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**Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC) and
Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB) Meeting
Summary of Action Items and Discussions
Sept. 6, 2023
Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, Kentucky**

Attendees

CAC:

David Davis (for Jeremy Slinker), Harry Moberly, George Ridings, David Stipes, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) and Craig Williams

CDCAB:

Col. Brett Ayvazian, Robert Blythe, Dr. Candace Coyle, David Davis (for Jeremy Slinker), Jim Davis, Dr. Diane Hatchett, Jeanne Marie Hibberd, Ron Hink, Leslie Kaylor, Tara Long, Darcy Maupin, Lt. Col. Tyler McKee (online), Harry Moberly, Stephanie Nelson (for U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell), Shannon Pendergrass, George Ridings, Stacey Shane (for Steve Bullard), Mica Sims (for U.S. Sen. Rand Paul), David Stipes, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) and Craig Williams

Media:

WEKU-FM: Shepherd Snyder
WKYT-TV: Phil Pendleton
Spectrum News 1: Scott Neumann

Meeting Synopsis

The meeting provided information on the following:

- Remarks from the Deputy Program Executive Officer, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA)
- Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) Project Update

- Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection (KDEP) Permitting Updates
- Economic Development Working Group Update

Meeting Summary Structure

This meeting summary is not intended to be a verbatim record of conversations; instead, it will provide an overview of the discussions and action items of government representatives and various members of the CAC and CDCAB. Key action items identified in the meeting and a synopsis of the major questions and comments discussed during the various updates are noted below. Copies of slides and documents presented during the meeting can be obtained from the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office (ORO) at (859) 626-8944 or bgoutreach@iem.com.

Action Item

Action Item: Confirm 2024 CAC/CDCAB meeting dates

Responsible Entity: Sarah Marko, communications manager, ORO

Timeline: By Dec. 6, 2023

Outline of Key Issues and Discussions

Welcome and Introductions – Sarah Marko, communications manager, ORO

Marko performed a roll call, welcomed the attendees, provided livestreaming information and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Opening Remarks – Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CAC/CDCAB

Williams welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He spoke about the passing of Doug Hindman, co-chair, CAC, noting Hindman's history working with the community on chemical demilitarization in Kentucky.

Status of Outstanding Action Items

Marko then noted the following action items from the June 7, 2023, CAC/CDCAB meeting:

Action Item	Steps Taken	Date/Status
Provide a line item on the schedule to indicate the facility closure timeline.	The facility closure timeline was updated and provided to the group during the BGCAPP update presentation.	Complete.
Report the amount of money spent with Kentucky companies by the Other Transactional Authority (OTA).	Marko reported it was found that the OTA does not track funds by states or companies, but the total cost for the OTA at the Blue Grass plant was \$335.7 million. The OTA revised rocket processing system efforts included the cost for design, procurement, support for installation and testing of the Static Detonation Chamber (SDC) 2000 and the off-gas treatment system for the SDC 1200, rocket warhead containerization system equipment, vertical rocket cutting machines and non-destructive examination equipment.	Complete.
Provide information about Industry Day at the Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD).	Outreach office staff distributed information to CAC/CDCAB members via email June 21.	Complete.

Key Updates

Remarks from the Deputy Program Executive Officer – Dr. James Watson, Deputy Program Executive Officer, ACWA

Watson extended his condolences to the family and friends of Hindman, noting his impact in the Kentucky community and with the ACWA program.

Watson then gave an update on the upcoming retirement of Michael Abaie, program executive officer, ACWA, in November. Watson stated Abaie extends his regrets for not

being able to attend the meeting but said Abaie could not think of a better way to end his federal career than with the safe destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles in Colorado and Kentucky. Watson said after Abaie's retirement, the ACWA team will ensure the same commitment to safety for the workforce and the community and will continue to keep the local communities informed through the closure phase.

BGCAPP Project Update – Dr. Candace Coyle, Former Site Project Manager (SPM), BGCAPP; Shannon Pendergrass, SPM, BGCAPP; and Ron Hink, Project Manager, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass (BPBG)

Slides of this presentation may be obtained by contacting the ORO at (859) 626-8944 or bgoutreach@iem.com.

Coyle shared her condolences on Hindman's passing and said she appreciates what he had done for the ACWA program. Coyle then highlighted the recent completion of destruction of the Blue Grass stockpile and the United States stockpile in its entirety on July 7, 85 days ahead of the Sept. 30 treaty commitment date and 78 days ahead of the target baseline. Coyle noted the stellar safety record at the plant and congratulated the workforce, program partners, officials and stakeholders for the effort.

Hink then recognized the completion of the campaign by handing out mementos to CAC/CDCAB members in attendance.

Coyle gave an update on the upcoming Oct. 11 *Honoring Our Commitment: Chemical Weapons Stockpile Destruction Complete in Kentucky* event, which will include high-ranking officials and stakeholder recognition.

Coyle then talked about her departure from the SPM position and said she is succeeded by Pendergrass. She mentioned her new position at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons where she will serve as a liaison between the Department of Defense and ACWA. Coyle extended her gratitude to everyone for making her time as SPM as easy as it could have been.

Pendergrass introduced herself and provided her background. She then gave an update on the processing of the drained, containerized rocket warheads (CRWs). She said the processing of VX CRWs is scheduled to start in November 2023. The processing of the GB CRWs has continued since the end of destruction operations, with almost 5% of the GB agent-contaminated secondary waste having been processed as of Sept. 3.

Hink then gave an update on closure activities. He said safety continues to be a top priority, maintaining a zero-accidents goal. The project incident rate for the last 12 months as of July 2023 was 0.30. As a result of the workers' diligence and dedication, Hink said the rate remains lower than people working in banks and financial institutions. As of July 31, the project has completed nearly four years without a lost-time accident.

Hink provided an update on the SDC units, with the SDC 2000 currently running and the SDC 1200 starting up. He said the SDC 2000 continued destroying CRWs containing residual amounts of GB nerve agent and has destroyed strainer socks removed from main plant equipment as well as three additional overpacked non-contaminated rocket motors. He noted the remaining 16 overpacked non-contaminated rocket motors will be destroyed by the SDC 2000 later. Hink gave an update on some challenges faced by the SDC 2000. An issue with a vent path and quench tank caused an operational outage for a couple weeks while the quench tank was replaced. An issue with the heat trace in the buffer tank is being worked through but is expected to be resolved in the coming days.

He said SDC 1200 operations are expected to begin in November and the unit has begun the Operational Readiness Review and training with crews. Preparation for Integrated Operations Demonstrations are underway, which will show the unit is ready to perform safe operations, Hink said. Test rounds are being run through the unit. The SDC 1200 is also facing some challenges, including an issue with the heat trace in the buffer tank. The system has been cooled down to replace the zone of the heat trace that failed, with an expected timeline of a week to complete the repair. Hink explained that it takes three days for cool down and three days to heat up so that extends the period of an operational outage.

Hink then gave an update on the main plant. Operations activities have been completed and the closure phase has begun, as approval on the temporary authorization request to begin closure work was received from the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection. Closure activities are focused on decontaminating and removing equipment from Explosive Containment Vestibules, Explosive Containment Rooms and Munitions Washout System Room. Currently, the plant is ahead of schedule with these activities, he said.

Hink said agent-derived hydrolysate shipments to Texas have been completed, with the last shipment occurring on Aug. 17. He reminded the group that during closure, flushing of systems will generate additional caustic water solution. He said the Anniston SDC continues to process non-contaminated rockets. He said seven shipments of rocket motors to Anniston remain. Shipments are currently suspended but are expected to start again soon.

Hink continued the main plant update by sharing information about safety procedures during closure. The activities performed through the closure phase provide different safety risks. A "safety rodeo" was conducted to prepare workers for closure, including scaffold safety, fall prevention, safe use of hand-held cutting tools and specialized training on new equipment not used during operations. Workers also were trained on remote-controlled machines to decommission sections of the Munitions Demilitarization Building to remove pipes, break up concrete and cut through thick metals.

Hink then discussed the BPBG economic impact. He said \$201 million has been spent with Kentucky companies with \$117 million spent in Madison and surrounding counties. Staffing in Richmond is now at 1,466 with 56% of the personnel hired locally. The first reduction of staff has occurred, with a large part of the reductions being retirees. The local payroll to date is \$1.278 billion.

Pendergrass gave an update on an action item from the June meeting. She shared the projected schedule for closure activities, end of surety operations and end of the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program.

Pendergrass also provided an update on the supercritical water oxidation (SCWO) study. She said no government or private operations followed through with a commitment to take the SCWO. She noted for all equipment, the closure process is very deliberate, and all disposition options will be evaluated. The ACWA program will continue working with the community on the SCWO disposition process.

KDEP Permitting Updates – Olivia Beasley, BGAD Section Supervisor, KDEP

The handout referenced during this presentation may be obtained by contacting the ORO at (859) 626-8944 or bgoutreach@iem.com.

Beasley referenced a handout provided in the meeting information packets. She said KDEP has issued approximately 26 permit modifications since the last meeting, with 25 of those Class 1 permit modifications and one a Class 2 permit modification. She said the organization has received and approved two separate extension requests for BGAD. Beasley said KDEP has acknowledged the transfer of ownership of the Blue Grass Chemical Activity (BGCA) igloos to the ACWA program. For BGCAPP, KDEP is still reviewing and drafting responses for the notice of deficiency for the closure plan and are working with the risk team to review the Multi-Pathway Human Health Risk Assessment for the SDC units. Beasley noted the retirement of Cran Combs, who provided many years of service to the team to facilitate environmental protection for Kentucky. She said KDEP personnel also visited the SDC 1200, which was insightful for their permitting actions.

Jeanne Marie Hibberd asked for clarification on groundwater sampling, what they were looking at and what the results were of the monitoring. Beasley clarified that two monitoring events take place at the open burn/open detonation (OB/OD) grounds at BGAD, which is another form of demilitarization of munition items. The groundwater monitoring events happen biannually as required by the permit and enable KDEP to see what is going on in the groundwater monitoring wells, if there is contamination happening, how that can be addressed and how KDEP can help fix it if they see something of concern. Hibberd asked whether they saw something of concern. Beasley responded they had just received the results the week prior.

Craig Williams asked Beasley to explain the Class 2 permit modification that has been

approved. Beasley said the permit modification was an increase in the Vapor Screening Level (VSL) limits for the VX alarm at the SDC 1200 off-gas treatment system, which was increased to 10 VSL. She noted this required a Class 2 as it was becoming less conservative.

Williams asked if the igloos have been decontaminated to a point where they are available to be used for something else. Beasley responded KDEP has acknowledged transfer, but ACWA is still using them to store CRWs. Pendergrass said ACWA has not started any closure activities on the igloos.

Hibberd asked how the igloos will be decontaminated once the CRWs are no longer stored. Coyle responded that ACWA has already taken ownership of more than 30 igloos for the storage of the CRWs. In talks with BGCA, it was determined it was in the best interest for permitting and consistency to transfer the igloos to ACWA and have BPBG close the igloos once they are no longer needed for storage. Once the igloos are emptied of CRWs, the process of putting together the closure plan will begin in collaboration with KDEP and BGAD.

Williams asked Hink about the cause of the rocket motor shipment suspension to Alabama. Hink explained Anniston's SDC unit is running, but its environmental permit must be modified to address polychlorinated biphenyls that could be in the shipping and firing tubes.

In response to a question from Williams about decontamination in some areas of the main plant, Hink explained chemical agent likely has permeated the coating in the two Explosive Containment Rooms, which will have to be removed by scabbling, or removing the top layer of, the concrete. Williams asked if the workers must be in full personal protective equipment for the process. Hink replied they are planning to use the remote-controlled machines for this decontamination process, but some Demilitarization Protective Ensemble entries will occur.

Economic Development Working Group Update – Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CAC/CDCAB

Williams recognized Jeff Brubaker, technical advisor, BGCAPP, and thanked him for his years of service and dedication to the project. Williams said that Reagan Taylor, co-chair, CDCAB, could not attend the meeting due to an out-of-town engagement. Williams welcomed Watson and Pendergrass.

Williams then said while the details can't yet be shared, a certain company is planning on locating in the area, with an estimated employment of 75 to 125 people who could move from BGCAPP to that company. He also said a munitions manufacturing firm is interested in locating on the BGCAPP footprint once it is decommissioned and cleaned.

Additionally, he noted although no final decision has been made, efforts continue to

determine a future for the SCWO units. Williams mentioned various entities, including some from the Pentagon, have asked what level of engagement the community would be willing to have with the SCWO units being used for destruction of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS. He mentioned that in previous discussions, group members determined they would be fine with testing the SCWO units with PFAS but that if the units passed all the tests, the community would not be comfortable with the SCWO units continuing to treat contaminated liquids on an ongoing basis. He said potential SCWO users are concerned about spending the money, time and effort to complete the testing and then not being able to use them in the long term. Williams said he recommended that if the three SCWO units pass the testing, they should be moved to three different places where there would be an abundance of material that needs to be treated rather than moving the material across the country to Madison County. There has still not been a firm decision from the Department of Defense (DOD). Williams noted due to the significant investment, closure of the SCWO units has been moved to the back end of the plant closure phase to add another year or so to the decision-making process.

Williams then gave an update on the OB/OD revised disposal options from DOD. He said legal discussions are taking place about moving the Army toward a final rulemaking on OB/OD, which could affect the OB/OD operations at BGAD. He said the decision could impact the availability of the SDC units that may be needed to replace the depot's OB/OD operations.

Williams said an additional entity is interested in locating a facility in the area that would have to do with military communications. The company could also take advantage of some of the workforce.

Harry Moberly asked about the city's latest efforts on economic development recruitment. Robert Blythe, mayor, City of Richmond, said a consultant has updated city representatives on the results of a survey detailing the future plans of BGCAPP personnel as they transition off the project. Moberly then asked about a property the city acquired and what activity was occurring. Blythe said the city is working with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development and has strong possibilities for a specific operation to locate on the site in the future.

In response to a question, Blythe said the city has discussed the workforce availability with the potential industries. David Stipes, executive director, Richmond Industrial Development Corporation, said the available workforce is one of the prime considerations when industries make site visits to the community. He noted the recently completed Economic Resiliency Plan identified specific skillsets and targeted when they would be available, which has been a valuable tool for industrial and business recruitment efforts.

Williams said the Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD) has submitted an

application for a follow-on grant from the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation. Part of the grant money initially provided was returned to DOD due to the criteria being met under budget, which makes BGADD a potential receiver of the next grant. The next grant would expand efforts to connect the workforce with job opportunities.

Closing Remarks – Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CDCAB, and Dr. James Watson, Deputy Program Executive Officer, ACWA

During closing remarks, Hibberd shared *WEKU-FM*, the local public radio station, has completed a three-part series about the chemical weapons project.

Williams said he will provide information on Hindman's funeral arrangements and where to send condolences. Williams thanked everyone for their continued engagement.

Watson also thanked everyone for their continued work. He said the feedback and open, honest conversations about the future of the BGCAPP and BGAD facilities are appreciated.

Next CAC and CDCAB Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.