

February 16, 2010

The Chehalis city council met in a special work session on Tuesday, February 16, 2010, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Ketchum called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, Daryl Lund, Chad Taylor, and Dennis Dawes. Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Kelvin Johnson, Fire Chief; and Bob Nacht, Community Development Director. Members of the news media in attendance included Adam Pearson and Marquise Allen of *The Chronicle*, and Ron Hall from KITI.

1. **Work Session – General Discussion on Possible Flood Control.** Mayor Ketchum stated the main purpose of the meeting was to find out what the council's thoughts and opinions were about the whole process of flood control, and hoped by the end of the evening they could come to a consensus that City Manager MacReynold and Councilor Taylor could take forth. He instructed the council to talk freely about the following: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Plan; the retention study; the new government coordinated study proposed by the Governor's Office that takes into consideration the study of retention and levees; the effectiveness and focus of the flood authority; FEMA maps; and flood zone issues versus flood district.

Councilor Taylor stated one of the reasons why he wanted to have the meeting was because there were so many ideas being discussed at the flood authority, and many decisions that had to be made. He stated he wanted to make sure he was on the right track with all of their wishes together, not just carrying forward his own personal feelings about it.

Councilor Taylor stated they had been in favor of supporting the authority to push forward for the water retention study, to make sure it moved forward. He felt the city's position was, in order to provide a sufficient amount of coverage and protection, water retention needed to be part of the study. Councilor Taylor noted he was also pushing to replace the existing flood authority with a flood zone.

City Manager MacReynold noted another issue they faced with the Corps project was that it felt like an either/or situation even though it didn't have to be. Councilor Taylor stated he had heard rumors the Corps project may not even be doable anymore because the new FEMA mapping would increase the project to greater than the 20 percent allowed, which meant it would have to go back to Congress for approval.

Councilor Harris indicated the Chehalis Basin Partnership was having the same discussions at the partnership meetings, adding the Corps was not going to do anything other than the levee system, until it was disapproved. He reported he was on the same page as Councilor Taylor, adding they needed to look at retention. Councilor Harris stated he was as stuck in the mud himself in trying to figure out where they should stand on issues, adding the difficulty was they were working with a moving target.

Councilor Pope felt they had wasted a lot of time and money and it really just came down to who to trust, adding he certainly didn't trust the Corps. He noted a lot of information had been presented to them on the issues, and the ones that made the most sense to him involved retention and the flood zone. Councilor Pope firmly believed if they didn't take a stand, a decision would be made with regards to I-5 with no regards for the rest of us. Mayor Ketchum agreed.

Councilor Spahr stated he originally thought they should work with the Corps on what they could get today, but rethought that issue, especially with the new flood maps coming out. He felt levees by themselves were not going to work; however, they were partially necessary. Councilor Spahr believed retention absolutely made sense and they should stay with retention. He added, two reasons why the idea of levees had not worked in the past were the cost of maintaining them, and they were not going to solve the problem. Councilor Spahr still maintained that something needed to be done about the Mellen Street Bridge. He stated he agreed with Councilor Pope, they needed to stick with retention.

Councilor Lund agreed with the opinions of Councilors Pope and Spahr on retention, but added they needed to work on moving towards a flood zone. He felt something would get done if J. Vander Stoep was in charge, adding he was very smart and was all about Lewis County as a whole.

Councilor Dawes stated he had been through many floods while working for the city, and heard from politicians as they came and went telling us they're not going to let it happen again. He indicated he even became cautiously optimistic after the 2007 event with players from Washington, D.C. involved, who could pull the strings to release the money to do the things we needed. He also felt they had gathered some good momentum with thoughts of combination water retention projects, and the like.

February 16, 21010

Councilor Dawes believed the flood authority was too big and too cumbersome, and it had too many people with various degrees of interest of what they wanted to see done. He felt there were people on the flood authority that wanted to kill economic development in our area, to send it somewhere else, which made him start losing his confidence in that group.

Councilor Dawes stated he did not distrust the Corps, adding they were a military organization that would do only what they were ordered to do. With regards to the new FEMA mapping, Councilor Dawes indicated we were not the only area with concerns. He felt we needed to look in a different direction, perhaps a smaller focus on some kind of regional plan, and get those who are really affected involved, who want to be a part of the solution. Councilor Dawes stated he had heard that U.S. Representative Norm Dicks was being looked at for a different position in Washington, D.C. and didn't know if that would affect his ability to work on the issue, adding he would certainly hate to lose that kind of clout.

Councilor Spahr reported shortly after the 1990 flood he attended several meetings with the Corps and suggested to them that retention would probably be one of the best methods of resolving some of our issues. He noted their response was nobody was ever going to get a permit from the Corps to build a dam in the United States. Councilor Spahr stated he didn't know if that was true, and asked if anyone could shed some light on that issue. Councilor Taylor stated, in speaking with Dave Muller from the Lewis County Public Utility District (PUD), it would take a lot of permits and a long time.

Commissioner Averill stated the answer was yes, it could be done, reporting the PUD dam located above Riffe Lake was built after 1990; however there were all kinds of people out there that don't want them to be built.

Mayor Ketchum stated he felt the flood authority needed to take the next step in continuing the retention study that's up for discussion. He personally thought it was very unlikely that we would be able to build a retention dam, even if the study showed it to be the best option for us. Mayor Ketchum indicated he had one concern regarding the retention study, which was the idea of lowering the proposed levees as a cost savings measure, versus what the Corps was planning on. He believed if they lowered the levees and the dams were never built, we would lose the protection that we could have had with the Corps plan. Mayor Ketchum felt the best protection for the city was to follow the Corps plan, leaving the levees at the max level; and if the studies show that retention would work and we're able to build dams, it would just give us extra protection. He added it was nice that the Governor's Office proposed a study to the authority that included retention and levees, but again, he felt they needed to keep the levees at the level of the Corps study and not lower them.

Mayor Ketchum felt they needed to move towards a flood zone, not a district. In his opinion, the flood authority had lost its effectiveness and they were not focusing on what they were charged to do. He believed the authority was formed to work on the issue of how to form a flood district, and they were way off base in their efforts.

Councilor Harris reported after the 2007 flood, representatives from our area went up to talk to the Legislature to get them to understand that everyone wanted a holistic approach to fixing the basin, and that we didn't want them to authorize the levee plan until we had a chance to look at other alternatives that would fix more than just the levees. He stated if the fix had to be done in steps, he would like to think there would be something after the levees; however, now he wasn't even sure if they were going to be able to pull off the levees. Councilor Harris felt they needed to go back to their roots and look at where they were and what their thoughts were right after the 2007 event. He stated he could understand the Mayor's statement about just getting the levees done; however, he couldn't agree without knowing whether there was some future behind it. Councilor Harris felt levees alone would just create another bottleneck both upstream and downstream.

Councilor Taylor stated he had some of the same fears as Councilor Harris, adding once the levees were done, that might be it for us.

Councilor Dawes thought there was some discussion or a study done that showed if they built the levees the way they were proposed, it would do more damage upstream in the Adna and Doty area. Councilor Harris stated that was correct. Councilor Taylor noted the levee project wasn't even 35 percent complete, and to talk about what it does up and down stream seemed ridiculous to him.

Mayor Ketchum felt they just needed to find a project they can do now instead of wasting another 10 years and not even have a shovel moved.

February 16, 2010

Commissioner Averill stated he understood the frustrations of the council, adding he shared some of the same concerns. He noted operating a flood authority had not been one of the more pleasurable tasks that he had been faced with. Commissioner Averill agreed they would not solve the problem without water retention, and he was fully committed to it. He believed our levees do nothing downriver, and by their very nature they shift the direction of water. Commissioner Averill stated in 1996 the Corps designed the project without any consideration of what it did upstream. He noted the fact was, if they clear out the jam at Mellen Street and at Galvin Road, they were going to get water a lot faster downstream which was one of the reasons why people were starting to look at the new FEMA maps a lot closer.

Commissioner Averill reported Northwest Hydraulics, the firm who did the study for PUD before they started the water retention study, was the same firm that drew the FEMA maps. He noted the only difference between the two was assumptions. Commissioner Averill reported the maps only had one function, which was to show the community where the water would go so they can get insurance on their homes. He stated Northwest Hydraulics was told, as part of their study, there were no 100 year levees and to consider them not there.

Commissioner Averill reported the Northwest Hydraulics report showed we could not solve the problem with water retention or levees alone, it would take the two together. He stated he knew the Corps would be unable to do anything because of the rules for Corps projects, which stated 20 percent revision up or down would take an act of Congress to change it. Commissioner Averill stated that was what they were working on and the reason for the coordinated study, which was on the docket of Thursday's flood authority meeting. He reported, if approved, it would say they need to look at how water retention can compliment the levees, adding they believed there was a design out there that could be done, using the one-to-one cost benefit ratio the Corps required to do both dams and levees.

Commissioner Averill noted there were some bad things about the Corps project, which included: the speed with which they worked; they don't know what the costs are going to be, or what would be protected; and they don't know where the water would end up. On the other hand, we wouldn't need to make any decisions until 2013 because that was the Corps current projection of where they would be at the time we need to make a decision to go, or not. He felt we needed to take advantage of the timing, and go back to try and change the language in the Water Resource Development Act (WRDA).

Commissioner Averill reported the funding for the Corps project was coming through Congress to the Corps, and we couldn't get to it except through the Corps. He noted the Twin Cities Project funding would be coming through the Governor's Office, and the General Investigation (G.I.) Project was through the flood authority; however, they were unable to get them to start design on that project. Commissioner Averill hoped through the G.I. study they could show that flood retention worked; however, if they continued at their current rate, they wouldn't even start the G.I. study until we have to make a decision on the dams.

Commissioner Averill reported he had been working with Congressman Brian Baird's Office, and registered several times, disconcert about the slow path it was taking. He noted the only money the flood authority had was the \$2.5 million, which was currently funding the PUD study.

Commissioner Averill stated he was not happy with the way things were going, but they could at least see things on the horizon and he was trying to lead the process for success. He noted if the city pulled back and went out on its own, they start all over and the county doesn't have the money to do that.

Commissioner Averill reported the county had a vision for over 80 years to fix flooding, and a legacy of no accomplishment. He provided information to council on how the flood authority was funded, what it does and some of the accomplishments they had made, and some of his concerns about where they go from here.

Councilor Dawes asked if Commissioner Averill wanted to carry through with the flood authority as it was, with the large membership. Commissioner Averill noted, as a group, they worked around the issues and the questions people were throwing out had to be addressed anyway. Councilor Dawes stated he agreed; however, it appeared that some of the members on the authority wanted to shoot things down before they even had a chance to run them to the end of the road. Commissioner Averill reported he shared in Councilor Dawes' frustration, but unfortunately from a funding standpoint, he didn't know how to get around it. He felt they were doing the best they could, and acknowledged he didn't like the progress they were making.

February 16, 2010

Commissioner Averill stated because he was no longer the chair of the authority, come Thursday, he had some things he wanted to pass along to a few people. He felt the Corps was stalling and they needed to be told that publicly. Commissioner Averill believed they needed the coordinated study so they could break the deadlock and get on with solving the problem. He stated he was strongly for water retention, and his estimation was they couldn't get there without it.

Mr. Vander Stoep reported his client in the matter was the PUD, but their real clients were the people not only in Lewis County, but all down the Chehalis River basin. He felt the one thing they could agree on was the best answer for our community and the basin, was water retention.

Mr. Vander Stoep agreed with what Councilor Harris stated earlier, which was if they pinch the river in the middle they would add flooding upstream as well as downstream. He noted his message to the council was to pursue as far as they could, as hard as they could, on the best answer for the community.

Mr. Vander Stoep provided the following information on dams:

- PUD was the last enterprise in the Pacific Northwest to build a major dam, adding the dam at Cowlitz Falls was significantly larger than anything that would be put at the headwaters of the Chehalis River.
- When Congressman Baird came last fall, he was very excited about water retention because it tied into what people were talking about with global warming.
- People say 'dams' in a very precise way, noting the PUD had a proposal for two large earthen dams up at the headwaters of the Chehalis River that included a small bit of hydro as a component.
- We could simply build water gates that close during certain times to reduce flooding.
- There were a lot of ways to structure flood control that don't conjure up another Grand Cooley Dam.
- People oppose dams because of water quality, even though we had to pay millions of dollars because of the low oxygen and poor water quality in the middle of the river during summer months.
- Improvements to water quality could be improved by storing water in November and December and releasing it in August and September, which was a potential environmentally beneficial component.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated he absolutely believed the Corps levee plan, as currently designed, would never be built. He believed the federal and state government would never appropriate \$200+ million dollars to build 11 miles of levees along I-5 for the following reasons:

- There were more than 140 properties along the way and the local government would be the local sponsor, which meant they had to pay for all the land acquisitions and maintenance.
- One of the mantras was 'no water faster downstream;' however, the Corps indicated they could not assure us there wouldn't be more water upstream, or downstream with their plan.
- Based on the new FEMA maps the question had come up, could they even build levees in the new floodway?

Mr. Vander Stoep reported they were going to have to go back to Congress now because they were told the costs would absolutely be over 20 percent. He suggested Chehalis, Centralia, and Lewis County speak up now as one voice stating they want a Corps project, but they want it to focus on the possibility of retention with very modest levees. Mr. Vander Stoep felt it would be lethal to take the approach of building levees first and dams secondary, because they didn't have the money to do both.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated he had to disagree with Mayor Ketchum with regards to building levees now and retention later. He noted, first of all, there wasn't money for it; and second, Northwest Hydraulics report and maps showed places in

February 16, 2010

Centralia that don't even get wet if they had water retention. Mr. Vander Stoep wondered why anyone would support an 11 mile levee project when there are places that don't even get wet. He agreed there would need to be a few places around the airport where they would need modest levees, but nothing approaching the 11 miles the Corps was currently conceiving.

Mr. Vander Stoep reported the Corps website reported the earliest the levee plan would be completed was 2020, not including the six-month to a year-and-a-half delay they reported two weeks earlier. He stated he could not accept that, adding they had a bird in the hand with the Corps plan, and we were not going to get any protection over the next decade.

Mr. Vander Stoep reported they had the geologic study that was approved by the Washington State Department of Ecology, which noted two excellent sites for water storage; however, there had been no environmental or cost benefit study for the Corps to look at or accept. He was optimistic that water retention could be done, but until those studies were done and approved, he was not ready to take the last step to say done deal.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated the authority had spent \$2.5 million, with the PUD study taking about \$250,000 of that. He felt the authority was never going to make a solid decision based on the competing agenda and different motives. Mr. Vander Stoep noted when legislation set up the \$50 million they specifically stated the authority was going to be an interim body. He felt it was important to move to a flood zone, and hopefully Grays Harbor would follow.

Councilor Taylor noted they had a flood meeting coming up and there were items on the agenda that needed to be hammered out. He stated he was trying to find the right direction for the city to go and wondered why they would keep supporting the Corps project, and asked if the Corps needs to remain engaged. Mr. Vander Stoep noted they would still need to have the Corps involved. He stated they had been saying, up until the last couple of weeks when they came to believe they were going to be over their 20 percent, let the Corps plan go forward and complete the study on water retention, and hope they could incorporate water retention into the Twin Cities Plan. Mr. Vander Stoep reported they were almost certainly going to have to go back to Congress for new authorization now, and felt it was important to direct the Corps to look at a comprehensive basin-wide flood control that includes retention.

Councilor Taylor asked if they could just amend the old WRDA bill. Mr. Vander Stoep reported those projects were amended frequently in the same fashion, but felt the Corps would probably say they have to go back to square one.

Councilor Taylor asked if there had ever been projects designed and done to Corps standards without having the Corps actually do it. Mr. Vander Stoep stated their hope was the consultants at the Corps would agree with the studies being done, rather than going back and redoing them all themselves.

Councilor Pope noted he had grown up around flooding, and in his opinion, dams stopped flooding and areas benefited from them. He noted a good example of what could be done with retention was the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Councilor Harris noted he attended a Chehalis River Basin Partnership meeting shortly after the 2007 flood, where state and federal officials came in and gave a 15 minute at-a-boy to the Skookumchuck River Dam, and talked about how it held back any other potential issues. He noted the very next speaker at the meeting was Mark White, who stated 'we all know dams don't work.' Councilor Harris noted his biggest concern was how to get past that, and how do they deal more with the entities than with the projects themselves.

Mr. Vander Stoep noted he had heard the Tribal leadership of the Chehalis Tribe was open to water retention. He felt one of the assumptions was the Tribe would automatically be against it, but he didn't feel that was true. Mr. Vander Stoep believed if push came to shove, if we could show there was a benefit to protecting their facilities without damaging water quality in the end, there was a possibility the Tribe would end up being neutral or a supporter.

Councilor Dawes felt the problem had to do with Mr. White being the Tribe's representative and speaking on their behalf. He inquired as to how they were supposed to combat that impediment and move forward. Mr. Vander Stoep reported there had been at least two meetings at the authority when Tribal leadership had been in attendance, noting Mr. White behaved very differently at those meetings.

February 16, 2010

Councilor Lund stated he had worked with the Tribe and was personal friends with several of the Tribal chairmen. He indicated they were very smart people, but you had to get to them and tell them what the problem was before they would take care of it. Councilor Lund felt nobody had made an attempt to do that. Councilor Taylor believed they had good communication with Chairman Burnett. Councilor Lund stated they needed to communicate with the Tribal Council, not just Chairman Burnett.

Councilor Spahr felt the consensus was there needed to be some retention and they had two vehicles to get to their objective, one being the authority and the other being the zone. Mr. Vander Stoep reported Lewis County already had a district and zone in place, which only needed to be activated by the Commissioners.

Mr. Vander Stoep reported Mr. Dave Muller and Commissioner Bill Schulte had briefed most of the members of the Chehalis council and the Centralia Council, and was told there seemed to be a wide consensus on the part of both councils, as well as Pe Ell, that the authority was broken and they needed to move forward to the next step, which was the flood zone.

Councilor Spahr asked if they would have more flexibility and impact if they went to a zone. Mr. Vander Stoep noted the first thing they would have would be a group focused on one question. He compared it to a fire district and the council, noting the fire district had one focus, while the city council had a hundred different issues before them, same thing with the County Commissioners. Mr. Vander Stoep stated they needed a dedicated focused board with one goal, which was flood control. He believed that in itself would solve a lot of the problems. Mr. Vander Stoep indicated Grays Harbor would have to do the same thing, adding there could be an inter-local agreement whereby they could essentially be one body, with one mission.

Councilor Pope stated he considered it to be a major problem when one incident can paralyze the whole state, costing \$400 million a day. He felt they needed a group who could be totally focused, and had no problem moving towards a flood zone.

Councilor Harris asked if the flood authority wasn't first designed to build a flood district. Commissioner Averill stated that was one of the objectives. Mayor Ketchum and Councilor Harris agreed it was the only objective, because they could not form a flood district without a flood authority first. Councilor Taylor agreed, adding the authority was only a vehicle to get everybody together.

Councilor Harris asked Commissioner Averill to demonstrate to him the benefit of the flood authority. Commissioner Averill reported the flood authority from the very start was intended to be an intermediary to a flood district. He stated there were two forms of a district under RCW 86.09 and part of 85-36. He noted the prosecutor recommended they go that route because with the flood zone the county commissioners would be the commissioners of the zone; and with a flood district they would be elected. Commissioner Averill reported with a flood zone the county would own the zone and all the liabilities, and with the district, the district would assume all those liabilities. He noted the problem with a flood district was it would require property owners to approve the district through a vote of the voters. Commissioner Averill reported they resolved that issue in the 2008 Legislature and now, in a three or more flood district, it would be the registered voters that decide what it would be. He noted another issue they had was they had three commissioners and three counties with big egos, and no way to divide them up. Commissioner Averill stated they asked the Legislature to consider five commissioners, but the idea was shot down in the 2009 session. He noted it was back in the 2010 session, adding he hoped it would slide through under the radar.

Commissioner Averill stated they understood and had asked the flood authority to hire a consultant to look into a flood zone district, because most flood districts in the state were very small, while the larger districts in the state were zones. He felt there were some options that would allow them to elect supervisors as opposed to having the commissioners do it, but they didn't know what those options were yet. Commissioner Averill stated they were commissioning a study at the next flood authority meeting to tell them how to do it.

Councilor Taylor asked if there was a way to get to that stage, without doing another study. Dr. John Henricksen reported the prosecutor's office had been researching zones quite extensively over the last few of weeks, since they became aware that a zone already existed in Lewis County. He stated he agreed with Councilor Taylor that a study was not necessary, and suggested Glen Carter probably had a lot of the answers the council and commissioners were looking for.

Dr. Henricksen compared a zone to a voted district. He stated they wouldn't have to get the voters okay to establish a zone, whereas, to establish a flood control district they had to have a complete designed project to put before the voters. In

February 16, 2010

Dr. Henricksen's opinion, we could not have a district for the simple reason we don't have a project as of yet. He suggested if the council wanted more information, Mr. Carter would be very willing to come and discuss his findings.

Dr. Henricksen commented on the project itself, noting he had heard a lot of discussion about potential obstacles and appreciated Councilor Dawes' concern. He stated they should never stop pursuing a project because of potential obstacles, and suggested they get the project designed and established, then start surmounting the obstacles.

Dr. Henricksen stated he thought Councilor Lund's analysis of the Tribe was a very accurate one, adding they may be a factor to deal with, but he didn't believe they were going to be an insurmountable obstacle.

Dr. Henricksen stated he had just come from an interview, and was told by the interviewer that if we had a unanimous 'one voice' presentation on a designed project that would make the levees half the size of what the Twin Cities Project was originally conceived to build, Senator Patty Murray and U.S. Representative Dicks would both be willing to listen. He felt no one could pre-determine what those two could accomplish; however, it would be totally ridiculous for us to just sit here and say we'll go for levees because that's all we can get.

Dr. Henricksen reported levees cannot stop a catastrophic hydraulic event, adding they only work to moderate the flow of slightly moderate events. He noted they fail for a number of reasons, including: the fact that they can not be made big enough to act like a dam; and they are not maintained.

Dr. Henricksen stated the fact was they had to get together and quit giving messages that levees are all we want. He reported they would be hiring an independent hydrology engineering firm that has no connection to the Corps or FEMA, to verify what they were saying. Dr. Henricksen added they had great respect for Northwest Hydraulic Consultants, but they were not going to be able to stand up and blow holes in the levee project, because a good share of their business came from the two agencies.

Dr. Henricksen believed unless we get retention, the only thing that will change the footprint of the new FEMA maps would be scientific data. He felt the only thing to change the data would be retention; therefore, that was where their focus needed to be, with levees secondary. Dr. Henricksen stated everyone above us, including the Corps, needed to hear that message loud and clear.

Councilor Taylor asked if Dr. Henricksen could explain the process of moving from a flood authority to a zone. Dr. Henricksen stated it was actually pretty easy according to Mr. Carter. The commissioners meet and two out of the three say they want a zone, they vote for it, and the zone becomes activated. He suggested they talk with Mr. Carter, noting the council could rely on his findings.

Dr. Henricksen stated once they start the process of re-authorizing the project, we need to make sure they include retention as the primary effort.

Councilor Spahr stated he favored the zone, if in fact that was what the county commissioners were willing to take on. Dr. Henricksen noted once it was up and running they could turn it over to a supervisor to oversee the process. He, as well as others, agreed they needed to stop having part-time attention to the problem.

Councilor Taylor noted the flood authority was full of people from the various counties and the Tribe, and getting from point A to point B was sometimes very difficult. Dr. Henricksen agreed, noting there was a certain element on the authority that could care less on solving flood problems in the Chehalis River basin. Councilor Dawes noted those were the impediments they needed to get rid of, before they could move forward. Dr. Henricksen stated if they got the zone in place the authority would go away, and a lot of those impediments would disappear.

Councilor Lund asked if they shouldn't make a statement that we pull out of the flood authority today, and support the county zone that was formed in 1990. Mr. Vander Stoep suggested they tell the authority to keep going, and give Councilor Taylor the authority and flexibility to act under their direction to specifically ask them to vote to move forward with a zone.

February 16, 2010

The Council briefly discussed points of consideration for Councilor Taylor to take back to the authority. City Manager MacReynold suggested, because the flood authority would be taking up the issues in parts, they should consider bringing them up in order.

After further discussion, Mayor Ketchum listed the following points:

- The Chehalis city council supports funding the next phase of the retention study
- The Chehalis city council agrees, along with the Governor's Office, to support the proposed coordinated study of retention and levees
- The Chehalis city council supports the reauthorization of a significantly different U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Twin Cities Project, with retention as the primary element that includes levees secondary
- The Chehalis city council supports moving towards a county flood zone to replace the existing flood authority

Councilor Dawes stated in all fairness to the Tribe, he agreed with the assessment made earlier. He noted the leadership was probably open to the idea of retention, especially if the goal would potentially bring back fish to the river and address the water issue in the summer months.

Councilor Dawes wondered if it might appear to the state and federal agencies that we can't even stick with a plan. Mayor Ketchum didn't believe they would, since the Governor's Office was throwing out the option to study retention. Councilor Dawes noted he was referring to changing their focus from a flood authority to the flood zone. Mayor Ketchum felt the flood authority had changed their focus, and now we're trying to get back to a focus. Councilor Dawes stated he just wanted to make sure, adding he was supportive of a zone.

Dr. Henricksen reported when the flood authority was formed, it was very clear to the Governor and made very clear by Senator Swecker and Representative Alexander, that the authority was just a temporary body. He felt it could be presented to the Governor as having matured into a zone.

Dr. Henricksen stated they also needed to keep in mind that when legislation was passed allowing a three county flood control district, it included a lot of representation on the governance of the district, much more than he would have ever hoped for. He reported there were no regulations requiring representation from the Tribe with flood control zones, so they wouldn't have the likes of Mr. White sitting on the zone. Dr. Henricksen noted he was not trying to do an end-run around the Tribe because they could not do that, adding with any project going forward they would eventually have to deal with the Tribe and their requirements, which would always be true.

Councilor Harris reported we were still studying and trying to find the best solution, adding we had not changed our minds from our very first statement to the state legislature, which was 'don't do anything unless it's going to benefit everyone.' He stated he was not going to settle for the least common denominator, and that's what they would be doing if they settle for one thing and hope the next thing happens.

Councilor Lund asked if they should stop talking about levees. Dr. Henricksen stated they were going to have to have some kind of levee system, because even with dams we're still going to have some moderate to mild flooding.

Councilor Lund felt they should vote on the issue. Councilor Dawes didn't believe they needed to vote, adding he felt they made a strong enough statement. Councilor Spahr also thought they got the message across. Councilor Harris stated he trusted Councilor Taylor to deliver the message to the authority.

Councilor Taylor reported about three months ago the authority talked about making sure the streams and tributaries that affect the Corps project were included in the evaluation. He reported they had a motion coming up that the flood authority had to vote on, to see if they had support.

City Manager MacReynold stated, from his observation, the council was clearly not in support of the Corps project as it currently stands, adding it had to go back to Congress to include retention as the primary focus, with some level of levees. He felt the safe thing to do was to bring it up at the authority and try to get them to vote to have it added to the evaluation.

February 16, 2010

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned a 6:57 p.m.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the council approve the minutes of the city council work session of February 16, 2010.