



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Advisory Board Chair Urges Additional Funding for Oak Ridge Cleanup Efforts

The chairman of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB), Steve Dixon has urged the team leading the transition of the Department of Energy's Environmental Management program (DOE EM) to the Obama administration to consider additional funding for the long-term cleanup of the Oak Ridge Reservation.

ORSSAB is a federally appointed citizens' panel charged with providing advice and recommendations to the DOE Oak Ridge EM program on its cleanup of contaminated land, groundwater, and facilities on the reservation.

In his letter to the DOE EM transition team lead Elgie Holstein at DOE headquarters, Dixon said Oak Ridge is well-positioned to make significant progress with cleanup work in the near future. "We're sensing a change in priorities with the new administration," said Dixon, "so I thought we should take advantage of that expectation and let the new administration know that Oak Ridge is a good place to invest resources for many years to come."

Since a major step has been achieved toward significantly increasing the scope of work at the Oak Ridge site by the approval of the Integrated Facility Disposition Program (IFDP), Dixon wrote that the groundwork is in place, personnel are available to do the work, community and regulatory support are strong, and "an amazing transformation can be achieved with adequate funding."

The IFDP is a proposal to add more than 200 facilities to the DOE Oak Ridge EM cleanup scope at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and the Y-12 National Security Complex. The project would be a long-term endeavor extending as far as 2039 and bring hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy.

Dixon wrote that the benefits of IFDP to the DOE EM program, the nation, and the Oak Ridge area would be significant. In addition to the economic stimulus and job creation, accelerating cleanup work in Oak Ridge will reduce landlord costs in Oak Ridge by millions annually; allow the Department of Science and the National Nuclear Security Administration to focus on their missions and enable ongoing modernization of the Y-12 National Security Complex and ORNL; maintain a highly trained and skilled workforce that's already in place; eliminate the high-risk legacies of the Manhattan Project and Cold War and reduce risk to workers, the public, and the environment; complete the environmental cleanup mission on the Oak Ridge Reservation and; reduce the footprint at Y-12 and ORNL by 1,240,000 square feet.

He went on to say that with additional funding the central campus of ORNL could be 80 percent complete by 2015, with at least 50 percent more land available for reuse. At Y-12 mercury releases could be significantly reduced and 90 percent of legacy waste there could be removed. Work already underway at East Tennessee Technology Park could be complete by 2014.

Dixon said risk reduction at Y-12 and ORNL is particularly important where currently operating facilities are in peril from residual contamination from those unneeded facilities slated for demolition and cleanup through the IFDP.

“With all these benefits possible, we urge that the new administration consider additional funding for the Oak Ridge cleanup program and act quickly to make these benefits a reality,” Dixon wrote.

ORSSAB meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the DOE Information Center, 475 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge. The meetings are open to the public. For information, call (865) 241-4583 or 241-4584, or see www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab.

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