

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Nancy Raca and Tanya Zwahlen, Highland Planning
Date: April 26, 2023
Subject: **Summary of April 26, 2023 Meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: June 28, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
Location: Ashford Office Complex and Zoom

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

Kevin Boyle, Anna Carr, Charlie Davis, Heidi Hartley, John Hood, Lee James, Kimberly Krzemien, Anthony Memmo, Joe Patti, John Pfeffer, Ray Raffel, Shannon Seneca, Pat Townsend, Ray Vaughan, Tim Zerfas

Facilitator and Notetakers: Nancy Raca, Julia Hayden, Tanya Zwahlen

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Bryan Bower, Jeff D'Agostino, Josh Desmarais

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

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

New York State Department of Health: Cynthia Costello, David O'Hehir, Nathaniel Kishbaugh

Observers: Kelsey Shank, Sean McCandless, Charlotte Salmon, Diane D'Arrigo

Welcome, Announcements, Administrative Business

CTF Facilitator Nancy Raca welcomed all present and reviewed the meeting agenda.¹

Bryan Bower of the U.S. Department of Energy provided an administrative update. Craig Rieman, former Deputy Director of the West Valley Demonstration Project, has a new job working for the EM Consolidated Business Center.

Lee Gordon of NYSERDA reported that, in the context of recent workgroup meetings regarding the ECA grant, agencies have been considering CTF workgroup processes and how they relate to the ground rules. DOE and NYSERDA are working on suggested language to amend the ground rules to update the workgroup process and will have suggested language for consideration by the CTF prior to the next meeting.

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

CHBWV West Valley Demonstration Project Update

Kelly Wooley of CHBWV presented a project update.

Safety: As of March 2023, the Total Recordable Case Rate is at 0.60, with the last recordable case in December 2022. Mr. Wooley noted that the Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) is 0.60. The last recordable injury was in May 2022.

There were two false alarms last month from continuous air monitors. The team did a full response, responded appropriately, and an evaluation was conducted according to protocol. There was no contamination detected. A ground survey was also conducted. There was no contamination.

Ray Vaughan asked if there was any feedback from the manufacturers about what the issue might be. The wind and dust can impact the equipment and cause these false alarms. Some false alarms are to be anticipated. The risk is that people become desensitized and won't respond appropriately, but that has not been the case at West Valley as every alarm is taken seriously.

Main Plant Process Building Deconstruction: Mr. Wooley showed photos from the deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB). The deconstruction of the Chemical Process Cell West Wall has continued, with removal of the five-foot thick reinforced concrete wall.

Next, Mr. Wooley showed photos of the deconstruction of the ventilation exhaust cell on the south side.

On the west side, the team has removed the Hot Acid Cell and the Chemical Process Room. Demolition is happening during the daytime and load out happens in the evening. Coordination has been excellent.

Other Updates: The new Guardhouse is occupied and open. Also, a mock-up to demonstrate the use of a specialized pump to obtain a liquid sample from Tank 8D-4 is underway. A work schedule is being developed for when the weather is warmer.

Joe Patti asked how long it takes between an alarm and reporting an all clear. Kelly responded that it has been taking two to two-and-a-half hours. A shelter in place occurs. Radiological Control Technicians (RCTs) survey the area, monitoring in real time. The filter is taken out and counted.

A participant asked what the contingency plan is in the summer for the site offices when air conditioning and restrooms are unavailable during an alarm due to shelter-in-place. Kelly answered that if there is an issue, they will contact the Incident Commander and arrangements will be made. Those conditions are monitored in the drills they do, which were run last year in June and July.

CTF Discussion

Washington, DC Visit: The CTF trip to Washington, DC was on March 29, 2023. John Pfeffer, Anna Carr, Ray Raffel, and Kevin Boyle attended. Ray gave an overview of the trip. They met with Kristin Ellis and Joceline Nahigian from the U.S. Department of Energy as well as with Congressman Langworthy and the staff of Senators Gillibrand and Schumer. Overall, it was a successful and informative trip. Anna Carr mentioned that they shared a presentation, and people they met with were receptive to the information. Anna also gave the attendees background on the Seneca Nation's concerns with the site. Anna thanked the people who put the presentation together.

Congressman Langworthy is willing to pick up where former Congressman Reed left off with funding authorization through 2026 and to work with the Senators in a bipartisan effort to keep it moving forward. The CTF members were able to correct the misperception in D.C. that West Valley is done with Main Plant demolition.

Overall, the Senators' staff were receptive and knowledgeable. Transuranic waste on site, erosion, and budgeting were all discussed.

John Pfeffer noted that with the ECA grant for public outreach, it may be a good idea to target information dissemination to politicians specifically, because there needs to be more discussion with Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) committee subject matter experts because they don't understand the mechanism to remove the TRU waste. The CTF needs to emphasize those audiences and drive home this issue. Some of the Congressional staffers also lack specific information about the site and agency responsibilities. Kevin Boyle said there was interest in sending Congressional representation this summer to visit the site. John Pfeffer will circulate a summary of the trip to the CTF and would like to discuss next steps for the CTF in connecting with committees, specifically the ENR committee.

Ray Vaughan thanked the group for going to Washington, D.C. He asked the group to say more about the West Valley Reauthorization Act and the need to renew this in the next year or so, especially with debt ceilings. This legislation allowed Congress to have the authorization to get the necessary appropriations. John noted that the CTF will need to get behind that and keep that request top of mind. We are working with a new Congressman who has a lot going on, and the CTF needs to be persistent in getting this in front of him. Ray noted that there is a lot the CTF can do to follow up.

Town of Ashford Grant Award: John Pfeffer gave an update on the ECA grant that has been awarded to the Town of Ashford to support technical assistance and public outreach support at West Valley. The RFP is posted [on the Town of Ashford's website](#). John has received a few questions from potential respondents. The deadline for questions is Friday, April 28, 2023. He will post responses to the questions on the Town's website. Proposals are due Wednesday, May 10, 2023. The review committee is in place. They have a review matrix ready. John Hood asked if the Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA) has been notified of the RFP. They have

not, but John will do so. Ray Vaughan thanked the group who has offered to review the proposals; there is still room if others want to be reviewers. Review/responses to the proposals are due on May 15, 2023.

John Pfeffer noted that he has an Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) check-in meeting next week. CTF members may join him to provide feedback about the grant application process. Ray asked John to follow up with the Town board member who will serve as a reviewer to ensure that she is aware.

Nancy raised that Pat Townsend had expressed that the agenda for this meeting seemed light and that it would be good to invite some speakers for future meetings. During the January meeting, the group brainstormed topics and speakers for future agendas. People can review that list and provide suggestions and ideas about people they'd like to have speak or topics they'd like explained. John Hood is interested in an overview of the history of how the site came to be. Paul Bembia offered to present that either on his own or in a group. He will get back to Nancy on whether this could be incorporated into the June agenda.

Nancy will put together a tentative schedule for CTF review and comment. Shannon Seneca volunteered to present on the environmental health impact of the site in June.

Joe Patti suggested the group revisit the future use of the site. It was noted that discussion of the future use of the site might be premature. Paul Bembia said the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement will identify a preferred alternative. Bryan noted that there is currently a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) contract but it's coming to an end, so they are transitioning to a new contract.

Quarterly Public Meeting: Pat asked if there would be a technical presentation in association with May's quarterly public meeting. There will be a presentation from Neptune about the probabilistic performance assessment, probably the morning following the QPM, in person at 9 a.m. or 10 a.m. That meeting will be for members of the public and will have more technical detail than the QPM.

Closure Guidelines, Acceptable Limits: Ray noted that the NYS Department of Health (DOH) doesn't have direct regulatory authority over the site. The CTF needs clarification on what regulatory authority will be in place over different aspects of the site. Paul Bembia clarified that the NYSDOH holds the radioactive materials license for the state-licensed disposal area (SDA). They also have some responsibility for public health impacts, but the primary responsibility with respect to the Environmental Impact Statement is the license. The current license shows an authorization for managing radioactive materials in the State-Licensed Disposal Area and wastes generated through site management activities. When it comes to closure, if the site is going to do anything different such as close in place or exhume the waste, that would need to be reflected in the license, and the NYSDOH would need to decide whether to amend the radioactive material license. The DOE self-regulates for the West Valley Demonstration Project,

and the balance of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center is regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, who issued the decommissioning criteria for the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Bryan brought up that they can have each of the regulatory agencies come in to explain about their authority at the site, such as NRC or the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Shannon suggested that a schedule is put together for speakers for upcoming meetings. Nancy will work with agency representatives to do this.

Shannon asked Kelly if false alarms are coming from different detectors or only one area that is problematic. Three different detectors were affected. Two were older and have been changed out. The detectors do experience wear with age which can lead to vibration in the filter.

Anna Carr asked if there is a protocol to notify the community when an alarm occurs. Kelly responded that it is an on-site alarm only. If there were an indication of a spread, a notification system would be activated.

Observer Questions and Comments

Nancy opened the meeting for questions and comments from attendees.

Nancy noted that often the CTF chooses not to meet in July and asked members whether that would be the case this year. CTF members proposed having a site visit in July instead of a meeting. Often, a site visit happens in June.

Charlie suggested that the group invite Congressman Langworthy, Senator Gillibrand, and Senator Schumer for a tour. Joe Pillittere noted that legislators tend to want to come by themselves to do their own tour and meet with employees instead of joining the CTF tour.

Ray Raffel thanked the CTF who worked on the Washington trip presentation, particularly Shannon Seneca, John Pfeffer, and Anna Carr. John did a lot of the leg work to get down there.

Ray Vaughan asked Bryan to tell Craig Rieman that the group gives him their best.

There will be a Quarterly Public Meeting on May 24, at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and in person at the Ashford Office Complex. The next CTF meeting will be June 28, 2023.

Meeting Documents Available on the CTF Website

Description	Generated by; Date
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Meeting Agenda	Raca; 04/26/23
CHBWV Project Update	CHBWV; 04/26/23