

Willamette Falls Locks Task Force

Action Items and Meeting Notes

Tuesday January 12, 2016

Clackamas County Services Building

Task Force website: <http://orsolutions.org/osproject/willamette-falls-locks-task-force>

Task Force Members present: Councilor Carlotta Collette, Christine Curran, Mayor Dan Holladay, Fred Myer, Jack Giffen, Jr., John Mullen, Matt Garrett, Peggy Sigler, Rachel Graham, Representative Julie Parrish, Mayor Russ Axelrod, Sandy Carter, Senator Devlin and Commissioner Tootie Smith

Convener present: Honorable Barbara Roberts

Facilitation Team: Peter Harkema and Julia Babcock

Staff and Interested Parties:

Andy Cotugno, Gary Schmidt, Former Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, Trent Wilson, Lisa Naito, Megan McKibben, Commissioner Martha Schrader, Danielle Cowan, Michelle Giguere, Chris Lyons, Kimberlee DeSantis, Ellie Boggs, Patrick Malec, Tony Miller, Samaron Phelps and Louis Landre

DRAFT ACTION ITEMS

Action Item	Who	Date
1. <u>Action Items</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact representatives from local tribes to confirm interest and format for Meeting Two: Tribal History• Develop and distribute draft action items memo, draft Operating Protocols, draft Topics List and draft meeting notes	Convener Honorable Barbara Roberts with Oregon Solutions Peter	1/22/2016 1/22/2016
2. <u>Scheduling and Information Follow up</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post meeting materials to OS Task Force website• Send Proposed Meeting Schedule out to Task Force• Send Meeting Two agenda and location details to TF members; post to website	Julia Julia Julia	Completed 1/22/2016 2/12/2016

DRAFT Meeting Summary

- Convener Governor Roberts welcomed the Task Force members and interested parties and thanked everyone for the thousands of hours of work that has gone into getting us to where we are today. Today's discussion with representative key parties is about the future of the Willamette Falls Locks, which has both regional and statewide significance.
- Project Manager Peter Harkema introduced the Oregon Solutions model and the facilitation teams' role in the Task Force, noting that Oregon Solutions is based at Portland State University in the Hatfield School of Government and is a neutral forum for community problem-solving. He then reviewed the draft proposed Operating Protocols, which are intended to help make the Task Force successful and provide a safe space for productive discussions and brainstorming. Task Force members were invited to provide suggested edits and modifications to the draft proposed Operating Principles.
- Andy Cotugno introduced the purpose of the Task Force by walking through [SB131](#) and the proposed topics list for future meetings. He specifically pointed out the following information about the charge of the Task Force.
 - The role of the Task Force is to consider what is significant about the Falls and how that informs the Locks' future form and function. A major consideration will be how to fund repairs, maintenance and operations on a long-term, sustainable basis. The recommendation(s) from the Task Force hold significant potential to set the policy context for negotiations between local, regional and federal partners.
 - USACE would like to see a transfer of ownership. Whether the Task Force recommends to decommission the Locks or not, USACE will have to go through all the reviews tied to federal action including NEPA as well as the process under the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 (<http://www.achp.gov/106summary.html>) USACE action further requires that a budget and work plan be developed and approved through the congressional appropriations process.
 - During the topics discussion; it was requested that seismic considerations be added.
- Presentations were given from Sandy Carter, Peggy Sigler and Commissioner Tootie Smith to provide an overview of historical information, structural status, past and current advocacy efforts and processes underway. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Treasure project, in advocacy partnership with the local One Willamette River Coalition and Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation, shaped the Task Force's charge and simultaneously facilitated development of the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group of regional stakeholders. A few highlights from the presentations are provided below and visuals from the presentations are posted on the website here: http://orsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/1_12_16-Willamette-Falls-Locks-Presentation-Autosaved.pdf. Comprehensive information about the locks was provided to the task force in the briefing book developed under direction of the Working Group.
 - Sandy Carter shared that when the Locks opened January 1, 1873 it eliminated portaging as the only way to traverse the river around the high falls, providing significant benefits to upriver farmers and loggers in the region to reach international markets including Pacific Rim nations. The possibility of degraded gudgeon arms-- critical mechanical parts of the locks' gate-opening function-- and an inability to fund necessary inspections and investigation were the main contributing factors to USACE moving the locks to "caretaker" status.
 - Peggy Sigler provided information about how advocacy efforts have been critical from the beginning to build local, state and federal partnerships to raise the funds for major locks milestones in 1873 for initial construction, major improvements in 1915, to garner \$2.37mil in ARRA stimulus funds in 2009, and ongoing to maintain operations.
 - Commissioner Smith thanked Convener Barbara Roberts, Darlene Hooley, Lisa Naito and others for their leadership in getting SB131 passed to establish the Task Force in order to have these important discussions about the future of the locks. Commissioner Smith, co-chair, of the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group has been working at all levels including with Congressman

Schrader, Senator Wyden, Senator Merkley and USACE District level and HQ staff among others to move solutions forward to reopen the Locks to meet future demands. Through these efforts, USACE has prioritized this project to receive funding as a pilot project in the next fiscal year so stay tuned.

- Governor Roberts invited Task Force members to share their hopes and expectations for the outcome of the Task Force's efforts. Members reflected on strong support across multigenerational, cross-sector partners that are uniquely a part of the Locks site. These partners and efforts include the rich tribal and early settlement history, recreation, tourism, economic opportunities and generally the intrinsic values that have made this site a gathering place for so many facets of Oregonian life from fishing to commerce to education. High-level summary of member reflections are provided below:
 - Willamette Falls has tremendous potential and plays a significant role in the master planning of nearby communities to build partnerships and draw tourism and economic opportunities to the region.
 - We owe it to the community to make this site a world-class destination once again; the Willamette Falls site is a major regional asset.
 - The Locks are a critical component to making the Willamette Falls site a major draw by connecting visitors and residents to the river and making it navigable by larger boats for commerce and tourism. Filling it in is not an option.
 - The potential to open up access to more recreational opportunities is significant.
 - It is clear from SB131 that the site holds significance for all Oregonians, and not just regionally. People are drawn to these historically significant sites—once they are lost it is impossible to get them back.
 - Many of the hurdles are surmountable and as we build momentum, we will find there is tremendous support and significance to this site which has compelled federal dollars in the past and will likely do so again in the not-so-distant future.
 - There is passionate support behind efforts to maintain the rich history of this site as it is an integral part of the history of Oregon City and surrounding communities. Seeing the Locks open again in our lifetime is tremendously important.
 - Heartened to see the diverse support for reopening. It is pivotal that we take tangible steps forward and build from studies and analyses already conducted. We do not want to partake in another fundraising effort for further investigations—we need results from this process.
 - Willamette Falls Locks are on the site of one of the major trading hubs in the Pacific NW for tribal nations. We lost Celilo Falls; it will never be recovered. We need to be very intentional in thinking about how we can preserve this site to preserve the cultural story for generations to come.
 - Projections about future economic and recreational use will shape the viability of the Locks reopening. We should build on regional efforts of emergency management planning and seismic modeling to understand how the Locks fit into potential scenarios.

Parties also noted that there are challenges that lay ahead including financial hurdles and shifts in the available funding mechanisms. The group expressed optimism in the ability to address the challenges that face the Locks. Governor Roberts thanked the group for their thoughts and expressed her own enthusiasm to explore all opportunities to reopen the Locks.

The meeting concluded with a brief summary of next steps and action items (see above). Members were also invited to suggest any additional parties that they felt should be included on the task force. A number were suggested, including: USACE, tourism, emergency management, and ODFW. It was noted that some parties may be best invited to present or attend on an as-needed basis depending on the technical information needs of the group while other may benefit from a consistent presence at the Task Force table.