

Utah Seismic Safety Commission

Meeting
April 28, 2011
Minutes

On April 28, 2011, a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting of the Utah Seismic Safety Commission (USSC) was held in the Kletting Room of the Senate Building on Capitol Hill in Salt Lake City, Utah. Chair Roger Evans called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Members Present:

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| -Roger Evans, Chair | Utah League of Cities & Towns |
| -Pete McDonough | American Society of Civil Engineers |
| -Greg McCombs | Structural Engineers Association of Utah |
| -Barry Smith | Western Mountain Region, American Inst. of Architects |
| -Rick Allis | Utah Geological Survey |
| -Meldee Love | Utah Insurance Department for Brad Tibbits |
| -Dimitre Assenov | American Public Works Association for Leon Barrett |
| -Enzo Calfa | Utah Division of Facilities Const. & Management |
| -Keith Koper | University of Utah Seismograph Stations |

Members Not Present:

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| -Keith Squires | Division of Homeland Security |
| -Joshua Sletten | Utah Department of Transportation |
| -Michelle Jones | Association of Contingency Planners |
| -Evan Curtis | Governor's Office of Budget and Planning |
| -Senator Peter C. Knudson | Utah State Senate |
| -Mike Morley | Utah House of Representatives |
| -Mark Petersen | U.S. Geological Survey (Ex-Officio) |
| -Doug Bausch | Federal Emergency Management Agency (Ex-Officio) |

USSC Staff Present:

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| -Bob Carey | Utah Division of Emergency Management |
| -Sheila Curtis | Utah Division of Emergency Management |
| -Chris DuRoss | Utah Geological Survey |
| -Steve Bowman | Utah Geological Survey |

Guests Present:

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| -Barry Welliver | Structural Engineers Association of Utah |
| -Rep. Larry Wiley | Utah House of Representatives |
| -Glen Palmer | Structural Engineers Association of Utah |
| -Leslie Randle | Northridge Elementary, Orem |
| -Casey Coleman | Utah Division of Public Utilities |
| -Jim Higbee | Utah Department of Transportation |

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| -Robert Pyle | Structural Engineering Consultant |
| -Scott Holt | State Farm Insurance |
| -Walter Arabasz | University of Utah Seismograph Stations |
| -Chris Kimball | Kimball Engineering |

➤ **WELCOME/OVERVIEW**

Chair Roger Evans welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance and asked for introductions.

Commissioners reviewed and made corrections to the minutes of the January 20, 2011 meeting.

Motion: *Greg McCoomb made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion seconded by Keith Koper. Motion was unanimously approved.*

➤ **Legislative updates**

Representative Wiley spoke to HB 367 Utah School Seismic Hazard Inventory. The fiscal note that has been attached to the bills is the main reason why the bills are not being passed. As a result of the Commission's efforts each year, more and more people are now involved. The Commission will keep trying until its goal is reached and bill is passed.

HB 423 Public Schools Seismic Safety Committee was not passed during the legislative session.

Representative Wiley spoke to why HB 53 Seismic Requirements for Condominium Conversion Projects bill did not pass. House Speaker Clark and Senate President Waddoups met with the parties that were in opposition to the bill. The opposition felt that the building assessments would be too costly and a hardship to the owner. The comprise will be any building over two stories would need to have a seismic assessment completed on the building. The bill will run again next legislative session. Having the bill debate has created interest with the general public. Some Legislators have received calls about the safety of various buildings. This increase interest may help with the passing of bill next legislative session.

Pete asked if cities could pass ordinances to move this issue along. Roger indicated that this issue needed to be resolved through the legislative process. He encouraged Commission members to pass along this information to the organizations that they represent.

Rep. Wiley stated that the board of realtors were opposed to the bill, but were open to looking at the bill in interim. The Commission discussed placing language in real estate contracts about the risk to earthquake would be a good first step toward educating the public about earthquakes and buildings at risk. However, more support is needed for the realtors. Rep. Wiley suggested the Commission to take on this task and get involved with the Board of Realtors. Education and upgrades are the main issues with all these bills.

Barry suggested that rehabilitating these buildings would make them a better asset and that might help in the marketing of the properties.

Walter asked about the timing of introducing the bills with regard to the legislative session. Rep. Wiley indicated that the bill submissions were a little late in the game. He suggested that another approach for the School Seismic Hazard Inventory Bill would be to make a budget line item in the Governor's budget. Governor is knowledgeable of what is happening or may happen on their watch and pays close attention to such issues. He indicated that the Legislature is more of a reactive body. The Legislature feels that a School Seismic Hazard Inventory is a district issue.

Enzo Calfa suggested that the Commission also look at apartments along with the condos. Roger suggested that the building code needs to be reviewed on this issue for a possible a code amendment. Roger will take a look at this and come up with a change.

➤ **Strategies for Reducing the Earthquake Risk of Utah's Schools**

The Commission plans on submitting the School Seismic Hazards Inventory Bill in the 2012 Legislative session. The fiscal note attached to the bill has made it less appealing to the Appropriations Committee. The Bill has been placed for further study with the Interim Committee but has never been studied to date. Another problem with the building inventory is the lack of identifying the seismic hazard of smaller school districts. Some school districts have completed seismic studies of their district building and some have not. Some studies have used RVS, while others have not. In many cases, school officials are not clear on exactly what these studies actually mean.

The discussion now is about a new approach to doing the inventory. The suggestion was made that the Commission offers school districts a free RVS study of their district buildings. The work would be done on a volunteer basis. Structural engineers have expressed a willingness to assist with the building surveys, pro bono. This offer would be extended to all schools in the state. There is need for the State Office of Education to be supportive this program. There also needs to be a discussion with all engineering organizations that deal with the schools to help educate them on the RVS process and how the process can assist in the prioritization of school rehabilitations.

The Commission discussed the next step which is to take the "Utah Students at Risk-The Earthquake Hazards of School Buildings" survey and get on the Appropriations Committee agenda to discuss this issue.

Rep. Wiley volunteered to get the Commission an audience with the Appropriation Committee and return in October with a game plan to go forward with new bills. The Commission discussed getting school community councils and parent-teacher associations involved with this issue. These organizations could be great advocates for the promoting school building RVS studies.

Leslie Randle from Northridge Elementary of Orem explained that funding is always an issue at the district level.

The closing discussion was a call for a plan of action for the overall state. Chris Kimball suggested a committee be created to work in this issue. The committee of seven members would include 4 schools, 1 charter, and 3 structural engineers. Roger indicated he would help facilitate the creation of this committee.

➤ **Presentation of Recent Earthquakes**

Keith Koper gave a presentation on the recent Christchurch, New Zealand and Honshu, Japan earthquakes. Keith's takeaway points were the size of the earthquake was unexpected, the available seismic record for these regions is too short which makes it more difficult to understand the real seismic hazard, and this type of earthquake could occur in the Pacific Northwest of US or Alaska.

Barry Welliver discussed the activities of the Structural Engineers Association of Utah Existing Buildings Committee and USSC Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Ad-Hoc Committee. The Committee is currently updating the Utah Guide for Unreinforced Masonry Residential Structures.

The work on the HJR 7 project is still ongoing with some buildings still needing to be completed. Hopefully, the report will be completed by the July meeting.

The Salt Lake URM inventory is a FEMA funded project to identify significant URM buildings in the city. The project is scheduled to start the middle of May. Purpose for the inventory is to quantify the building damage for The Great Utah ShakeOut Exercise so that emergency managers can better understand what search and rescue assets will be needed after the earthquake. The information will be used in the Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Plan.

Barry discussed his presentation of the Seismic Upgrade of Historic Homes to the Utah Heritage Foundation. The presentation was made, was well received by those in attendance. On May 21, at Murray City Hall, Barry will make the same presentation. The presentation has good information on how to rehabilitate older buildings.

Pete McDonough discussed the Western States Seismic Policy Council (WSSPC) annual meeting held in Boise, ID. WSSPC sponsored a half-day session for seismic safety councils and commissions. Ten states were represented and talked about their organizations activities. The group has created a council/commission website which provides information about seismic safety councils/commissions and provide active links for all active state sites.

Bob Carey discussed the National Earthquake Program Managers Meeting (NEPM) held in Boise, ID. Earthquake program managers meetings were held following the WSSPC conference. The meeting is an opportunity for program managers to get together to exchange information of what each state's earthquake program. FEMA conducted a session successful projects using HAZUS. The managers received first-

hand accounts on how HAZUS was used to create the earthquake scenarios for the ShakeOut exercises around the country.

➤ **News Items**

Barry Welliver will be conducting a presentation on the Seismic Upgrade of Historic Buildings, May 21, at Murray City Hall.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be conduct training, Earthquake Mitigation for Hospitals P-767 at the Intermountain Health Care (IHC) Hospital in Murray on July 28. The training is free and will look at non-structural and structural mitigation.

Bob Carey spoke about the Great Utah ShakeOut Earthquake Exercise being held in April of 2012. Public relations rollout should be in the next few months. Registration website should be up and running in the next few months for people and organization to signup to participate in the exercise. Starting the first part of June, FEMA and DEM will be conducting a series of meetings called Courses of Action. These meeting are problem-solving workshops which will aid in the development of the Regional Catastrophic Earthquake Plan and developing the earthquake exercise to be held in April of 2012.

The new EOC has been approved by the Preservation Board and construction can now move forward. Construction should begin in May with completion in early October to November.

Steve Bowman presented the Commission with Utah Geological Survey Earthquake Clearinghouse proposal. The clearinghouse will be web-based, designed to store scientific data, mainly geologic but will be store other data such as building damage provide by structural engineers. UGS will use the clearinghouse to support the 2012 exercise. The clearinghouse website will be presented to WSSPC as a template to be use by other states. It will also be part of a nationwide database. The website can be accessed from the field so data can be accessed and evaluated quicker.

UGS is requesting \$8,650 from the Commission to help fund the development of the clearinghouse website.

Motion: *Keith Koper made a motion to contribute \$8,650 to UGS to develop a web-based clearinghouse. Motion was seconded by Greg McCombs. Motion Carried.*

Roger asked the Commission if they were interested in meeting with Nevada Earthquake Safety Council? The Commission responded favorably to having a joint meeting with Nevada. Roger informed the Commission of the resent publication on the Wells earthquake from the Nevada Bureau of Mines. It is very complete accounting of the earthquake.

Pete proposed a joint meeting possibly in Elko, Nevada. **Bob** will contact Nevada for meeting times and places. A discussion will be held in July on place and date.

➤ **NEXT MEETING**

Date: Thursday, July 21, 2011
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Capitol Hill Kletting Room.

➤ **ADJOURNMENT**