can be incorporated. Committee members specified that the PIC would not regard this review as endorsement or consent of approval. The PIC will provide an update on the document's status and next steps during a committee call.

## **Standardized/Thematic Public Involvement Survey Questions**

### *Introduction and committee discussion*

Becky Rubenstrunk (via phone call-in) introduced the topic of standardized/thematic public involvement survey questions. Becky noted that standardized public involvement questions would help the agencies pool responses to questions and share information from the public. Feedback was provided using a MeetingSphere brainstorm activity (Attachment 6) in advance of the PIC meeting. The purpose of the MeetingSphere activity was to develop ideas for how the groups providing the public involvement survey—Heart of America Northwest (HoANW), Hanford Challenge, Ecology, and others—might include questions on their surveys that would allow all surveyors to pool responses and thereby share information from a wider range of constituents.

Sharon Braswell, MSA, noted that public involvement survey results were presented at the June PIC meeting, and it was difficult to compare the results between the different groups' surveys. Sharon had requested that the committee develop questions that could be included on all surveys to allow for direct comparison. This agenda topic came out of this request.

*Share and discuss data from online brainstorming*

The committee discussed input provided as online feedback in MeetingSphere. It was noted that HoANW, Hanford Challenge, and Ecology could include the same three questions with any public involvement survey distributed. The responses to these questions could be pooled to broaden response demographics. Questions could be developed in such a way that they could be included in any survey type, whether the survey was distributed in-person at an event or online.

One committee member noted that survey questions should be tailored to each specific public involvement goal and that different sets of questions should be used for annual evaluation surveys than for surveys provided throughout the year. Other committee members disagreed and felt that general, overarching questions that could be included on all public involvement surveys to gauge Board progress with public involvement.

*Identify questions that will be used*

The committee developed a list of potential questions based on three different categories of survey type: simple survey with questions about how the individual found out about the survey/meeting/event, analysis questions specific to the public involvement/evaluation, and demographic questions designed for direct pooling of responses without any filtering. Potential questions are listed below.

- How did you learn about this survey or event?
- Please provide the appropriate demographic information.
- How do you prefer to receive information about Hanford topics?
- Are you a member of the general public, or are you on this list because of your job?
- Have you attended a public meeting?
- How do you receive notices of public meetings?
- Which notices provide you with the information needed to comment and to comment and motivated you to either comment or go to a meeting?

*Next steps*

The committee decided to work in a smaller group to develop either a shared survey or smaller subset of questions. The committee will look to review existing or past surveys used to determine if the groups are already using similar questions. The smaller committee subset group will work with Heart of America NW, TPA Agencies, Hanford Challenge, and Columbia River Keeper and discuss the options of creating a shared survey or using shared questions to collect and compare response data and bring the issue back for discussion at the December PIC meeting.

## Committee Business

### *Monthly update on HAB public involvement activities/contacts (round robin)*

Ken Niles reported that he had arranged a Hanford tour for the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board. Ken said there are six new members of the Cleanup Board since the beginning of 2013, including people in the following positions: director, legislative director, state legislator, Governor's energy policy advisor, and several members of the energy facility siting council. Ken noted that the tour went well, and the next cleanup Board meeting is to be held September 23 and 24 in The Dalles.

- Steve Hudson said he has been working with a Master's student at Portland Community College on a systems analysis problem. Steve has also been working with Cascade and Rock Creek Community Colleges to make use of Hanford materials and talk to history and chemistry classes about Hanford Site cleanup. Steve indicated that one student will be using the State of the Site (SOS) meetings as a model public meeting study for an upcoming report.
- John Howieson said that he has been focusing his time on the topic of cancer induction by radioactive materials. John noted that he has been reviewing documents and providing input to attempt to tone down what he considers overstatements by some on the probability of biological effects of radiation.
- Laura Hanses reported out that she supports the bargaining unit contract for the Hanford labor workforce and noted the importance of having a well-trained, well represented and very secure workforce.
- Gerry Pollet noted that he will be giving a presentation at the NW Toxic Communities Coalition (NWTCC), which includes the Duwamish River Waterway, Portland Harbor, and Spokane River community groups. Gerry said he also will be organizing an externship program related to public health and workshops on radioactive waste in Magnusson Park in Northeast Seattle along Lake Washington, where readings of radioactivity have been very high.
- Liz Mattson reported that Hanford Challenge held an ice cream social on Saturday, August 31, that attracted 75 people and served as an opportunity to learn about Hanford Site. Attendees were asked to sign a petition to ask for new tanks at Hanford Site and complete a public involvement survey in exchange for ice cream. With a total cost of \$230 for ice cream, the event was a big success. In the coming weeks, Hanford Challenge is also hosting a story-telling event, which will serve as an ongoing series entitled 'Richland in the 1940s' and will focus on what was going on in the country and at the site. Attendees will be invited to share their own stories. In addition, Hanford Challenge is hosting a pub crawl event and participating in a movie series, lantern ceremony, and will work with students in the fall to continue outreach and education. Liz also noted the blog 'Inheriting Hanford,' funded through an Ecology grant, which encourages people to write posts and share thoughts.
- Norma Jean Germond noted that she is frequently asked about Hanford cleanup because people know she is on the Board, and they are interested in what is happening. Norma Jean said that she reaches out to friends and people she knows with updates on Hanford Site in all of her social contexts regularly.

- Susan Leckband said that as a member of the Washington League of Women Voters, she answered questions about Hanford cleanup at a public meeting held in celebration of the 19th Amendment.
- Kim Ballinger, DOE-RL, noted that DOE has provided presentations to upwards of 100 people, and the Speaker's Bureau program has encouraged over 1500 people to engage in Hanford cleanup issues.

### *Review follow up items*

Susan Hayman reviewed the follow up and action items:

- Let DOE know if a group is interested in a presentation
- Space is available on B Reactor tours in September
- During an upcoming committee call, John Howieson will give a report out on the status of the FAQ document
- Issue managers and a subset of the PIC committee will work together on the public involvement survey questions and bring questions back to the December PIC meeting for full committee discussion

### *3 Month Work Plan*

The committee updated their 3 Month Work Plan (Attachment 7) based on interest level, timing, and work load. Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues, explained that the HAB FY 2014 Work Plan "A" List (Attachment 8) was provided to support consideration for topics during work planning. Topics listed on the "A" List drive the need for in-person committee meetings.

The committee decided not to have a Committee call in October. The committee will ask Ecology for a webinar presentation the last week of September providing an overview briefing on the air operating permit and how it fits in with the Site-wide permit. The committee will use the webinar as a way to make decision for whether or not the topic should be on the HAB "A" list of topics of interest. This is also seen as a public involvement educational opportunity to learn more.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1: Transcribed Flip Chart Notes

Attachment 2: HAB Consensus Advice #239

Attachment 3: Strategic Public Involvement Products for Review

Attachment 4: Introductory presentation (John Howieson)

Attachment 5: Public Understanding of Waste Classification DRAFT FAQ

Attachment 6: MeetingSphere brainstorm activity results: Hanford Public Involvement Survey questions

Attachment 7: PIC 3 Month work plan

Attachment 8: HAB FY 2014 Work Plan – "A" List

**Attendees**

Board Members and Alternates

Norma Jean Germond	Steve Hudson	Ken Niles
Laura Hanses	Susan Leckband	Gerry Pollet
John Howieson	Liz Mattson	Becky Rubenstrunk (phone)

Others

Kim Ballinger, DOE-RL	Dieter Bohrmann, Ecology	Sonya Johnson, CHPRC
	Emy Laija, EPA	Sharon Braswell, MSA
		Michael Turner, MSA
		Peter Bengston, WCH
		Abby Chazanow, EnviroIssues
		Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues