

**AHSS Council Meeting Summary
May 9th, 2012 at the ESB in Tacoma**

In Attendance:

Gabby Byrne, AHSS
Bob Simmons, WSU
Rich Doenges, Thurston County
Tiffany Spiers, Pierce County Masterbuilders
Greg Vigoren, City of Lakewood
David Troutt, AHSS Executive Committee (Nisqually Tribe)
Justin Hall, Nisqually River Council
Dan Wrye, South Sound Ecosystem Coordination Board representative (Pierce County)
Andy Haub, City of Olympia
Karla Fowler, LOTT Clean Water Alliance
Dave Peeler, People For Puget Sound and Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team
Tom Kantz, Pierce County
Chris Schutz, Pierce County
Debbie Riley, Oakland Bay Clean water district (Mason County)
Alex Smith, Port of Olympia

Background on the Alliance for a Healthy South Sound w/Q&A

Dan Wrye, Rich Doenges and David Troutt provided some background and perspectives on the Alliance for a Healthy South Sound.

Adopt and/or develop a Mission and Vision for the AHSS Council

The AHSS Mission was reviewed and adopted by consensus.

The AHSS “Purpose” as written in the by-laws was reviewed. The group felt that what’s written currently is not a true purpose statement and revisions were suggested, namely:

“The purpose of AHSS is to be a forum, bringing together entities to advocate for and implement programs for the environmental, economic and community sustainability of South Puget Sound.”

This statement will be presented at the next Council meeting for revisions and approval – as a recommended change to move up to the Executive Committee.

There was discussion about whether or not the Council wants, and is ready to, elect a Chair and vice Chair, particularly regarding the role of that person and the relationship and authority between the Council and the Executive Committee. The question was asked whether it is the executive Committee that holds the power to make the decisions, while the Council serves as an advisory committee. The understanding after discussion was that this assessment is currently correct

Council recognized that as AHSS was founded initially it needed to have a designated group of electeds to get the ball rolling and that there will be some evolution to having the Council, a

roughly 40 member group with folks from all the different stakeholders, working toward building a sustainable south sound, engaged and making recommendations to guide the process.

Two possible solutions were suggested – a separately elected leadership of the AHSS council with a seat on the Executive Committee, or acceptance that the Executive Committee is the leadership of the council and should attend Council meetings.

Council members suggested that if the guiding document is the by-laws, that there needs to be more clarity of that document, and potentially, some changes that could be presented to the Executive Committee.

Council members acknowledged that the reality is that elected officials are not going to have time or energy to attend Council meetings. Council should elect a chair to help with running meetings and to also be there at the Executive Committee meetings – acknowledging that anyone can go, but to give the Council a voice. Council members also suggested that it's better not to get super formal unless we are wrestling with really divisive issues, but rather to have clear and concise basic operating rules.

One way to know that the Council's voice would be heard by the Executive Committee would be to elect our own leadership and to request that the bylaws change and allow our designee to have a vote or, at least, to have an ex-officio representative.

Action Item: Support of electing a chair – consensus agreement on this was reached.

Proposal to propose to the Executive Committee that the elected Council chair would sit on the Executive Committee – consensus was not reached.

Council member's recognized that there was a lot of time spent on developing a core committee of elected representatives with the broadest jurisdictional purview. Making any recommendation to change that is premature. It may be appropriate later on to have that happen, but it's a little early for changes to the basic structure.

Council members pointed out that if we're going by the by-laws exactly, then the Council itself will need a quorum to have a consensus vote and with a group of this size they did not feel that was a consistently realistic expectation. Additionally, it was mentioned that there's no role defined for the Chair or for the Vice Chair of this Council. The jobs and responsibilities throughout the by-laws are not at all clear. What are we electing them to do?

Council members recognized that AHSS is still developmental. The point is that we want to achieve an organization that is nimble, inclusive and effective at getting things done. The words on paper can't get in the way.

Sharing decision making and authority is absolutely fundamental to our success. There are opportunities to show leadership effectiveness and that we can revisit these things moving forward.

Action Item: There was consensus on the need for a Chair of the Council, but the Council wants and needs to define what that Role is exactly.

It was suggested that the by-laws were written in a way that doesn't really recognize the functional differences between parts of the Alliance.

Action Item: Council recommended that members volunteer to look critically at the Bylaws and come back with some comment and suggestions as well as suggested role of the Council Chair and Vice Chair. Justin Hall (Nisqually River Council) volunteered, as did Alex Smith (Port of Olympia) and Dave Peeler (People For Puget Sound Alternate).

Agenda Change: Because some folks needed to leave a little early, the group agreed to discuss the last two agenda items (science strategy and grant backing criteria) first.

Discussion of actions needed to develop AHSS science strategy and criteria for determining what projects (grant applications) are endorsed by AHSS.

With the official adoption of the Interim priorities resolution by the Executive Committee (available at www.healthysouthsound.com), AHSS is now in a position to begin fleshing those priorities out. Some of the established priorities are highly conceptual and others are currently happening and there's everything in between. Developing concrete actions is the next step, particularly as there will soon be grant funding available, projects applying for endorsement of the LIO and, additionally, because there's still time to have these near term actions included in the Partnership's Action Agenda.

A proposal was offered that the ad hoc workgroup, consisting of interested and engaged technical and scientific experts continue to move forward with the addition of interested Council members to do this short-term work and to develop a criteria for AHSS support of grant applications for the 2012-2013 year, with the caveat that a more robust, long term strategy will be developed in the coming year.

In February the Executive Committee adopted Resolution 2012-001 which are the Interim South Sound Priorities. This was a substantial precedent in that these are the first set of ecological priorities for South Sound to ever be adopted by a board of elected officials.

These priorities are in effect and relate to multiple years of cooperation and collaboration. They were adopted as interim in anticipation of the need to refine and develop them. The Governor's 1.2 Billion dollar capitol budget just passed and experience suggests that this summer there will be grant proposals made available. The need now is to take the interim priorities and put them forward into actionable projects with substance, tasks, budgets and partner. There's a very short time frame to be ready in time for that summer grant cycle.

At several Executive Committee meetings the question of endorsing one thing or another (e.g.; Puget Sound Champions, grant applications) has come up. They haven't had the criteria to make those decisions confidently. The Council and workgroup need to give them those criteria so they have them if they wish to use them.

Additionally, how do we determine priorities relating to salmon recovery lead entity process in a strategic way, given the wide range and variety of potential projects. Tom Kantz (Pierce County) put together a straw dog format using a similar model as the salmon recovery board, looking at those projects through the interim priorities. The straw dog lays out the need to put

meat on the bones of the priorities and to sequence those projects to take to the Council and the Executive Committee.

Council members spoke about the need to define more clearly what we are trying to accomplish – are we trying to recover ESA listed stocks or all stocks, for example. That's a conversation for the next round of grants, here at this Council.

A South Sound specific look at the PSP Leadership Council's Sound wide targets to determine what, and how to measure, the South Sound contribution to reaching those targets is also an ongoing conversation and that for this year, we do not have that long term strategy – that addresses the South Sound specific targets, but we have got the interim priorities. So, how we get from the interim priorities to the actions that move us forward and at the same time develop that long term strategy. .

The straw dog proposal recognizes the interim priorities and that some of these are better developed than others. Also that there is potential funding coming down the pipe in the short term and that will need actions that are ready to implement.

When we develop this plan, it should be science based and allow us to move forward implementing those science actions. Proposal suggests a brief review of the ecological context, probably using the 2008 core report with spatially explicit discussion of the ecological review of the south sound as a kind of executive summary. Then a brief discussion of the regulatory context in which we're operating now, with Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Shoreline Management Act etc. Then we have the body of the plan and that is to take these actions and for each action, expand it, flesh it out and in the attachments, is a project information sheet that could be filled out by the person leading that project or action that contains a simple description of the relevant details, including partners, budgets, barriers and so forth. Lastly, there could be a section in which there is a review of the PSP targets and identify south sound specific targets additionally and how close that gets us to our goal.

The work group and interested Council members will, if this proposal is accepted, meet twice in the coming four weeks to identify and assign to each member of the workgroup the responsibility of putting the flesh on the bones of that project and to come back together to make a collective decision on the top five or ten, or whatever the number may be, projects that are actionable within the immediate time frame so that they can report back to the Council and the Executive Committee the kind of projects of which we want to encourage financial backing.

Action Item: Gabby will schedule two meetings to flesh out actions and invite both members of the work group and the Council.

Some of the proposal is an articulation of a vision that is not attainable in the near term, but that we can work toward. That process might be akin to what the SRFboard has done, where there are regional allocations of different watersheds and then the organizations within the watersheds, through their strategies, determine priorities and make funding recommendations. That may be a good model to expand to the Action Area, but we have to demonstrate we have the capacity to make those decisions and choose the right priorities – so block grants or regional allocations that ultimately the Council and Executive Committee are empowered to make those calls. We want to be positioned to influence that decision by building the capacity which will help our action

area in the long term. It could also help us, even in the near term, by having that prioritized list that is respected by the funding community.

It was also noted that during the last grant cycle, the Executive Committee requested that a criteria for backing grants be produced to help with that process for this year.

Action Item: Council approved the use of the straw dog proposal to guide the development of actions under the AHSS priorities as well as the implementation plan process.

Discussion of adoption of a model of South Sound Sustainability Recovery Plan

Two examples of sustainability plans were distributed: The Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan and the PSRC Vision 2040. These are not the only examples, but a representative starting place. The Stewardship plan is a shorter plan that breaks out three areas (economy, social and environment). The PSRC plan is a topic based plan that doesn't silo off fields.

The PSRC is a much broader charge. The Nisqually Stewardship Plan is a closer match, though the Vision statement on the PSRC is an interesting approach. Council could potentially combine the two.

The Council determined that it needs more information on the background of other groups moving forward with similar planning processes – challenges and public input, the ways in which broad input was dealt with on issues like growth and so on. A vision for the future may be a major public involvement campaign. A vision for the South Sound will need to be fairly broad.

Action Item: Gabby will ask if other groups would present their process to the AHSS Council at the next meeting.

Nisqually River Council

Thurston Sustainability Group

Pierce County Sustainability Group

Adjourn. **Next AHSS Council meeting will be in August**