

Mayor Darrell Kerby called the special meeting of February 26, 2007 to order at 2:05 p.m. at the Boundary County Extension Office. The purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the levee system with the Corps of Engineers. Present for the meeting were Mayor Kerby, Clerk Kris Larson, City Administrator Stephen Boorman, City Civil Engineer Mike Klaus, Street Superintendent John Youngwirth, and Economic Development Coordinator Mike Sloan. Also present were Boundary County Commissioners Ron Smith, Dan Dinning, and Walt Kirby, Commissioner Secretary Michelle Rohwasser, Sara Howe, Corps of Engineers Representatives Doug Weber, Kathy Desjardin, Eric Winters, Larry Merkle, Brian Appleberry, and Nola Leyde, Mitch Silvers, Patty Perry, Kevin Greenleaf, Bob Graham, Jay Baker, Eric Olson, Bob Olson, Karen Rhoders, Jim Marx, Bill Michalk, Craig Hubbard, John Martin, Mark Compton, Tina Jacobsen, Tim Dillin, Bob Meyers, Tom Koehn, Glenn Fodge, Brad Studer, Ed Atkins, Randy Peterson, Larry Peterson, Ray Hinthorn, Ken Irons, Janet Satchwell, John O'Connor, Joe Figgins, Dave Walters, and Victor Amoth.

Doug Weber spoke to the group and said the Corps of Engineers had evaluated each levee and made a determination as to whether they meet the Corps standard and if not what needs to be done to bring them up to the standard.

Larry Merkle spoke about the Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. He said the inspection was made at the request of Boundary County and the City of Bonners Ferry. Corps personnel from the Seattle area made the inspections over a three week period in October and November. Larry said over 100 miles of levees were traveled on foot and by vehicle and also by boat from Deep Creek to Canada. Mr. Merkle went over the check list and instructions for the inspection guide. He said 17 districts were inspected and that out of the 17 districts 15 had an unacceptable rating. The City of Bonners Ferry right bank was marginal and District 16 had no unacceptable marks. He said the minimum elevation standard must provide five year protection to agricultural property and 10 year protection for residential. Libby Dam is designed to provide 200 year protection to our area except near the Kootenai River Inn which is at a 100 year level of protection.

Bill Michalk commented that the levee system was designed for what Boundary County could afford.

Larry Merkle said erosion control is an important item of inspection as the levees must be capable of handling designed flow velocity for the level of protection for the entire flood control works (FCW) in Boundary County. He said the inspection was concerned with levee overtopping and failure not seepage issues. If the community is successful in getting into the rehabilitation program the Corps would pay 100 percent of engineering work to repair the damage plus 80 percent of the cost of flood repairs with the local entity paying 20 percent.

Larry said unwanted vegetation growth is a problem and he understands why this may be controversial. He said depression rutting deters ability to good access of the levee system. Good access is needed for maintenance of the levees. Erosion and bank caving

is a big problem. Larry explained the critical prism area and said sometimes non-critical erosion becomes critical erosion if not taken care of.

Larry commented that this report is a draft and comments will be looked at by the Corps. The Corps of Engineers needs to determine which districts are serious about the rehabilitation and inspection program.

Eric Winters said on the initial boat trip 54 miles of erosion was noted on levees when the water was high. The inspection teams could view the levees when there was low water. Water levels are affected by water released from the Libby Dam and backup from Kootenai Lake. When looking at erosion from the boat it is difficult to determine if erosion is at the levee prism or on the bench.

Slope stability is the steepness of the slope and whether or not it is so steep that it is ready to slide. There was an area near the Wildlife Refuge that had slope stability problems. Beaver and muskrats were seen on the inspection so there could be holes in the levees but there was vegetation covering so it was difficult to see. Encroachment is something preventing good access to the levees. Some cases were fences without gates on the levees. During a flood fight items must be able to be removed and the Corps has the authority to move them.

Larry said critical erosion can be traced back to the map handed out to the group. He spoke about toe protection at the base of the levees. He said some of this toe protection was provided by the Corps prior to 1987. Doug Weber said rip rap or cobbles need to be added to an erosion areas toe. A summary report was included for review. Areas were identified with critical erosion but the way to fix these critical areas was not defined.

Bill Michalk commented on fish issues and changes that have resulted. He asked that his comments be noted.

Dan Dinning spoke about the 200 year flood level and asked if this meant the level could be reduced. The Corps program is a 10 year level of protection according to Doug Weber. Dan asked about in-kind services. Doug said this is allowed. Doug explained the 1987 notices that were sent out by the Corps when the program changed. He said the diking districts had to request evaluation and the one done last spring was the first other than the City of Bonners Ferry who requested an evaluation in the 1990s.

Bob Graham inquired if entities corrected problems noted if they could qualify for the program. Larry Merkle said not necessarily and he spoke of vegetation and if it were removed then other problems may result.

Larry showed the Corps Levee Manual to the group. Doug said additional inspections can be done to determine if standards are met. Eric Winters spoke about trees coming down due to weather.

The right bank of the City of Bonners Ferry and part of District 16 are acceptable. Mayor Kerby asked for clarification of vegetation on the left bank and variances and what the timeline would be for repairs to levees. Larry said there are fences and other debris on the levee that need a determination.

Ron Smith asked if there was financial help available for repairs to get dikes to qualify for the program. Doug said the primary intent of the program is to provide reliable levees. Doug said there is the option of moving a levee back.

Ken Irons asked why District 15 was not included in the evaluation and explained that it is in the Crossport area. Glenn Fodge asked if the Corps can take a look at District 15. Eric Winters said it can be evaluated.

Bob Olsen asked who does the work after a district is in the program. The Corps contracts and administers the work according to Doug.

Mike Klaus inquired about tree houses. Doug Weber said the Corps will inspect the area.

Eric Winters said if entities do not join the program now they can still join at a later date.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

---

Darrell Kerby, Mayor

Attest:

---

Kris Larson, City Clerk