



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

# Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

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## *Monthly Meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board*

### **Approved March 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) held its full board monthly meeting virtually via Zoom and in person at 1 Science.gov Way on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 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](http://www.youtube.com/user/ORSSAB/videos).

#### **Members Present**

Kris Bartholomew  
Raiyan Bhuiyan  
Mary Butler  
Harold Conner, Jr.  
Paul Dill  
Amy Jones  
Mike Mark

Harriett McCurdy  
Christine Michaels  
Charles Moore  
Tonya Shannon  
Michael Sharpe  
Rachel Stewart  
Tom Tuck

#### **Members Absent**

Atilio Anzellotti  
Candace Atkinson  
Rosario Gonzalez

Noah Keebler  
Thomas McCormick

<sup>1</sup>Third consecutive absence

#### **Liaisons, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, and Alternates Present**

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

#### **Others Present**

Leah Alexander, OREM

Sierra Generette, UCOR  
Shelley Kimel, ORSSAB Staff  
Sara McManamy-Johnson, ORSSAB Staff  
Abby Newberry, OREM

One member of the public was present.

### **Liaison Comments**

**Ms. Noe** – Ms. Noe began her comments by introducing new member Tonya Shannon. Next, Ms. Noe told members that Congress recently passed its budget for 2024, which included the largest budget ever for OREM at \$694 million. Additionally, she said DOE EM headquarters had released its Strategic Vision document for 2024 through 2034. This document includes a 10-year look-ahead for projects expected to be completed at Oak Ridge during that timeframe. Next, she told members the second phase of the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF) project had begun, with crews recently beginning field work for the groundwater fill demonstration study. After that demonstration study is operational, data will be collected for two wet seasons to help finalize the design for EMDF. Before closing her comments, Ms. Noe introduced new members Rachel Stewart and Raiyan Bhuiyan.

**Mr. Czartoryski** – No comments.

**Ms. Urquhart-Foster** – Ms. Urquhart-Foster said she recently moved to Oak Ridge, so she would be attending meetings in person moving forward.

### **Presentation**

Mr. Bartholomew introduced OREM's Karen Thompson to present the topic of discussion, FY 2026 Budget Prioritization/Input.

Ms. Thompson began her presentation by giving members an overview of the federal budget process. She said each Cabinet-level department submits a budget to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which then consolidates those budgets and prioritizes them. That prioritized budget is then sent for the President's approval before being submitted to Congress. She then further broke down the process after the proposed budget reached Congress through to when the President signs the bill into law and OREM receives its budget.

Ms. Thompson said before all that happens, each individual office develops a budget. She said OREM maintains a comprehensive work plan that reflects all the priorities and work scope for the site for a life cycle. That life cycle is consistent with the site's federal facility agreements (FFAs) and gives an overall look at the work needed on the site. She said differences encountered between previously planned work and actual work are accounted for in the budget development process. She then described how OREM uses that comprehensive work plan to map out future work and prioritize the budget. She said the work is organized into four categories: maintaining safe and compliant operations, meeting regulatory milestones, enabling needed infrastructure, and continuing cleanup activities. After the site receives a planning target from headquarters, the plan is refined to fit within that target dollar amount.

She then discussed OREM's priorities, which include closure of East Tennessee Technology Park

(ETTP), demolition of excess contaminated facilities at ORNL and Y-12, building infrastructure to enable cleanup (Mercury Treatment Facility (MTF) Outfall 200 and EMDF), disposition of uranium-233 (U-233) material, disposition of legacy transuranic contact-handled (CH) / remote-handled (RH) debris and sludges, and maintaining and operating facilities at ORNL and Y-12.

Ms. Thompson next briefly discussed an extract from the President's FY 2024 Budget Request to the House Energy and Water Development Committee, with an overview of budgeted amounts for example Oak Ridge projects.

Ms. Thompson concluded her presentation by discussing the current status of the federal budget and added that this is an opportunity for the board to provide input on the FY 2026 budget.

Board members asked the following questions:

- Mr. Conner asked if OREM's budget development process includes provisions to account for additional funding that may be received. He then commented on the correlation between site cleanup performance and funding amounts received at the site.
  - Ms. Thompson said OREM's process utilizes a prioritization process that also can be applied to higher or lower levels of funding than expected.
- Ms. Butler asked if there is money in the budget to clean up miscellaneous debris, such as remnant cement pilings and ramps, from ETTP before the property is transferred.
  - Ms. Thompson said the closure plan for ETTP involves physically cleaning up the property, including miscellaneous debris.
- Mr. Connor asked if the budget extract discussed included capital projects in the funding amounts.
  - Ms. Thompson said MTF Outfall 200 and EMDF are both capital projects and they are line items included in the budget.
- Ms. Butler asked what amount was requested for the FY 2024 budget amount versus the received amount.
  - Ms. Thompson said the amount requested was \$635 million. The amount received was \$694 million.
- Mr. Bhuiyan asked if there are any active mercury-cleanup projects being funded. He then asked if any work was happening specifically at Melton Hill Lake.
  - Ms. Thompson said Outfall 200, a mercury treatment facility, is being constructed. She said that facility needs to be in place before OREM does final cleanup at some facilities. Additionally, she said technology development is being done specifically to investigate how to better address mercury. She said nothing is going on at Melton Hill currently.

- Mr. Tuck asked what the projected operational date for MTF is. He then asked the status of the budget on that facility.
  - Ms. Thompson said that date is currently being recalculated due to changes to the project plan, and it is not known yet. Regarding the budget for the facility, OREM received enough money to continue construction for FY 2024 and funding is planned for FY 2025. She then gave additional details about the process used to planning for capital line items in the budget.
- Ms. Stewart asked how long the deactivation and decommissioning (D&D) fund ETTP cleanup operates under would be available. She then asked what would happen if projects aren't completed at that time.
  - Ms. Thompson said work under that fund is planned through about 2029 or 2030. She then said if there was ongoing work it would be under defense funding.
- Ms. Stewart asked if the scope of mercury treatment work extends beyond the Oak Ridge Reservation into other tributaries or bodies of water.
  - Ms. Thompson said she didn't have the specifics of the technology development activities and what all they're looking at.
- Mr. Tuck asked if it would be appropriate to call the Outfall 200 MTF project a "linchpin project."
  - Ms. Thompson said it's a vital infrastructure project that will allow cleanup in mercury-contaminated facilities. Mr. Czartoryski said he would call it critical. He said DOE, TDEC, and EPA had an agreement in a record of decision (ROD) that required the MTF be constructed and operational prior to any serious D&D work in the area most affected by mercury contamination.
- Mr. Czartoryski asked if there was any risk of the Outfall 200 MTF project being cancelled if the new cost estimates of the project go over by 50 percent of the original baseline.
  - Ms. Thompson said they are not expecting that, and she said OREM is working with DOE-EM headquarters in the replanning process to complete the project.
- Mr. Czartoryski asked when lifecycle planning starts per budget year.
  - Ms. Thompson said OREM developed a plan for all future work about 10 years ago and that plan is updated as needed changes become apparent. She said prior to each budget cycle, that lifecycle plan is tweaked in the January-to-February timeframe.

### **Public Comment**

- Public Comment #1 – Mr. Luther Gibson discussed activities at the Nevada SSAB and public health inquiries related to the Manhattan Project and its associated sites. (See attached.)

### **Board Business/Motions**

- Ms. Jones asked for a motion to approve the agenda.
  - 3.13.24.1 Motion made by Mr. Conner and seconded by Ms. Butler. Motion passed.
- Ms. Jones asked for a motion to approve meeting minutes.
  - 3.13.24.2 Motion to approve the February 14, 2024, meeting minutes. Motion made by Ms. Michaels and seconded by Ms. McCurdy. Motion passed.

### **Responses to Recommendations & Alternate DDFO Report**

Ms. Noe said there were no open recommendations.

### **Committee Reports**

Executive – None.

EM & Stewardship – Ms. Butler said the committee last met February 28, 2024, to continue discussion on Ongoing Efforts to Assure Waste Disposal Capacity and the group did not believe a recommendation was necessary and no recommendation was requested of the group. She added that the topic can be revisited at a later time and a recommendation reconsidered if the group feels it's necessary. The next committee meeting will be held March 27 to continue discussion on the budget, and a recommendation on this topic is being requested. She asked members of the issue group in particular to be at that meeting if possible.

### **Additions to the Agenda & Open Discussion**

None.

### **Action Items**

None

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the March 13, 2024, meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board.



Amy Jones, Chair



Harriett McCurdy, Secretary

April 10, 2024

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

AJ/sbm