

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Bill Logue, Citizen Task Force Facilitator
Date: July 28, 2021
Subject: **Summary of the June 23, 2021 Meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: **July 28, 2021 at 6:30 PM**
Location: Zoom

CTF Members and Alternates Attending

Charlie Davis, Clyde Drake, John Eberth, Heidi Hartley, John Hood, Lee James, Kathy McGoldrick, Tony Memmo, Joe Patti, John Pfeffer, Mary Reid, Pat Townsend, Ray Vaughan. Facilitators: Bill Logue & Loraine Della Porta.

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Bryan Bower, Joshua DesMarais, Patrick Hefflinger, Moira Maloney, Bethany MacNeill, Zintars Zadins.

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

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

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: Pat Concannon

Public: Anna Carr, Francine Cohen, Diane D'Arrigo, Rosalind Ground, David Klenk, Rick Miller, Charlotte Salmon, Kelsey Shank, William Townsend, Barbara Warren. (Other dial-in only callers not identified.)

Introductions, Announcements, Administrative Business

Bill Logue welcomed all present and reviewed the meeting agenda and materials¹. He reminded the CTF and attendees of the CTF policies regarding the press and asked members of the press to identify themselves when posing questions and comments.

CHBWV Project Update

Kelly Wooley of CHBWV presented a project update.

Safety. Mr. Wooley reviewed safety information. There were two recordable injuries – a strain requiring surgery and a slip and fall where the individual struck their head. Recent safety training included a simulated fire extinguisher exercise.

COVID-19 and Impacts on Work. The rate of COVID-19 spread in Western New York is low and new protocols have been implemented allowing for the resumption of work. Fully vaccinated workers are not required to wear masks. Social distancing and handwashing protocols continue. Outside work has fully resumed. Inside work is resuming with safety measures. Preparation is underway for resuming work in the Product Purification Cell – South (PPC-S) and Vent Wash Room (VWR).

Deactivation and Demolition Progress – Performance-Based Incentive 1. Operators installed berms for the water management system to be used during the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB) demolition and sealed and waterproofed joints. In the 10-Plex office building installation of showers and lockers and the respirator issue room continues. Work should be complete within a month. Floor grouting in the Chemical Process Cell (CPC) is complete and ready for application of fixative to control contamination during demolition. Emergency egress stairs were installed in the Acid Recovery Cell (ARC). Final installation for portable ventilation in the ARC continues.

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

Balance of Site Facilities (BOSF). All 46 BOSF have been removed and areas restored. The final work included removal of the Schoolhouse well and septic. Containers are being loaded with excavated soil from the installation of the Permeable Treatment Wall (PTW). Container shipment will start by rail later in the week. Site road and drainage improvements and Drum Cell modification to support waste shipping continue.

Response to Questions Regarding Outside WVDP Transuranic Waste Storage

John Rizzo, CHBWV Waste Planning and Disposition Manager, presented on the storage of TRU waste at the West Valley Demonstration project (WVDP). Mr. Rizzo reviewed the staffing of Waste Characterization Engineers and Technician and their role in completing paperwork and answering questions. Staff also handle issues related to compliance with waste packaging and transportation criteria, contracting with certified shippers, ordering packing equipment, doing paperwork and arranging for transportation, and managing contracts.

WVDP TRU Waste History. Mr. Rizzo recapped the history of TRU Waste at WVDP. The waste was generated starting in the 1980's as contaminated material was removed from the MPPB to prepare for High-Level Waste (HLW) solidification. As MPPB deactivation continued additional TRU waste was removed. When possible, the waste is separated and segregated in a manner that allows as much as possible to be disposed of as Low-Level Waste (LLW). WVDP TRU waste can be either Contact Handled or Remote Handled. Onsite there are currently 1590 WVDP TRU waste containers holding 28,049 ft³ of waste. All but 4 containers are stored inside. Of the four stored outside, two are steel boxes containing large vessels removed from the MPPB Chemical Process Cell (CPC) in the 1980's and two are sturdy DOD Type A packages holding waste removed during deactivation of the MPPB Extraction Cell under the current contract. One of the steel boxes is the one that leaked in 2019.

Waste Management. Mr. Rizzo stated that the mission is to ensure safe and compliant management of generated waste including radiological, chemical and mixed waste. He reviewed WVDP Waste Management Program Scope; including standard operating procedures and work instructions, assisting in waste characterization to ensure waste will meet waste acceptance criteria at the disposal site, support staffing for waste generators and waste storage activities, and inspection of facilities and containers for storage.

There have been 1772 shipments with over 975,000 highway miles and almost 950,000 rail miles without incident. This includes 1,498,618 ft³ of LLW; 14,643 ft³ of mixed LLW and 265,080 ft³ of non-radioactive (hazardous, universal and industrial waste. As of May, stored onsite are: 154 containers of LLW, 4 mixed LLW, 1,590 TRU waste and 95 non-radioactive waste containers. The non-radioactive waste will ship in July. Most of the waste is stored inside in facilities that meet requirements for mixed waste storage. Remote Handled TRU and high-dose LLW containers are placed within shielded containers or surrounded by other low-dose containers to provide shielding for worker protection. Facilities and containers are inspected monthly and mixed TRU/LLW waste weekly.

Fourteen LLW and 4 TRU waste containers are stored outside because of their high dose, size and/or weight. The LLW waste will be disposed of off site by the end of FY 2022. Two of the TRU will be moved inside once a suitable space is available by then end of FY 2022. The two TRU waste containers with vessels from the CPC will be processed in the Remote Handle Waste Facility, packaged and dispositioned by early FY 2022. It is anticipated that after processing this last container will be LLW. The containers with CPC material hold large vessels and have no liquid sludge.

Response to 2019 container breach. Mr. Rizzo described the procedures and process for moving the containers and the path of movement. These include work instructions, forklift drivers, spotters and Radiological Control Technicians. Prior to the move, radiation surveys indicated no contamination. When a drip was observed, work was stopped to conduct tests and no contamination was found. Following the move another survey of the forklift tines found contamination. A possible source of the liquid is condensation inside the container. Cleanup actions were implemented with soil removal and placement of clean gravel. The large containers have been placed in pans and covered with tarps. The containers are surveyed monthly. Additional control measures were put in place including additional stone and straw wattles to minimize potential spread. Eleven intermodals of soil and one drum of liquid were disposed of as a result of the contamination remediation.

A CTF member commented that this appeared to be a considerable amount of work that they did not recall

hearing about in detail at the time.

In response to questions from CTF members and observers Mr. Rizzo and Mr. Rendall made a number of points:

- TRU waste has not been overpacked because it is scheduled to be repackaged. The high dose containers are stored outside in a “corral” to protect workers from exposure. When the TRU waste is processed, the segregation of wastes can reduce TRU waste volume by separating out the LLW.
- The TRU waste includes residual Uranium and Plutonium from NFS processes operation. Since the waste may also contain mixed fission products, this may result in some gamma emissions.
- Mr. Rendall explained the difference between radiation dose from exposure from “shine” (similar to an x-ray) emitted by materials stored in a container and radiation dose resulting from direct exposure to contaminated materials that are not securely containerized.

Budget Update

Bryan Bower of DOE provided an update on the federal budget. He reminded the CTF that DOE works on three budgets at the same time: the current enacted budget in implementation (FY21), the upcoming fiscal year (FY22) which is at the stage where the president has submitted his proposed budget to congress, and the budget under development (FY23) which is now at the stage of being drafted internally at DOE.

Mr. Bower compared the FY 2021 enacted budget with the FY22 request for DOE Environmental Management and for WVDP. For WVDP FY21 the Non-Defense portion is \$88.113 million and Safeguards and Security is \$4.298 million for a total of \$92.411 million. The president’s request for FY 2022 for the Non-Defense portion is \$88.120 million and for Safeguards and Security is \$4.298 million for a total of \$92.418 million. He expressed how this was good news and how this budget request is significantly higher than a number of years ago. He cautioned that a budget is not final until congressional approval is received.

SEIS & PPA Contract Status Update

Lee Gordon of NYSERDA provided an update on the contract status for Neptune completing the Probabilistic Performance Assessment (PPA) which will be used in support of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). He explained that Neptune’s contract expired in April. The agencies had hoped to extend it without interruption; however, negotiating a new scope of work has taken longer than expected. They anticipate that the contract will be in place and work will resume in the next few months. This will impact the baseline date for the SEIS completion which will be revised once the contract is in place.

He noted that it has been over two years since the SEIS scoping comment process and that NYSERDA and DOE have been working on issues raised during public scoping. A meeting between DOE and NYSERDA leadership was held and a few issues are under discussion as they relate to the requirements of the federal NEPA process and the state SEQRA process as each agency needs to meet regulatory requirements and shared goals.

A CTF member expressed concern about the delay and worry that at the conclusion of the Neptune contract that they and their work would not be available to address questions and concerns following release of the PPA. He cited what had occurred with the Phase 1 Studies Erosion Working Group. The member objected to what he saw as the agencies not being open to discussion prior to release of the SEIS draft. Mr. Gordon stated that there would be ongoing technical detailed updates at the Quarterly Public Meetings with opportunity for discussion as items became ripe. The member expressed particular interest in updates on erosion with respect to gully headward advancement. Mr. Gordon stated that Neptune will continue work on the PPA, including assumptions and distributions, engineered barrier performance, groundwater modeling at the waste tank farm, and transport and dose analysis downstream of the outlet of Buttermilk Creek.

Mr. Gordon stated that Neptune’s contract would continue after the release of the model and PPA through assistance with integration of the PPA with the SEIS and development of alternatives. The agencies will provide PPA documentation and a reference library, via a website that Neptune will support through the 6-month public comment period for the SEIS.

A final SEIS scope is required by the New York SEQRA process but not the NEPA process. NYSERDA

will release a modified Notice of Intent that will address the significant issues raised through the public scoping process.

Other CTF Discussion

Correspondence. The CTF approved the letter on TRU Waste disposal with one edit clarifying the formation of the CTF. John Hood reported that he was continuing to draft the letter on funding with the ad hoc working group members. It will be circulated to the CTF

Addendum to 1998 Final Report. Tony Memmo informed the CTF that the Seneca National Tribal Council and administration were reviewing the paragraphs that might be addressed related to the Nation. He will provide an update in the future.

Other business. Paul Bembia of NYSERDA informed the CTF that the Trench 14 leachate measures were ahead of schedule. Between June 7 and 17 the sheet piles were installed and the geomembrane cover to prevent water infiltration will be installed soon.

Upcoming Meetings. A CTF member expressed interest in returning to in-person meetings. Mr. Bower stated that there was a government-wide review of returning to the worksite and once OMB and GSA release guidance it might take several more months before it is implemented locally – likely in the early fall.

Observer Comments

An observer requested that the PPA website should include a searchable database and access be provided before the release of the SEIS. Mr. Gordon stated that, in accordance with NEPA and SEQRA, SEIS supporting information will be made available at the time of the release of the draft SEIS for public comment.

Action Items

Action	Who; When
Send letter on TRU waste disposition	Logue

Meeting Documents Available on the CTF Website

Description	Generated by; Date
Meeting Agenda	Logue; 6/23/21
CHBWV Project Update	CHBWV; 6/23/21
CHBWV Response to CTF Questions Regarding Outdoor TRU Waste Storage	CHBWV; 6/23/21
Budget Update	DOE; 6/23/21
News Clippings Since the Last Meeting	NYSERDA; 6/23/21