



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

Annual Planning Meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

Approved August 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) held its Annual Planning Meeting virtually via Zoom and in person at 1 Science.gov Way on Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at 6 p.m. Copies of referenced meeting materials are attached to these minutes. A video of the meeting was made and is available on the board's YouTube site at www.youtube.com/user/ORSSAB/videos.

Members Present

Atilio Anzellotti
Kris Bartholomew
Mary Butler
Harold Conner, Jr.

Paul Dill
Rosario Gonzalez
Amy Jones
Michelle Lohmann

Mike Mark
Michael Sharpe
Leon Shields
John Tapp

Members Absent

Noah Keebler
Thomas McCormick

Harriett McCurdy
Christine Michaels

Bonnie Shoemaker
Tom Tuck¹

¹Third consecutive absence

Liaisons, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, and Alternates Present

Melyssa Noe, ORSSAB Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO), OREM
Roger Petrie, ORSSAB Alternate DDFO, OREM
Kristof Czartoryski, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)
Samantha Urquhart-Foster, EPA

Others Present

Shelley Kimel, ORSSAB Staff
Sara McManamy-Johnson, ORSSAB Staff
Abby Newberry, OREM
Belinda Price, Pro2Serve
Erin Sutton, OREM

Five members of the public were present.

Liaison Comments

Ms. Noe – Ms. Noe welcomed members and guests and took the opportunity to thank retiring members Michelle Lohmann, Leon Shields, Bonnie Shoemaker, and John Tapp. All four members will be exiting the board in October after having completed six years of service, the maximum of three terms allowed by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). She said that during their service, they have been instrumental in every area of the board: Writing recommendations, interacting with the community, representing the board at national meetings and conferences, and spending endless hours attending and providing leadership at ORSSAB meetings.

Ms. Noe then commended the board on the previous year, noting that the board is back to full strength in membership and has been able to resume the normal meeting schedule.

She then gave members an update on recent activities and accomplishments in OREM, including the recent groundbreaking for the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF). She said the groundbreaking marks the start of early site prep for the EMDF project.

Next, she said crews continue to make progress at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), where one of OREM's top priorities is the demolition of the Low Intensity Test Reactor in the central campus. That project is scheduled for completion and marks the second reactor taken down in the year.

Additionally, she said the new base of operations for cleanup crews at Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12) should be completed this summer.

Mr. Czartoryski – No comments.

Ms. Urquhart-Foster – Ms. Urquhart-Foster expressed appreciation for all the effort put in to making this a great work environment.

Presentation

Ms. Jones introduced OREM's Erin Sutton to present on OREM's Program Overview and Updates.

Ms. Sutton opened her presentation by giving background information on the DOE Office of Environmental Management (EM), its history, and its active cleanup sites nationwide. She said Oak Ridge is one of the largest of EM's 15 cleanup sites. She then gave an overview of the Oak Ridge site's key areas – East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP), formerly named K-25, ORNL, and Y-12 – and their respective roles and histories. Ms. Sutton then discussed OREM's key goals for the respective areas. She said OREM's main focus is protecting human health and the environment while enabling critical Department of Defense (DOD) missions, making clean land available for use, and returning land back to the community to help support the local economy.

Next, Ms. Sutton gave an overview of OREM's recent budgets and impacts on the state and local economies. She said the program produces 42,906 jobs and its economic impact totals \$1.3 billion annually and generates nearly \$400 million in personal income.

Ms. Sutton then discussed notable OREM accomplishments, plus current cleanup work underway and planned in Oak Ridge. She said Oak Ridge was the first site in the world to remove a former uranium enrichment complex, which involved removing nearly 500 structures spanning a total footprint of 13

million square feet. The crews responsible for that accomplishment are now deactivating and demolishing excess contaminated facilities at Y-12 and ORNL, and it's expected that 400 additional structures will be removed from these two areas in the next 20-plus years. She added that at ETTP, DOE's work is transforming the former enrichment site to a multi-use industrial center, a national park, and a conservation area.

Ms. Sutton also told members about EMDF, which she said it is a \$550-million project that will provide a new onsite disposal facility and is essential to maintaining the environmental cleanup momentum. The facility will always comply with all federal and state requirements and will incorporate numerous engineering features into the design to ensure waste is handled in a protective manner.

Other key projects she discussed included demolitions of Beta One, Alpha Two, and Alpha Four; the West End Protection Area Reduction Project; the Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility construction; removal of former research reactors and excess isotope production facilities in ORNL's central campus; uranium processing/disposition; and reindustrialization at ETTP.

Work Plan Topics and Discussion

DOE Topics

OREM's Roger Petrie presented DOE's suggested topics for board focus this year, adding that they are presented in no particular order:

- Excess contaminated facilities risk reduction activities at Y-12 and ORNL
 - Mr. Petrie said excess contaminated facilities risk reduction activities represent a large part of OREM's cleanup activities.
- Ensuring sufficient waste disposal capacity to continue cleanup at Y-12 and ORNL
 - He gave an overview of the existing waste disposal process for the site, including the types of facilities – both onsite and offsite – that receive each type of waste. He then discussed the importance disposal capacity in terms of cleanup work.
- Provide input related to the fiscal year 2026 budget development for OREM
 - He said OREM would like ORSSAB to provide input on what EM-cleanup-specific projects are important for funding.
- Aquatic Ecology Research and Technology Development in East Fork Poplar Creek
 - He said increased understanding of how mercury cycles through the environment helps OREM find a cost-effective and practical solution for removing mercury.
- ETTP Main Plant Groundwater Remedy Selections
 - He said this also applies to the K-31/K33 Area at ETTP. Records of Decision (RODs) for both areas have been submitted to regulators for review and approval, with the ROD for the Main Plant Area being an interim ROD and the one for the K-31/K-33 Area being a final ROD. He said the Main Plant Area project will likely be ongoing for several years.

TDEC Topics

TDEC's Kristof Czartoryski presented TDEC's suggested topics for board focus this year:

- Future disposal for the Environmental Management generated waste
 - Mr. Czartoryski said he would like ORSSAB to provide input on several actions that have to be taken. He said the ROD is just the start; there will be discussions about waste acceptance criteria and public input will be very important.

- ETPP Main Plant Groundwater Remedy Selections
 - He said the K-31/K-33 Area ROD would be a final remedy and the DOE remedy aligns with regulators. The Main Plant Area ROD would be an interim remedy and there is a lot of work to be done and decisions to be made, and TDEC is concerned about a steady budgetary environment for the project to prevent potential delays.
- Excess Facilities Risk Reduction and Decontamination & Decommissioning at ORNL and Y-12 National Security Complex - Mercury treatment and Disposition
 - He said TDEC is concerned about the adequate management and protection of discharges from any mercury removal actions at Y-12. He added that cleanup at Y-12 is being performed under the Removal Action Process, which does not allow regulators to approve or disapprove DOE plans, only to comment.
- Processing and disposition of Transuranic (TRU) waste
 - He said TDEC is concerned about steady funding for treatment and disposal of TRU waste sludge currently being stored in tanks at ORNL. He added that treatment and disposal of this waste do not fall under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) guidelines, so milestones are not comparable to those in other parts of OREM's cleanup program and there are concerns with how it would be prioritized if there were funding reductions.
- Meaningful collaboration around cleanup project (and budget) prioritization and the DOE Budget Development Effort
 - He said TDEC would like ORSSAB to consider getting involved in the project prioritization process earlier, before priorities are already established.

EPA Topics

EPA's Samantha Urquhart-Foster EPA's priorities largely coincide with DOE's topics, with EMDF, groundwater, and mercury as the top three priorities.

Board members asked the following questions:

- Mr. Conner asked how Mr. Czartoryski envisions the board becoming involved in prioritizing projects earlier.
 - Mr. Czartoryski said DOE has lifecycle baselines for the cleanup with milestones established for major points in the cleanup extending out three to five years, and there can be large periods of time between milestones. He said it would be nice to be able to review and evaluate and cooperate on the lifecycle baseline for individual major projects.
- Ms. Butler asked if ORSSAB would be involved in the subset of upcoming decisions regarding EMDF.
 - Mr. Petrie said they can definitely be part of the planned presentation on waste disposal.
- Ms. Butler asked about how DOE, TDEC, and EPA are involved with the TRU waste sludge removal.
 - Mr. Petrie said EPA is not involved with the TRU waste disposal project because it is not

a CERCLA project; it's being conducted under a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) site treatment plan, which is an agreement between the State and DOE. He said the agreement has milestones in it and rules about how waste is characterized and how it will be disposed.

- Mr. Conner asked what flexibility the board has to make midcourse changes to budget recommendations should project priorities changes.
 - Mr. Petrie said the board has flexibility to change what it recommends.
- Mr. Bartholomew asked whether OREM's budget is sufficient to address mercury.
 - Mr. Petrie said the more money OREM has, the more work that can be accomplished. OREM is being extremely successful with the money currently being received, which in turn means more work to do.

Public Comment

- Public Comment #1 – Mr. Luther Gibson shared suggested FY 2024 ORSSAB topics and comments. (See attached)

Board Business/Motions

- Ms. Noe announced upcoming FY 2024 officer vacancies and elections. She said there is currently one person for each position, which is the minimum necessary, however anyone interested in running can submit their name any time through the November meeting, and nominations will also be accepted at the beginning of the November meeting. She said the vote will be held at the beginning of the November meeting, and the candidates selected will take over running the meeting at that time.
- Ms. Butler presented information on Recommendations on Groundwater Remedy Selections in the Main Plant and K-31/K-33 Areas at ETTP.

Mr. Shield asked for a motion to approve the recommendation.

- 8.9.23.1 Motion to approve Recommendations on Groundwater Remedy Selections in the Main Plant and K-31/K-33 Areas at ETTP
Motion made by Mr. Conner and seconded by Ms. Jones. Motion passed.
- Mr. Shields asked for a motion to approve meeting minutes.
 - 8.9.23.2 Motion to approve June 14, 2023 meeting minutes
Motion made by Ms. Jones and seconded by Ms. Butler. Motion passed.

Responses to Recommendations & Alternate DDFO Report

Ms. Noe told members the EM SSAB Chairs meeting is scheduled to be held in Oak Ridge the first

week of October.

Committee Reports

Executive – None.

EM & Stewardship – Mr. Sharpe said the next EM & Stewardship meeting has been scheduled for November 29.

Additions to the Agenda & Open Discussion

Ms. Noe gave members an overview of the work plan process and tentative plans for FY 2024’s schedule.

Action Items

None

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the August 9, 2023, meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board.



Amy Jones, Chair



A. Harriett McCurdy, Secretary

November 8, 2023

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

AJ/sbm