



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

Monthly Meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

Approved February 11, 2026, Full Board Monthly Meeting Minutes

The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) held its monthly full board meeting virtually via Zoom and in person at 1 Science.gov Way on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 6 p.m. Copies of referenced meeting materials are attached to these minutes. A video of the meeting was made and is available on the board's YouTube, www.youtube.com/user/ORSSAB/videos.

Members Present

Kris Bartholomew
Mary Butler
Laure Clark
Harold Conner, Jr.
Paul Dill
Lauren LaLuzerne
Harriett McCurdy

Otto Merz
Charles Moore
Melanie Rogers
Tonya Shannon
Michael Sharpe
Kelli Thompson

Members Absent

Rosario Gonzalez
Thomas McCormick

Tom Tuck

¹consecutive absence

Liaisons, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, and Alternates Present

Erik Olds, DOE Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management (OREM)
Manager

Melyssa Noe, ORSSAB Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO), OREM

Roger Petrie, ORSSAB Alternate DDFO, OREM

Kristof Czartoryski, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)

Samantha Urquhart-Foster, EPA

Others Present

Leah Alexander, OREM
Emily Day, UCOR
Abby Hill, OREM

Shelley Kimel, ORSSAB Staff
Eileen Marcillo, TDEC
Sara McManamy-Johnson, ORSSAB Staff

Angel Perkey, TDEC
Sarah Springer, UCOR

Ben Williams, OREM

5 members of the public were present.

Liaison Comments

Mr. Olds – Mr. Olds gave members an overview of OREM activities since the last board meeting. He discussed economic development updates in Oak Ridge, U-233 disposition progress and plans, and recent demolition activities. He also cited a recent announcement that approximately 16,000 acres, or about half the federal acreage, in Oak Ridge were deemed uncontaminated and do not require cleanup. Mr. Olds also told members that he was named Acting Manager of the Paducah project office, in addition to his current duties as manager for Oak Ridge and Portsmouth.

Ms. Urquhart-Foster – Ms. Urquhart-Foster said the EPA approved three remedial action completions at East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) Zone 2 between October and December and is working on a few more.

Mr. Petrie – Mr. Petrie asked members to respond to staff with availability for possible site tour dates.

Mr. Czartoryski – Mr. Czartoryski said TDEC has a new deputy director, Justin Meredith.

Presentation

Mr. Bartholomew introduced OREM's Ben Williams to discuss OREM's Outreach Efforts.

Mr. Williams began by describing the organization's primary audiences (Congress, stakeholders, the community, and employees) and their respective interests in the work. He said OREM's outreach goals include boosting awareness, understanding and support for the mission; building trust through factual and timely content; emphasizing the benefit of each project and connecting the dots about how each fits into the larger picture; and creating connections so residents can reach out if they have concerns.

He then discussed OREM's Public Involvement Plan, which is updated every three years. This document outlines when and how the public can provide input on decision-making, provides staff contact information, and lists all the venues where official information is shared and posted. Examples of these venues include press releases, web stories and social media; EnergyCast, a weekly newscast airing in 24 Tennessee counties; a weekly national newsletter; a local monthly newsletter; media coverage; monthly advisory board meetings; annual publications documenting progress; briefings and tours; public meetings and information sessions; and community and school events. He next showed samples of the local and national newsletters and the weekly newscast and told members how to subscribe to updates.

Mr. Williams then discussed approaches used for the various information venues, including social media analytics tools that are being used to help the team understand what messages resonate with audiences, ways OREM works with media outlets, specific publications produced, and specific public information events held.

He said the following are OREM's key messages to share:

- EM's work is helping ensure local communities are safe, clean, and prosperous;
- Cleanup at the Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12) enables modernization to support national defense missions that are helping keep our nation secure;
- Cleanup at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) is freeing up space to support important research and innovation;
- Cleanup at East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) has transformed a former liability into an attraction for nuclear industry companies that are boosting the region's economy and answering the nation's future energy demands;
- EM's employees are focused on maximizing the impact of the tax dollars it receives.

Board members asked the following questions:

- Mr. Conner commented on differences in telling the stories about the work today versus what it was like in previous years. He said he thinks it's easier to talk about the work now than before.
- Ms. McCurdy talked about how the work was discussed in the community when she was growing up.
- Ms. Rogers asked if OREM has any input in how waste is handled by new businesses moving in to ETTP.
 - Mr. Petrie said all privately owned and operated facilities working with nuclear materials are licensed through the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and, as part of the licensing process, must describe how they will dispose of their waste. DOE's involvement after the property transfer is limited, primarily to ensuring land-use restrictions are followed.
- Mr. Sharpe asked if EnergyCast videos can be cut to share smaller snippets on social media.
 - Mr. Williams said the program has already been condensed, and the team does share individual pieces on social media.

Members of the public asked the following questions:

- Mr. Doug Colclasure asked Mr. Williams to consider EnergyCast stories about the environment on the Oak Ridge Reservation from a life sciences perspective; about the Wheat Community Reunion; and about the extensive peach orchard that used to encompass the west end of Oak Ridge.

Public Comment

- Public Comment #1 – Mr. Luther Gibson said he thought the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) should be presented at an annual planning retreat as part of a basic regulatory introduction. He discussed the most recent PIP update in 2025 and ORSSAB’s prior actions related to PIP revisions in the late 1990s. He suggested ORSSAB review the PIP and evaluate itself on performance of what the PIP indicates ORSSAB does. He said the board should consider resuming activities such as assisting in preparation of fact sheets to explain post-Record of Decision changes to Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) documents. Mr. Gibson also discussed current issues for the board to look at further. (see attached)
- Public Comment #2 – Mr. Doug Colclasure said the 16,000 acres in Oak Ridge discussed recently are a natural treasure. He said conservation has an economic value and discussed some of the highlights of the area.

Board Business/Motions

- None

Responses to Recommendations & DDFO Report

Mr. Petrie said DOE has responded to ORSSAB’s recommendation on OREM’s 2027 budget request and the response is included in the board’s meeting materials packet.

He next discussed officer elections. He described the current membership approval process and said until new members are approved, the board does not have enough members to reach a quorum and conduct official business, including electing officers.

Mr. Petrie then discussed issue groups and asked members to consider signing up for them.

Committee Reports

Executive – Mr. Bartholomew said the executive committee discussed officer elections and the work plan. He said the next executive committee meeting is March 4.

EM & Stewardship – Mr. Moore said the next EM & Stewardship committee meeting is February 25.

Additions to the Agenda & Open Discussion

None

Action Items

None

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the February 11, 2026, meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board.



Kris Bartholomew, Chair



Kelli Thompson, Secretary

April 27, 2026

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

KB/sbm

Public Comment to Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB)
February 11, 2026
Luther Gibson
ORSSAB Member (1999-2005), Chair (2000-2002)
DOE Oak Ridge Contractor Employee (1977-2017)
Coalition of Oak Ridge Retired Employees Board of Directors (2019-)

I have commentary on the Public Involvement Plan as well as current issues.

This evening's presentation is about one year late. Actually, it should be presented at a real Annual Planning Retreat as part of a basic regulatory introduction. Updates to the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) are triennial milestones in the Appendix E of the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA). The 2025 update was drafted and being reviewed among the FFA parties around this time last year without input from the public or ORSSAB and little, if any, awareness that the update was in progress.

ORSSAB has not always not been involved in preparation of the PIP. ORSSAB itself found in a recommendation that the PIP, as presented in November 1997, did not comply with the FFA; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA); or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance in implementing CERCLA. ORSSAB recommended that the document be revised with the assistance of stakeholders and regulators and it was. The Department of Energy (DOE) and its contractors worked with an ad hoc committee of some ORSSAB members and other members of the public in drafting a revised plan. At a minimum ORSSAB should now review the PIP and evaluate itself on performance of what the PIP indicates ORSSAB does. It should consider resuming activities such as assisting in preparation of fact sheets to explain post-Record of Decision changes to CERCLA documents.

The goal of public involvement should be a public not only informed about decisions and progress but providing input as a collaborator during the process. The value added from public involvement beyond that which is legally required cannot be overstated.

DOE public involvement in Oak Ridge is complicated due to there being an Office of Science Consolidated Service Center, an Oak Ridge National Laboratory Site Office, and a Y-12 Field Office, in addition to Oak Ridge Environmental Management (OREM) all conducting environmental, waste management, and emergency preparedness activities. Events like a joint presentation on results in the Oak Ridge Reservation Annual Site Environmental Report or an Emergency Management Forum seem to no longer occur.

Nevertheless, I wish that Nuclear Regulatory Commission public involvement was more like DOE's.

Current issues with aspects that deserve elevated curiosity surrounding their background include:

- Path forward for mercury at Y-12 after pause of the Mercury Treatment Facility
- Path forward to return Rarity Ridge Wastewater Treatment Plant to normal sludge operations
- Emergency Removal Action at the White Oak Creek Sediment Removal Structure
- Time Critical Removal Action at White Wing Scrap Yard
- Impact of CSX railroad track contamination on right-of-way transfer
- Applicability of the Partial Deletion Rule and prescribed public involvement process to decision that half of the Oak Ridge Reservation doesn't require environmental cleanup