

## December 21, 2005 Meeting Summary

The eleventh meeting of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership was held on Wednesday, December 21, 2005 4:00-6:00pm at the Port of Vancouver administration offices.

### Attending

#### Partnership members in attendance:

Pete Capell, Brian Carlson, Brian Calkins for Carl Dugger, Nancy Ellifrit, Martin Hudson, Don Jacobs, David Judd, Carol Record for Lee McCallister, Thom McConathy, Chris Hathaway for Deb Marriott, Clark Martin, Jim Meyer, Dave Howard for Iloba Odum, Patty Boyd for Larry Paulson, Randy Phillips, Doug Quinn, Lisa Faubion for Scott Robinson, Jane Van Dyke

#### Partnership members absent:

Gary Kokstis, Vernon Veysey, Bruce Wiseman

### Staff:

Loretta Callahan, Maureen Chan-Hefflin, Victor Ehrlich, Jeroen Kok, Jeanne Lawson, Kelly Skelton, Ron Weirenga

### In the audience:

Steve Bollens, Dick Carroll, Dick Chandlee, Justin Clary, Tim Dean, Jacquelin Edwards, Vinton Erickson, Annette Griffy, Tim Kraft, Curt Loop, Bob Moser, Ed Strohmaier, Bob Zak

### Committee Business

*10/19/05 Meeting Minutes*

No changes

Funding and next steps are the purpose of today's meeting. Jeanne then had the members introduce themselves for the benefit of Amanda's replacement, Kelly Skelton.

Brian had a card for Lee McAllister, which was routed to the entire meeting for everyone to sign. Carol will deliver to him.

David Judd said that he has brought IGA samples, as was requested of him at the 12/7/05 Steering Committee meeting.

Dave Howard from Ecology commented that he feels that IGAs are of great importance, especially for auditors to justify billable hours spent. This issue will be addressed further on down the agenda.

### **Public Comment on Committee Business**

Bob Moser commented that he was recently on a hike in the Ridgeview Wildlife Area and when he reached the end of state route 501 only half of the road is left due to erosion, he foresees future issues with flooding in this area. He has reported the issue to Larry Paulson and thought it was useful to point out and could impact what the committee is working on.

### **Funding/Next Steps**

Pete Capell reported that one issue raised at the most recent Steering Committee meeting was the need to continue funding this activity to keep the Partnership Group going, and the need for larger funding to keep other projects going as well. Currently there is \$50,000 for the county's 2007 budget, and \$50,000 for 2007 from the Port; the city has similar money to fund the committees. In the past this was done very informally, the County paid for JLA's services and the Port covered studies outside the budget and JLA's services above and beyond what the county covered for 2006. To do "real work" grants and additional funds will need to be secured, possibly partner with Ecology. David Judd and Bill Dygert have been talking to Martin at the Corps about the possibilities of General Investigation Studies program funding, where we would make the request through Martin in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the year for Fiscal Year 2006-2007; funds would start in October of 2006. This will affect our timeline; we will begin to put the proposal together.

Martin said that he has a meeting on December 22nd to talk strategy about approaching groups about possible funding. He said they are discussing the potential of a little seed money for initial work within the Corps of Engineers (literature review) on a project restoration plan.

Curt presented a "holiday present" from the Corps: maps of Vancouver Lake. He also shared photos of the lake from the 50s and 60s. These will be helpful once the project has progressed so we can see where things have been.

Martin said that this project is on people's radar at the Corps and at some point in the near future the Colonel would like to attend a meeting -- possibly in February. Martin also noted that he will not be assigned to Iraq, after all.

Pete Capell said that work with legislative representatives is not limited to the federal delegation and the Corps; he'd like to explore other groups as possible funding options and other state grants as well, such as the Centennial clean water grant.

In summary, the Corps' General Investigation study seems to fit nicely with the needs of this program as a framework to move forward with the study. Partners

will move forward in seeking this money from the Corps. The soonest that money would be available will be October 2006.

Thom asked Martin about if included in this planning piece is a characterization study of the lake. Martin said the process is a report called a Project Condition report, base condition of the resource if nothing is done, and then show the changes and benefits that would occur if it was restored. This then helps justify project funding to Congress.

The committee asked about the review of the science of shallow lakes. Martin said once you get the money you'd scope out what you need, and one of things you'd look at is the success of the restoration of shallow lakes. Look and see what's been successful in other places, hence the need for a literature review. That process would start after 2007.

### **Action Plan/Update on Steering Committee Scoping efforts**

Pete said that the Steering Group envisions the full partnership staying very actively involved to direct and oversee the work, focusing on keeping the partnership going, provided we get the necessary funding. The Steering Group wants to have an individual identified as a Project Coordinator for all activities and information. The Steering Group believes Ron Weirenga, if his current workload can be freed up, would be a good choice for that role.

The Steering Group also felt that an expert panel convened by WSU is still a desirable approach to bringing the best available science to the project and for the credibility of independent scientific review. The group has continued discussions with WSU. The Corps would be managing the actual work but the partner agencies would pull together resources and help get the work done, with the oversight of the full partnership. The Steering Group wants to produce a clear outcome policy, with a final direction that will include substantial public process and engage the community. The specifics of how that is done are yet to be determined as funding and partnerships come together.

David Judd agreed and said that the ability to pull together scope and public work is essential and the Project Coordinator would help that work.

At this time Jeanne introduced a new staff member, Jim Gladson, the Public Information Outreach Manager for Public Works at Clark County. The public information team is ready to move forward when the committee is ready.

Regarding the timeline, Clark mentioned that we still need to conduct a literature review of existing science, and asked how/when that will happen. He feels it is essential.

Pete replied that the scope of the initial study will be based on the information and research already in place, and the Corps (if money comes into place) will begin the technical work to identify and address new questions. Prior to the time that this study can begin (Oct 2006) we'll be doing the continued discussion with the Corps and pursuing other funding; but there is not enough full committee work to keep meeting monthly and the Steering Group recommends transitioning to quarterly meetings until there is more to discuss, but the Steering Committee will continue to meet monthly, and those meetings are open and other interested committee members are welcome. As money becomes available, we can begin meeting more regularly.

Jeanne cautioned the committee that meeting too often, when meetings are not productive enough, will result in losing members. We need to make sure the process continues to be open and accessible but does not become onerous to those who are not as eager to come to meetings.

Thom voiced his concerns about putting all our eggs in one basket, he'd like to see a Plan B, we are going to have to compete with a lot of other needs at the federal level. Pete agreed and pointed out that the most promising funding is the Corps program but everyone is aware that there are challenges and no guarantees. We need to lobby the state reps as well as federal delegations for other funding options, and pursue grants.

Thom stated that he'd like more diversity with the funding, and thinks we should be actively developing other funding options and programs besides the Corps. Other funding options have been raised at prior meetings and he hopes that these options are pursued as well.

Thom also stated concerns about cutting back to quarterly meetings and suggested that those meetings become half-day sessions to make the meetings richer and more meaningful, he feels that issues he had raised before are not getting covered, even after a year of meeting. He fears that cutting back to quarterly meetings will slow things down and we will lose momentum. He also feels that the process has to remain open and transparent. His previous experience has been that the community does not respect the Port and the committees if they are not engaged and informed.

Martin asked what Thom feels is missing. Thom replied that there haven't been open meetings for the public to discover what citizens see as needs for Vancouver Lake and wants the process to be more transparent and include the visions of people outside of the Partnership committee.

Ron W. stated that he hears what Thom is saying. He agreed that people should be able to give input into the Diagnostic studies, and keep things transparent during the work with the Corps, and hopes that everyone will be engaged all the way through the process into the Feasibility studies, as well. He thinks it will be

an engaging process all the way through; community surveys will be important to get broader input.

Pete stated that his only concern is that if the broader public process begins before the background work is done, it's premature and people will become frustrated because we don't fully understand the problem and we don't have viable alternatives yet.

Clark asked if there was any money now. His felt that one person could do research for a couple of months for \$5,000.

Ron said the money Martin is referring to is for a literature review and it also depends on who the Corps gets to work on the project. The Corps has a lot of qualified people to work on the project and if those people became involved the research could be done quickly.

Jeanne felt the primary issue for the committee is that the group is productive, committed and gets something out the time spent, but we also don't want to lose momentum. Can we slow down and expect people to stay committed and regroup next year? The full partnership committee has to remain the driver, whatever happens with the tech committee.

Brian Carlson pointed out that there is earmarked \$200,000 between the three partner agencies in 2006. Some funding is targeted for the committee process, but a lot of that money has not been earmarked yet and we need to figure out how the get the most bang for our buck.

Clark asked if we have money why not continue the scientific research, why wait?

Chris Hathaway asked if the Corps' GIS requires a match. No. Even if they do, we have a match in the value of the land and that match can come in many different ways.

Ron is not sure what the Corps is planning right now; we can continue to talk to Martin and possibly start working on some components sooner than others.

Dave H. said it's often frustrating on projects because people don't realize that Ecology will be expecting two seasons of field data, and we are still at the beginning of trying to identify what the actual problems are. We've had a fantastic year of getting this much commitment to move forward. But it will be 3 to 5 years before money can realistically be spent. He feels there is a lot to do; how do we officially move forward? There is a problem with possible die out, people might not be able to continue to commit this much time without a more formalized plan. Perhaps we do a formal kickoff with the community in the spring, go to the public

with an outline of what we propose, we have that information and well as access to volunteer resources.

Ron pointed out that we do have enough growing season's data, we are not starting from scratch, and we will continue to gather that information.

Loretta reminded the group that the public information team has plans for doing public outreach and doing a survey of citizen expectations. This wouldn't take away from the technical information and studies. They are just waiting for the project to be ready for public discussion and for direction from the committee.

Thom said he feels that there needs to be a certain level of regulation and commitment by jurisdictions to a watershed approach and to improving the quality of the water flowing into Vancouver Lake. He felt we should start study groups, including the public, looking at each of the creeks, and get started now to build credibility and have real data on hand when applying for grants and so that we have significant work to do this upcoming year. A lot of info needs to still be collected and this collection might be hindered if we move to a quarterly meeting. We have no credibility now, no watershed groups are in place or no interlocal agreements or an idea of what the requirements might be. We need to have multiple lines occurring at the same time, he's concerned that we are too committed to the Corps funding, and we have power outside of the Corps. Thom additionally stated in a follow-up email that his concern with the Corps is related to the 1981 cleanup. The EPA made all future work dependent on the communities' commitment to watershed solutions, and that we can expect no commitment from funding sources until we make such commitments.

David Judd said that there are dozens of funding programs to pursue, but there aren't many generalist programs. Bill Dygert said of all the funding sources that would help us, the Corps approach is one of the few generalist approaches that allow people to study a whole range of things over many disciplines, which allows you to come out of it with a clear map of specific areas where you need to find more specific funding with other groups. He thinks we'll want to work closely with the Corps to get this funding going, and he feels there is a strong reason to keep up this level of commitment to the Corps, since they have been very engaged thus far. Jeanne pointed out that she just received a letter from Nancy for another funding program.

### **Next Agenda**

Jeanne summarized the group's discussions for the next meeting.

#### **1. Funding and Scoping Updates**

- Corps Status
- Plans B, C, etc.
- Status of IGAs
- Scoping efforts

2. Interim work, what can be done now? (Study groups) resources to keep things moving.

3. Public process, when do we start?

Pete said he is concerned about not giving people enough to keep them coming back, or just turning people loose to start working on new directions without more scoping work or meaningful information to go on.

Jeanne opened up the discussion to the full group. She said that the Steering Group will keep in strong contact with everyone and will be sure to share summaries with the entire partnership about Steering Group outcomes.

Clark asked how much money will be saved by not having a monthly meeting, based on Jeanne's approximation of JLA's rates; it's about \$5,000, which doesn't include committee member time. Clark wanted to know why we can't just pay someone the \$5,000 to begin the literature search, Ron said it was a possibility but he's unclear on what the Corps' plan is and that we don't undermine the Corps' process somehow. The meeting with the Corps may clarify this.

The group agreed to assume meetings every other month, and meet in February, given that the Corps members hope to bring Colonel; and the committee will re-evaluate at that time whether to meet bi-monthly or quarterly.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Steering Committee meeting will be held in January, and minutes from this meeting will be sent to the full partnership. The next Partnership meeting will be Wednesday, February 15.

### **Public Comment**

Pete recommends, as a budget saving idea, that the meeting minutes be more of a summary, rather than a transcription.

Thom disagreed and said that detailed meeting minutes are important and that they show agencies the nature of the meetings and the level of commitment in the group. He also said that he thinks detailed notes will be essential if we move to half day meetings.

Jeanne suggested that we try doing a condensed meeting summary for this meeting, cutting back to approximately four pages. We will evaluate the thoroughness of these minutes at our next meeting. The group agreed.

Carol, Lee's replacement, said she thinks the minutes are helpful and would like to receive copies of previous meetings. Kelly will email them to her.

The full partnership committee will receive a draft of the condensed meeting minutes via email, and Jeanne expects comments if people are not happy with them.

**Public Comment**

Jacqueline expressed her gratitude to the committee and appreciates the work and information that they provide.

Bob Moser commented that we are lucky to have Martin on this committee and if he's offering help that we need to find a way for them to help us right away.