



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

# Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

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## Approved March 12, 2014, Meeting Minutes

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at the DOE Information Center, 1 Science.gov Way, Oak Ridge, Tenn., beginning at 6 p.m. A video of the meeting was made and may be viewed by contacting the ORSSAB support offices at (865) 241-4583 or 241-4584. The presentation portion of the video is available on the board's YouTube site at [www.youtube.com/user/ORSSAB/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/ORSSAB/videos).

### Members Present

Jimmy Bell  
Noel Berry  
Alfreda Cook  
David Hemelright, Chair  
Jennifer Kasten

Jan Lyons  
Fay Martin  
Scott McKinney  
Donald Mei  
Belinda Price

Mary Smalling  
Wanda Smith  
Coralie Staley  
Scott Stout

### Members Absent

Carmen DeLong  
Lisa Hagy, Secretary  
Bob Hatcher<sup>1</sup>  
Bruce Hicks, Vice Chair  
Howard Holmes<sup>1</sup>  
Greg Paulus

<sup>1</sup>Second consecutive absence

### Liaisons, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, and Federal Coordinator Present

Dave Adler, Department of Energy-Oak Ridge Office (DOE-ORO), Alternate Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO)  
Mark Whitney, (DOE-ORO) Manager for Environment Management (EM)  
Connie Jones, Liaison, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
John Owsley, Liaison, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)  
Melyssa Noe, ORSSAB Federal Coordinator, DOE-ORO

### Others Present

Tammy Blaine, DOE  
Susan Gawarecki  
Spencer Gross, ORSSAB Support Office  
Gracie Hall, Student Representative  
Pete Osborne, ORSSAB Support Office

Ten members of the public were present.

**Liaison Comments**

Mr. Whitney – Mr. Whitney reported that the last load of debris from demolition of the K-25 Building at East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) was hauled away for disposal on March 10. He said completion of work at ETTP is a near-term goal and upcoming mid-term goals include the building of a mercury treatment facility at Y-12 National Security Complex, a sludge build-out facility, and an additional waste disposal facility. All of those projects will present challenges, he said, and one of those challenges is securing sufficient funding to do the work in a timely manner.

Mr. Whitney said Monica Regalbuto has been nominated by the President to be the new Assistant Secretary for EM. If her nomination is confirmed she will assume the position currently being managed by Dave Huizenga as Senior Advisor for EM.

Mr. Adler – Mr. Adler said planning is underway for the board's annual meeting. A recent poll of members favored having the meeting locally instead of a site away from Oak Ridge. An additional poll will go out soon to receive additional board member input on the annual meeting concept. One of the questions on the poll will be whether to have the meeting on a Saturday, as has been tradition, or to dedicate the regular Wednesday meeting night in August for the annual meeting. He said a Wednesday evening meeting would have to be very focused and shorter than previous meetings. Staff will send the survey after this meeting.

Mr. Adler said DOE headquarters has mandated that DOE Oak Ridge EM must manage funds provided for board operations. He said the board's Finance & Process Committee will be renamed the Budget & Process Committee and it will not meet as often. DOE will continue to accept recommendations on how DOE spends money on the board's behalf.

Mr. Adler said a haul road is being built to service excavation activities for building the Uranium Processing Facility at Y-12. In building the road, a cut was made into Pine Ridge where demolition debris contaminated with depleted uranium was exposed. The contamination levels do not pose health risks. Options are being considered on where to dispose of the debris. Mr. Adler said it was a relatively small volume of material.

With completion of demolition of the K-25 Building at ETTP, Mr. Adler said levels of contamination have been found in groundwater underneath the K-25 footprint and in conveyances that leave ETTP. Those conveyances are storm water drains, underground electrical conduits, and sewage pipes to a water treatment plant. Levels of technetium contamination have been found in each of the pipelines. He said that was not unexpected, and it is not considered a health threat. DOE continues to monitor and take any actions necessary to keep levels as low as possible. DOE orders call for meeting certain limits of radioactive levels, but if levels are still detectable then DOE must implement a policy of 'as low as reasonably achievable' to continue to find ways to reduce levels even more. All three of the conveyances have been closed to prevent additional contamination transfer through the lines. Mr. Adler said the sewer line eventually feeds the Big Turtle sewage treatment facility on the west of side of Oak Ridge. Samples were taken at that facility and levels of technetium contamination were detected in the sludge. About 5,000 gallons of sludge will be retrieved and returned to ETTP until disposition is determined and agreed to by TDEC.

Under a memorandum of agreement for historic interpretation at ETTP, DOE committed to preserving the slab of the K-25 Building to illustrate the size of the building. A portion of the slab is contaminated with technetium. A study will be done to see how much of the slab can be preserved and how it will be preserved. The study must be completed within 90 days of the completion of debris removal from the site. Mr. Adler said the results of the study will help determine how much of the slab can be left in place without modification, if some parts of the slab must be removed, or if other mitigative measures must be taken.

Ms. Cook asked if any water runoff from the slab could pick up technetium contamination. Mr. Adler said that was a possibility. Berms have been built to control water runoff and water is collected between the berms. He said lessons learned from the K-25 demolition will help control water runoff in future demolition projects.

Mr. Bell asked if very low levels of contamination can be detected, even they are low enough not to be hazardous. Mr. Adler said technetium is definitely being detected in the water leaving the site at very low levels. But he said DOE orders call for driving levels as far down as possible.

Mr. Adler said Cate Alexander has retired as the Designated Federal Officer for the EM SSAB. Until a permanent replacement is announced, David Borak at DOE Headquarters is the acting official.

Mr. Adler reported that there were no recommendations from the board that require DOE consideration.

Ms. Jones – Ms. Jones said she was pleased that the demolition of K-25 has been completed with the removal of debris from the site. Sampling has been underway at K-27 in preparation for that structure's demolition. Ms. Jones asked Mr. Crane for comments.

Mr. Crane – Mr. Crane met with DOE and TDEC officials earlier in the day reviewing budget planning for FY 2016. In general, he said all three agencies are in agreement for the priorities for the next several years. High priorities are mercury reduction at Y-12 and demolition of K-27 at ETTP. He said discussions are underway about accelerating the demolition of the K-31 Building at ETTP. Mr. Crane said if demolition K-31 is funded that will speed up the need for a second waste disposal facility. He said discussions about K-31 focused on making sure that adding that project to the work scope doesn't adversely affect addressing mercury control at Y-12.

Mr. Owsley – Mr. Owsley agreed with Mr. Crane that DOE, EPA, and TDEC are in agreement on the priorities of projects for the near future. He said available budgets will necessitate compromise among the agencies to achieve a balance between cleanup of media, such as mercury, and demolition of unneeded buildings.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Presentation**

Ms. Blaine provided the presentation on the FY 2016 DOE-Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program Budget and Prioritization. The main points of her presentation are in Attachment 1.

She began by saying that at any given time DOE is working on three fiscal years budgets at the same time – the current fiscal year and fiscal years +1 and +2. The appropriation of \$430 million for FY 2014 was provided in January. In early March, the President announced his budget to Congress for FY 2015, which included a request for the DOE Oak Ridge EM program of \$385 million. Currently, the process is underway to develop the Oak Ridge EM budget request to DOE Headquarters for FY 2016.

Ms. Blaine explained the budget request development process. Meetings are underway now to set priorities and milestones. During March and April comments will be taken from EPA, TDEC, and ORSSAB on those priorities. In the April/May timeframe the budget request is submitted to DOE Headquarters. Once the request is submitted it is embargoed and no information on the budget request is shared outside of DOE. During the summer months, the budget request is considered by

DOE Headquarters and a final budget is submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in September.

Ms. Blaine said OMB will provide a 'passback' to DOE indicating what it believes is a reasonable request. That usually requires additional work on the budget to bring it in line with OMB's input. A final budget request is submitted to the President, who usually sends the national budget to Congress for approval in February. In the spring Congress will consider the budget and provide House and Senates 'marks' indicating what each house will fund. That usually requires a conference between the two houses to agree on a final national budget.

Ideally, Congress agrees on a budget and announces appropriations in October, the start of the fiscal year. However, often there is no agreement by that time and the government must function on a continuing resolution by operating on the previous year's budget request.

For FY 2014, the President's budget request was \$413 million for the Oak Ridge EM program; however, Congress appropriated \$430 million (Attachment 1, page 3). The FY 14 appropriation included \$4 million of remaining Recovery Act funds for projects that were to be finished by the end of March. Ms. Blaine said those remaining projects were completed and required paperwork was being prepared.

Ms. Blaine showed a comparison of the FY 2013 and FY 2014 appropriation (Attachment 1, page 4). The Oak Ridge EM budget comes in two accounts – defense funding and ETTP cleanup. The increases in the FY 14 budget are all in the defense account. There was a \$4 million decrease in the ETTP cleanup account.

Ms. Blaine reviewed DOE's principles for setting project prioritization (Attachment 1, page 5).

She then reviewed DOE's near term priorities for FY 2014-16 (Attachment 1, page 6) and mid-term and long-term priorities for FY 2017-26 and FY 2027-43 (Attachment 1, page 7).

Ms. Blaine said the path forward now is to evaluate the President's FY 2014 budget. She details are to come on how the money is to be spent. A public workshop will be conducted on the FY 2016 budget development as has been done previously. The details of the workshop have not been completed. DOE will receive input on the FY 16 budget from EPA, TDEC, and ORSSAB and a final budget request will be submitted to DOE Headquarters (Attachment 1, page 8).

Page 9 of Attachment is a graphic of the timeline to finish all the projects in Oak Ridge and the amounts of money needed to complete the projects within the timeline.

After Ms. Blaine's presentation, a number of questions were asked. Following are abridged questions and answers.

Ms. Gawarecki – Regarding [page 9 of Attachment 1], have you done any more realistic projections considering DOE has not been able to receive budgets approaching \$500 million a year for the last several years? Where would we end up if we're receiving \$400-\$450 million a year? Ms. Blaine – We're starting that process because the FY 15 budget is \$385 million. We're going to start talking about what our priorities would be. That's where input from ORSSAB, EPA, and TDEC is important on how that budget will impact this work. Mr. Adler – Regarding that page, much of the uptick in the annual budgets is not explained by us getting more spending power; it's explained by escalation. Most of the uptick in the out years is based on us sustaining spending power, but we escalate the dollars to preserve the spending power. Ms. Gawarecki – What is DOE Oak Ridge doing to raise this site's priorities to headquarters? We fail when we come to competition with other

sites like Hanford and Savannah River Site. Mr. Adler – The answer we've always given to that question is to execute work well. The best thing we can do is get jobs done safely and within scheduled budget. Getting that done requires that we have consensus on priorities and a plan for getting work done. The entire federal sector is under the same pressures we are. We always ask for healthy amounts and we're allowed to ask for above target spending. We make sure headquarters knows what we can do if we get more money. But the President and OMB tell us what we are going to get. Ms. Gawarecki – But what are you doing to change the priorities at headquarters? That's the list that put decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) so far down. Part of the problem is we can't get to soil and groundwater until that D&D is done. I don't think Oak Ridge has done a good job of selling that to headquarters based on the risk this site poses to the community surrounding the site. Mr. Whitney – If you look at the increase in the FY 2014 appropriation from the FY 2013 appropriation that's one of the highest increases across the DOE complex. While the FY 2015 figure is disappointing we're going to have to work with that. When we go to Washington and when we talk to our representative here we talk about the success we're having on our projects. We talk about Oak Ridge being a unique site. We talk about the fact that we're within the city limits of Oak Ridge. There is a large population that lives or works near the site. But I can't say the problems at other sites are any less important than the ones we have here. We'd like to get \$500 million a year, but in this budget environment it's not going to happen. But I do spend a lot of time trying to advance budgets for the priorities we share with the regulators and ORSSAB. The FY 2015 budget announcement for EM was down overall, but for individual sites, some were up and some were down.

Mr. Bell – I think a reason Oak Ridge is not a higher priority is because of the waste we have here compared to Savannah River or Hanford is so much lower on the radioactive scale. Those places dealt with plutonium recovery from spent fuel. All of that waste is phenomenal compared to what we deal with in Oak Ridge. Regarding the \$385 million for FY 2015, considering the mercury problem at Y-12, would you consider dropping demolition of K-31 to be able to adequately address mercury at Y-12? Mr. Whitney – If we can afford to do it, sequencing K-31 between K-25 and K-27 will allow us to put money on priorities and our timeline for the Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility. By putting K-31 between K-25 and K-27 we can potentially accelerate that schedule at ETTP and finish that job much sooner then focus to get the mercury treatment plant operating in 2019 and begin taking the process buildings down at Y-12 in the early 2020s.

Ms. Hall – On the graph, why is there a spike around 2034? Mr. Adler – Projects come in chunks, so there is something in that timeframe, probably taking down a big facility that causes a large spike to appear at Oak Ridge National Lab.

Mr. Hemelright – I have a question, but not related to budget. With the situation at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) how is that going to affect our D&D and transuranic (TRU) waste removal? Mr. Whitney – On February 5 there was a fire in WIPP where DOE sends all of its transuranic wastes. On February 14 there was a separate, unrelated radiation release. This happened late on a Friday evening and there were no workers in the mine. No one has entered WIPP since February 14. There were some elevated readings on the surface but were below regulatory levels. There were 13 workers that received a low-level dose that doesn't appear to present any health risks to them. The department has put together two accident investigation teams, one for the fire and one for the radiation release. A couple of people from Oak Ridge are participating on those teams. A re-entry plan is being worked on and a team will probably go in the mine within the next week. Instrumentation below ground has not detected levels that would not normally be detected in the mine. In Oak Ridge we are planning to re-initiate our shipments of TRU waste to WIPP. But right now WIPP is not receiving any waste. So there could be impacts to us depending on what they find. I hope we'll have a better idea soon of what happened and when they will start taking waste again.

Mr. Bell – I couldn't tell from reports what the fire was and what would be down there that is flammable that's not contained. And I also couldn't tell if it happened near where the waste is stored. Mr. Whitney – The fire was a truck fire in the engine that had nothing to do with waste in the mine. As far as the radiation release, we don't know have any details.

Ms. Cook – Do we have storage capacity here so that treatment of TRU waste could continue? Mr. Whitney – We're looking at options. Storage may be an option for the contact-handled waste. I'm not sure about remote-handled waste, but there may be options there as well. It's not ideal from an efficiency standpoint. If we do have a long-term outage that's a discussion we'll have to have with the state.

### **Committee Reports**

Budget & Process – Ms. Price reiterated Mr. Adler's comments about DOE managing ORSSAB funds. She said the change was to bring ORSSAB's procedures in line with other SSABs around the country.

The next meeting will be a combined meeting with EM & Stewardship on March 19, where the committees will discuss a recommendation on the FY 2016 DOE Oak Ridge EM budget request to DOE Headquarters.

EM & Stewardship – Ms. Staley reported that the committee received a presentation on the remedial investigation/feasibility study for a second waste disposal facility on the ORR. Four sites are being considered in East Bear Creek Valley near Y-12. One of the sites, Option 3 just east of the current waste disposal facility, is the preferred site. A draft recommendation on the proposed facility will be presented at the March 19 meeting.

The committee also reviewed a draft recommendation on groundwater. There were many comments and suggestions made on the recommendation and a revised recommendation will be presented at the March 19 meeting.

Public Outreach – Mr. McKinney said the committee decided to have an exhibit at the Earth Day Celebration in Oak Ridge at Bissell Park on April 26. Mr. McKinney requested members volunteer to staff the exhibit. An exhibit for the Oak Ridge Secret City Festival is being considered.

Mr. McKinney said the board's outreach efforts have been successful in the Oak Ridge and west Knoxville areas, but not as successful in other areas. The committee is looking at ways to increase public outreach in the nine counties around Oak Ridge. He said the committee may work with the University of Tennessee marketing department to increase public outreach effectiveness.

Work is being done to update the ORSSAB exhibit at the American Museum of Science and Energy.

The *Advocate* newsletter is now being distributed in about 20 area libraries. The committee is also looking at trying to distribute the newsletter in area businesses.

The ORSSAB website will soon be migrated under the energy.gov website. The new website is active and can be accessed at <https://energy.gov/ORSSAB>. The current website will remain active for a time.

Executive – Mr. Hemelright said it was suggested at the January meeting that an overview of the work being done at the other SSAB sites around the country be added to the new member orientation materials.

Mr. Hemelright said the presentation for the April board meeting will be on a comprehensive mercury strategy for the ORR.

A suggestion was made that board leadership should make annual presentations to the Oak Ridge City Council and Planning Commission about cleanup work being done on the ORR and any subsequent land transfers to the city.

Regarding land transfers, Mr. Hemelright said DOE Oak Ridge EM will be more involved in transfer management of properties. He said the change will improve coordination with cleanup decisions. Mr. Hemelright said the topic will be discussed more at the board's annual meeting.

Mr. Hemelright that members who have suggestions for topics for the ORSSAB delegation to bring before the EM SSAB Chairs' meeting in April should submit those suggestions by March 26.

Ms. Staley is the board's representative on the Center for Oak Ridge Oral History. She reported that there are now more than 400 oral history interviews available at the Oak Ridge Public Library. They may be checked out or viewed on the library's website. The interviews are with people who worked and lived in Oak Ridge during World War II and the Cold War. Also included are 10 interviews conducted by George Mason University and 33 interviews done with hospital employees at Methodist Medical Center of Oak Ridge.

#### **Announcements and Other Board Business**

ORSSAB will have its next meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2014, at the DOE Information Center.

The minutes of the January 8, 2014, meeting were approved. The board did not meet in February.

An EM SSAB Draft Recommendation on Capitalizing on EM Successes was reviewed by the board and approved for presenting at the EM SSAB Chairs' meeting in April (Attachment 2).

Ms. Price's trip report to the 2014 Waste Management Symposium was distributed (Attachment 3).

#### **Federal Coordinator Report**

Ms. Noe said travel arrangements have begun for members attending the EM SSAB Chairs' meeting in April.

#### **Additions to the Agenda**

Ms. Price announced that the Geological Society of America is holding a conference honoring the career of ORSSAB member Bob Hatcher in Asheville, N.C., March 30-April 4.

#### **Motions**

##### **3/12/14.1**

Ms. Staley moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2014, meeting. Ms. Cook seconded and the motion passed **unanimously**.

##### **3/12/14.2**

Ms. Price moved to send the EM SSAB Recommendation on Capitalizing on EM Successes to the EM SSAB Chairs' meeting in April. Ms. Smalling seconded and the motion passed **unanimously**.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

**Action items**

*Open*

1. Staff will poll members about the structure and logistics of the annual meeting.

Attachments (3) to these minutes are available on request from the ORSSAB support office.

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the March 12, 2014, meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board.

*Dave Hemelright*

Dave Hemelright, Chair  
Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board  
DH/rsg

April 10, 2014