

Minutes of ALRC Meeting 21 September 2001

The Meeting was Attended by ALRC members Jim English, May Gerstle, Shaheeda Pierce, Steve Macdonald, Rita Schenck, Nan Hammett, Dennis Saunders, and Lyman Houghton, and by Community member Sharon Nelson.

An agenda was developed, including:

- The Minutes Approval
- Mission Statement
- Discussion of Interests and agendas
- Resources available
- Towards developing unity in committee
- Report re: Ecology meetings
- Committee organization and structure
- ALRC/IRPPC relationship
- Goals and Objectives
- Work Plans

It was agreed that this agenda probably could not be completed in this meeting, and would be continued until next meeting as needed.

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. The approval was tabled until the next meeting because of the need to verify the information about some changes. Corrections should be sent to Rita.

The mission statement provided by May differs from the one we developed over a year ago. That mission was developed assuming that governmental bodies would be doing the actual work of the remediation, and ALRC would be simply a conduit of information for the community. Now that it is clear that no substantive work will be done until Ecology sues Asarco (which may take 10 to 20 years) it was agreed that ALRC must take an active, not a passive role.

The draft mission statement was approved with modifications, and May will send it out to all of us.

Below are brief summaries from the discussion of interests and agendas provided by each of us.

May Gerstle stated that her background was in public information, strategic planning and facilitation. She joined the committee to apply those skills to the problem and to be a good conduit of information for the community.

Sharon Nelson was here because she was concerned that Ecology will study the island indefinitely rather than act, and she was concerned that Ecology would use the arsenic issue to reopen the Glacier case. She noted that any barge traffic on the island would create problems to the marine nearshore ecology. Jim English has a background in strategic planning and Public Affairs in the Air Force and community outreach in his latter years in the Air force and since then. He is on the committee both representing Misty Isle Farm's concerns (their arsenic concentrations are in the 70 ppm range), and based on his strong feeling and connection to the Island welfare. HE is concerned about the effect of this issue on property and hopes to bring his strengths in seeing the broad picture and a pragmatic approach to the committee. He noted that he had measured the arsenic in the well water on their property and that it was very low.

Lyman Houghton has a background in science and medicine and in facilitation for community issues such as youth at risk. He is interested in providing a safe place for his kids and to support the community.

Nan Hammett's background is in education. She specialized in alternative education and special education where she works supporting the home schoolers on the island. She notes that many of the reasons for kids needing special education may be environmentally related. She hopes to support the committee through being an information conduit between the educational community and the community/governmental work

in hand, although her style is to work at a slow pace. She was concerned that her background may not be what is needed now. (N.B. there was overall acclaim that Nan's skills were needed an very valuable to ALRC)

Dennis Saunders manages Wax Orchards, one of the oldest businesses on the Island. He has a background in public relations and marketing and worked at Bishop's (another old Island Business) and has become acquainted with the wide diversity of people on the island—including the “Old Timers” and the less well-off citizens. He believes that we need to include these islanders in our deliberations and recognize that the Island includes the very poor as well as the well-off.

Rita Schenck manages the Institute for Environmental Research and Education, and Environmental non-profit with offices here and in Iowa. She is trained as an ecotoxicologist and biogeochemist, with expertise in heavy metals, and has a large experience in remedial actions around the country. She is interested in applying those skills to this problem here. Rita is very action oriented, and wants to help the community clean up the problem as soon a feasible.

Steve Macdonald is an epidemiologist working for the Department of Health. Upon hearing about the heavy metals problems on the island he formed the Vashon citizens Public Health, a group of public health professionals here on the Island. He also is a member of VIGA. He is interested in “beating down” the perception that we are living on a poisoned island. VIGA will support studies gathering data on the risks posed by the contamination.

Shaheeda Pierce is a midwife, married to a doctor on the island. She is interested in action, and has a bias toward getting cleanup done using phytoremediation. Shaheeda has been working with the school district and since she is only renting property, will not stay here if cleanup is not undertaken, especially at the school.

Our next meeting will be held at the Library at 3:30 on Friday, October 5