

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Nancy Raca and Susan Charland, Highland Planning
Date: January 24, 2023
Subject: **Summary of January 18, 2023, meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: March 22, 2023
Location: Ashford Office Complex and Zoom

CTF Members and Alternates Attending (in person or via Zoom)

Kevin Boyle, Anna Carr, John Eberth, Heidi Hartley, John Hood, Lee James, Kathy McGoldrick, Tony Memmo, Joe Patti, Ray Raffel, Mary Reid, Shannon Seneca, Pat Townsend.

Facilitators: Nancy Raca, Susan Charland.

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Stephen Bousquet, Bryan Bower, Jeff D’Agostino.

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA): Paul Bembia, Brad Frank, Lee Gordon, Andrea Mellon, Pete Vlad.

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC (CHBWV): Joe Pillittere, John Rendall, Kelly Wooley.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: Pat Concannon.

New York State Department of Health: Cynthia Costello.

Observers: Ashley Clines, Diana D’Arrigo, Joanne Hameister, Sean McCandless, Rick Miller, Thomas Mooney, Anne Redmond, Charlotte Salmon, Kelsey Shank.

Introductions, Announcement, Administrative Business

CTF Facilitator Nancy Raca welcomed all present and reviewed the meeting agenda and materials.¹ As an administrative update, Paul Bembia of NYSERDA noted that there was a request at the September 2022 CTF meeting to learn more about the role of the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH). In response to this request, Cindy Costello of NYSDOH will attend the March 2023 CTF meeting and provide a presentation on the role of NYSDOH.

Ms. Raca noted that a retirement letter for Eric Wohler needs to be updated, signed by CTF members, and sent.

Ms. Raca noted that Heidi Hartley’s alternate is no longer a member of the Assemblyman’s staff. Heidi confirmed that she will propose a new alternate and will send that information to Nancy.

¹ Each meeting material is listed at the end of this summary and may be found at www.westvalleyctf.org

Bryan Bower noted that one item in the packet of materials is the ECA report on the Consolidated Appropriations Act. He pointed out that the West Valley budget number is \$89.9 million, which is a slight increase from FY 2022. That number does not include spending on security and cybersecurity.

CHBWV West Valley Demonstration Project Update

Kelly Wooley of CHBWV presented a project update.

FY 2022 Goals. Mr. Wooley began with a recap of 2022 Goals, noting that each of the eight goals had been achieved, except for the shipping of four million pounds of debris. The CTF has been briefed on the status of shipping throughout the year, as that goal was started later than expected but is now in progress and is going very well.

Safety: As of December 2022, the Total Recordable Case Rate is at 0.30, with the last recordable case in December 2022. Mr. Wooley noted that the only change since the November update was related to Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART), which is 0.61. The last recordable injury was in May 2022.

Main Plant Process Building Deconstruction: Mr. Wooley showed photos from the deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB). Deconstruction of Extraction Cells #1, #2, and #3 are on track and the crews are making good progress. There are specific pace controls listed in the work package that dictate how fast the work can be completed. The crews are required to work only the number of days allotted for performing the tasks. The crews have done an excellent job of staying on task.

New Scope: Mr. Wooley showed photos of the new guardhouse construction. Exterior work has been completed. A fence line has been installed. Work on the inside continues (e.g., lockers, furniture, fire system); as does the installation of the Keltron System. Security staff will move into the building soon. In addition, preparation for sampling of Tank 8D-4 is wrapping up, and a radiation-resistant camera has been delivered.

2022 Community Support. Mr. Wooley summarized the various community support and volunteer activities completed by WVDP, including monetary donations to West Valley Fire District, Bertrand Chaffee Hospital, Mercy Flight, United Way, and general community donations. He also noted the annual food drive collected more than 98,000 pounds of food, which CHBWV employees delivered to nine food pantries.

FY 2023 Goals. Mr. Wooley presented the 2023 goals, which include performing all work safely, completing the new guardhouse, completing processing, packaging, and disposal of four Chemical Process Cell degraded containers, completing disposal of two of the eight High Integrity Containers, continuing rail shipments from WVDP from MPPB demolition, and demo/disposal of 9,000 tons of MPPB waste.

CTF members then viewed a video animation of the demolition process, which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kobznp07Mow>.

Joe Patti asked why there is still a three-story column standing at the end of the video. Mr. Wooley answered that the building shown is Product Purification Cell South (PPC-S), for which deconstruction plans are still pending.

Pat Townsend asked about timing of demolition and when there would be access to the basement area. Bryan Bower answered that the below-grade area under the MPPB will be addressed in Phase 1b, which will be covered by an upcoming procurement. This will happen no earlier than 2025. In the meantime, there will be an interim cover over the area, as shown in the video.

Shannon Seneca asked whether the nitrocision in PPC-S is complete. Steve Bousquet answered that it is complete and most of the waste from that process that could be shipped off site has been shipped.

CTF Discussion

Washington, DC Visit: Ms. Raca said that a small group of CTF members led by John Pfeffer has met to discuss details of a trip to visit legislators and agency officials in Washington. A summary of their meeting is available at www.westvalleyctf.org.

Ms. Raca informed the group that John Pfeffer (who was unable to attend tonight's meeting) has been involved in finding a date for the trip. He has not found a date yet. A subgroup of the CTF have had numerous conversations about the trip and have prepared a draft presentation.

Anna Carr and Ray Raffel provided an overview of topics to be discussed on the DC trip. CTF members asked if NYSERDA could provide an updated site map that could be used in the presentation. Paul Bembia noted that Lee Gordon can generate whatever kind of map is needed.

Lee Gordon suggested that members start with figures and maps presented in the 2010 Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Phase 1 Decommissioning Plan. Both documents are available on the DOE website and illustrate the various areas/facilities of the site quite well, particularly in the context of cleanup. Mr. Gordon would be happy to make needed modifications to these figures or generate new figures. Also, if the CTF needs any large format (i.e. poster) size files or prints, Highland Planning or NYSERDA can assist with this.

Joe Patti commented that the group should not be lobbying for funding but that the WVDP funding will run out in 2026, and this funding will need to be reestablished so there is not a lapse. Mr. Patti said other topics to be discussed should include future use of the site to replenish the hole in the economy and Phase 2 and disposition of waste. He noted that West Valley has had a lot of support from its congressional delegation in the past.

John Hood asked what year funding was interrupted. Paul Bembia responded that funding wasn't interrupted, per se, but it was cut back. Bryan Bower added that pre-2005, funding was

once resolved during a visit to Sen. Charles Schumer's office. Another time in 2014 or so, the CTF talked with Dave Huizenga at U.S. DOE, which resulted in additional funding.

CTF Annual Organizational Meeting Topics:

Review of activities. Ms. Raca reviewed a document describing activities in 2022. She asked CTF members to review the document and note if anything needs correction. The memo has been reviewed by the agencies and CHBWV.

Self-evaluation survey. Ms. Raca reviewed the evaluation survey, noting that it could be modified for next year as there were 30+ questions and some questions were unclear. She asked for any comments.

Regarding public education and outreach, Joe Patti noted that in order to let constituents know more, CTF members need to know what the next phase is going to be. Right now, work is proceeding well and there is little to tell. Bryan Bower noted that the agencies are available to give presentations to any CTF member's constituents about the 43-year history of the site and ongoing work.

Ray Raffel stated that many constituents are completely unfamiliar with the West Valley site. Kathy McGoldrick agreed and asked what the original intent was regarding the CTF and public outreach. Joe Patti responded that originally it was not the CTF's task to brief the public, but that many people he represents (i.e., WV Fire Department) are aware of what's happening at the site.

Paul Bembia added that NYSEDA worked in cooperation with DOE to convene the CTF and in so doing looked for a broad cross-section of people in the community: representatives of the business community, school board, elected officials, youth representative, environmental groups. However, it can be a challenge for the CTF to figure out who their constituency group is and how to reach them. The CTF has consistently rated themselves low on that category.

Kathy McGoldrick suggested that the CTF review membership and to see if other types of stakeholders in the community should be included. She proposed putting that on the agenda for future meetings.

Ray Raffel noted, in response to the question about hybrid/Zoom meetings, that he much prefers the in-person format. However, the Zoom is an important backup in case of weather events, illness, or other reasons that keep people from attending in person. Pat Townsend stated that she has been grateful for the hybrid meetings but that they could be more effective. It would be helpful to have a roll call to know who is in the room.

CTF attendance.

Ms. Raca provided a table showing meeting attendance by CTF members and alternates in 2022.

Meeting topics.

Ms. Raca asked for suggestions on meeting agenda items in 2023. Future topics suggested were:

- Need for new CTF members from groups that have not been represented
- Responsibilities of agencies involved in WVDP
- Presentation from the president of NYSERDA
- Scope for the area below the MPPB, including how contamination will be addressed
- Boundary between Phase 1 and Phase 2
- History of the establishment and choice of location for the West Valley site and an overview of the nuclear fuel reprocessing work that was done there

Joe Patti asked for more information regarding risk levels of each waste management area. Bryan Bower responded that the probabilistic performance assessment is meant to determine this. Eventually, there will be an online tool that will allow people to see how removing various inventory impacts the rest of the project/model at specified time periods into the future. He noted that the current model assumes that the main plume will already be gone because Phase 1 will have been completed.

Mr. Patti said the tanks may present less of a danger than the waste disposal areas. Mr. Bower indicated earlier that some of the radioactive material remaining inside the tanks, like cesium and strontium-90, have a half-life of 28-30 years. The material in all but one of the four tanks has been dried, the remaining tank still contains liquid requiring treatment and disposal. Mr. Patti said he might be convinced to allow the tanks to remain in place so efforts can focus on the waste disposal areas. Mr. Bembia said that the biggest issue is erosion.

Observer Questions and Comments

An observation was made regarding historical spills detailed in the Phase 1 Decommissioning Plan and how they have or would be dealt with and whether they pose risk to workers.

It was noted that any spills that happen on the site are immediately cleaned up. However, there are legacy spills on site. Any time the ground will be disturbed, we make sure workers are protected. We also put controls in place for how we manage that soil. If it's contaminated soil, it needs to be boxed up and shipped off site. We are aware of those historic spills and they are not a risk to our workers. As far as the spills in waste management areas 1 and 2, those would have to be cleaned up and meet limits specified in the decommissioning plan.

A comment was made regarding difficulty for remote observers in understanding who is speaking or asking a question.

There will be no meeting in February due to the Quarterly Public Meeting on February 22. The March meeting will be on March 22 at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and in person at the Ashford Office Complex.

Follow Up

Description	Generated by; Date
Send retirement letter to Eric Wohlers	Nancy Raca
Identify replacement for Deb Aumick	Heidi Hartley
Update site map for use on DC trip	Paul Bembia/Lee Gordon
Seek date for DC trip	DC trip work group

Meeting Documents Available on the CTF Website

Description	Generated by; Date
Meeting Agenda	Raca; 1/18/23
CHBWV Project Update	CHBWV; 1/18/23
News Clippings Since the Last Meeting	NYSERDA – see posts at westvalleyctf.org
CTF attendance list	Raca; 1/18/23
CTF self-evaluation survey results	Raca; 1/18/23
CTF 2022 activity summary	Raca; 1/18/23