

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Nancy Raca, Highland Planning
Date: January 30, 2024
Subject: **Summary of January 24, 2024, Meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Location: Ashford Office Complex and Zoom (register at

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_InzKhvnORI23zL_IYYRupw)

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

Members

John Eberth, Ken Kassel, Kathy McGoldrick, Anthony Memmo, Joe Patti, Pat Townsend, Ray Vaughan

Alternates

Kevin Boyle, Shannon Seneca

Facilitator and Notetakers: Nancy Raca, Tanya Zwahlen

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Bryan Bower, Steve Bousquet, Jeff D’Agostino, Josh Desmarais

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

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC (CHBWV): Jason Casper, Elizabeth Lowes, Joe Pillittere, Kelly Wooley

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

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: Patrick Concannon, Lynn Winterberger

Observers:

Abe Zeitoun, Barbara Warren, Dee Gray, Kelsey Shank, Sean McCandles, Ed Wannemacher, Gina Joiner, Erin Culver, Don Goebel

Welcome, Announcements, Administrative Business

CTF Facilitator Nancy Raca welcomed all present, conducted a roll call, and reviewed the meeting agenda.¹

Nancy announced recent changes in membership of the CTF. John Eberth is now representing Assemblyman Giglio. Kara Stimson will now represent State Senator Borello. Ken Kassel has replaced Kimberly Krzemien representing the Town of Concord. Anna Carr, the alternate for Tony Memmo, has taken a position with CHBWV.

CHBWV West Valley Demonstration Project Update

Kelly Wooley of CHBWV presented a project update.

Safety: The Total Recordable Case Rate is unchanged at 0.58 and Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) is 0.29. The last recordable injury was in June 2023. There have been some slips and falls due to weather conditions. Workers have been reminded to use cleared walking paths instead of using shortcuts.

Main Plant Process Building Deconstruction: Mr. Wooley showed photos from the deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB), including deconstruction of the Hot Cell and the Chemical Process Cell (CPC) lower east wall. The team has begun deconstruction of the Liquid Waste Cell and tank removal. Demolition of the old guardhouse has begun.

Waste and Site Operations. The site has shipped two of seven degraded Chemical Process Cell waste containers off site for disposal. The combined weight of these two containers is 169,000 pounds. Site workers have also overpacked four High Integrity Containers and sent them by truck to a rail yard in Lockport, NY, where they were loaded onto rail cars sent for safe disposal.

Community Support. Mr. Wooley shared that CHBWV donated more than \$100,000 for community organizations in 2023. The annual food drive collected enough food for 10,800 meals and delivered it to nine local food pantries. Toys for Tots at CHBWV collected more than 350 toys.

A CTF member asked why the High Integrity Containers were transported by truck to Lockport instead of by rail. Mr. Wooley explained that this was how the subcontractor determined it to be most beneficial.

A CTF member asked what is used to de-ice the walkways at the site. Mr. Wooley explained that they use a mixture of salt and chemical spray-on material. They used to use straight salt, but that had the potential to affect the performance of the permeable treatment wall. CHBWV is encouraging workers to avoid slips and falls by using traction devices on their boots. Freezing rain has been problematic.

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

A CTF member also asked about removal of the tanks from the Liquid Waste Cell and why this is a slow process. Mr. Wooley replied that specialty items like tanks require special boxes and containers, which slows down the work. The tanks are being removed whole. Bryan Bower said the tanks were placed before the plant was built, so the procedure to remove them is to deactivate the tanks, remove supports, and then remove the tanks. It takes engineering and planning to get everything out of the cell, which is below ground level.

A CTF member asked if removal is difficult because of the tank size or radioactivity. Mr. Bower explained that the challenge is the time it takes to deconstruct the walls around the tanks. This cannot be rushed and will enable them to remove the tanks whole. The tanks were deactivated previously and have been cleared, grouted, and foamed. They are well prepped for removal.

Presentation: End State Contracting Model

Steve Bousquet of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) gave a presentation on the DOE End State Contract Model (ESCM). He noted that there is currently a request for proposals out for Phase 1B cleanup. Phase 2 work will have another contract.

Mr. Bousquet noted that “end state” in “End State Contracting Model” does not refer to the end state of work on the site as a whole. Rather, it refers to contracting with a focus on the ultimate goals of each individual contract or project.

In 2018, DOE initiated ESCM to reinvigorate the nuclear waste cleanup completion mindset. ESCM is a contract mechanism to incrementally execute planned work and achieve project goals with defined completion criteria. It provides flexibility to partner with industry and stakeholders to openly negotiate the right end states and regulatory framework to reach individual project completion at complex sites. It reduces environmental risk and financial liability through focused contracting actions and shares risk between DOE and the selected contractor.

One advantage of ESCM is the ability for DOE to add task orders under an umbrella contract as the work progresses. This allows best implementation of work on site, reduces upfront proposal preparation costs, and levels the playing field among potential offerors and shortens the procurement timeframe. ESCM also reduces long-term risk.

Use of ESCM for the Phase 1B procurement is designed to maintain continuity in site operations across contracts, ensure site programs and procedures reflect changing conditions and employ modern methods, and promote flexibility to achieve common goals or end states.

The general components of the Phase 1B End State Contract include continuing site operations, maintenance and security; updating site infrastructure; remediation of subsurface infrastructure and contaminated soils in Waste Management Areas 1 and 2 (MPPB area and treatment facility/lagoon area); removal of additional facilities and underlying soils (Phase 2 facilities excluded); and management of WVDP TRU waste and storage facilities until a pathway for WVDP TRU disposal is defined. Mr. Bousquet shared an image of the areas that will remain for Phase 2.

A CTF member asked whether removal of Remote Handled Waste Facilities might lead to a future need for them. DOE responded that they will not remove these facilities until the appropriate time, and they will evaluate that carefully and discuss it with stakeholders.

A CTF member asked if the plan is to award the Phase 1B to one prime contractor with subcontractors. DOE answered that, as the RFP is still out, it is too early to know.

A CTF member asked if the new contract will change the relationship of NYSERDA with DOE. DOE answered that it will not. NYSERDA will be reviewing the proposals.

A CTF member asked whether CHBWV will be submitting a proposal. DOE replied that they do not have that information at this time.

Discussion of CTF Ground Rules

Lee Gordon of NYSERDA shared changes reviewed in previous meetings regarding proposed alterations to Section 3-C of the Ground Rules. The agencies propose to keep the language in Section 3-C as it currently is, without changes.

Nancy will circulate a clean copy of the Ground Rules with previously agreed upon changes and will ask the CTF for consensus on these Ground Rules at the March meeting.

A CTF member noted that the CTF was convened to give guidance to DOE and NYSERDA on the path forward for the site. That intent of the CTF will remain regardless of any changes to the ground rules.

CTF Annual Organizational Meeting

Review of 2023 Activities. Nancy reviewed 2023 activities asked for feedback on the summary, which was emailed to CTF members and is available on www.westvalleyctf.org. Comments may be emailed to Nancy at nancy@highland-planning.com

A CTF member noted that the CTF has not yet heard a presentation from Dr. Mary Reid about the underlying health conditions of people in the Western New York region and asked that it be scheduled soon. Shannon Seneca will facilitate the scheduling of this with Dr. Reid.

Self-Evaluation Survey. Nancy will send a self-evaluation survey to the CTF. Results will be reviewed at the March meeting.

Membership. John Ebert replaced Heidi Hartley as the representative for Assemblymember Giglio's office.

Future Meeting Topics

The CTF discussed future meeting topics they would like to see:

- Regional health statistics by Dr. Mary Reid

- West Valley site history and background (presented by Paul Bembia, NYSERDA) – this could be ready for the March meeting
- Basics of radiation 101, presented by DOE and/or CHBWV
- Interim progress report on the ECA grant related to hydro-erosion modeling (presented by Ray Vaughn) – scheduled for the March meeting
- Phase 2 decision making process, with a schedule of dates or targets for making decisions (presented by Lee Gordon, NYSERDA) – this could be ready for March or April

Other comments by CTF Members

A CTF member commented that it can be difficult to find documents associated with the site. Bryan Bower acknowledged that there are many repositories of documents online, including www.westvalleyctf.org, the DOE website, the NYSERDA website and www.CHBWV.com. Most historical documents are on NYSERDA’s site, whereas CHBWV’s site has material since 2011.

Observer Comments

An observer raised a concern about the continuing presence of transuranic waste at the site and asked how it will be addressed. DOE replied that the TRU waste is stored in a safe and compliant manner. The storage facility is state of the art and is inspected monthly and documented.

Other participants noted that information on the TRU waste is vague and asked to know more about who does inspections, what they find, and what is the projection for disposal of the waste.

DOE responded that there is no pathway for disposal of the TRU waste, which places DOE in caretaker status. DOE will discuss options for a presentation about inspections and documentation.

Next Steps

A Quarterly Public Meeting will take place on February 28, 2024. The next CTF meeting will be on March 27, 2024.

Meeting Documents Available on the CTF Website

Description	Generated by; Date
Meeting Agenda	Raca; 1/24/24
CHBWV Project Update	CHBWV; 1/24/24
ESCM Presentation	DOE; 1/24/24
Summary of 2023 CTF Activities and Member Attendance	Raca; 1/24/24

