



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

January 22, 2015 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Lloyd Closson, William King, Suzanne Liebelt, Roy Audet, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda, Tim Romanow Cyd Cunningham, and Mary Lupwayi

Teleconference: Ron McNeil,

Absent: John Ross, Dennis Spackman, Joan Hughson, Paulette Fox, Trevor Murray, Frank Larney, Brian Hills, Ken Brown, Kristen Dykstra, Ross Ford

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross was not able to attend the meeting. Ken Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:40pm

2. Minutes from November 27, 2014 meeting

- William King requested that the minutes from November 27, 2014 meeting be amended (second bullet, part 12 on page 10) by removing “a great” so that the sentence should read “In 2013 grazing was introduced, the area was fenced and there was improvement in weed control

Motion: William King moved to accept the minutes as amended. Suzanne Liebelt seconded. **Carried.**

There was an addition to the agenda as follows:

Based on last meeting’s motion which read:

Motion: Ron McNeil moved that MRWCC send a letter of support to the Management Committee to encourage grazing in the natural area as a tool to manage invasive agronomic species through 2015 at the discretion of the management committee. Ken Brown seconds. **Carried**

- Tim presented a letter that was drafted and requested that a motion be passed to send the letter to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to approve sending the letter to the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development as presented. Ed Sloboda seconded. **Carried**

3. Financial Statements Update

- a. November Financial Statements
- b. December Financial Statements
 - o November and December Financial Statements were reviewed
 - o November closing balance was \$291,069.51
 - o December closing balance was \$259,461.82

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statements as presented. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

- c. Status of current grant applications
 - i. Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (ESRD)
 - Three projects were submitted
 - o Hilmer Bridge Site Riparian Restoration Project Proposal (\$44,600)
 - o Milk River Cattle Co. Riparian Restoration Project, (\$138,000)
 - o Milk River Watershed Riparian Restoration Stewardship Program (200,000 over 3 years)
 - ESRD is yet to make a decision on the funding which makes it difficult to submit the second round grant application which was supposed to be submitted prior to the end of January.
 - ii. Loblaw Water Fund
 - Submitted a \$10,000 grant application for water monitoring in 2015
 - The results should be out soon
 - iii. Conservation, Community and Education Grants (ACA)
 - Will be submitting an application to ACA for \$25,000 for Education Outreach programs by January 26th, 2015
- o There was discussion regarding the RBC Blue Water grant program and council eligibility. Was suggested that we look into the grant funding for continuing the under ice wintering fish habitat project. The next round of applications is accepted in April and we will apply for funding. It was noted that the OWC has been successful in receiving over 60,000 for a headwaters fish restoration study.

4. AGM Planning – 10th Anniversary

- a. Agenda
 - 1. Presenters?
 - 2. Keynote/entertainment?

- The Board was asked if they had ideas on Keynote or Entertainers
- Tim advised that “Survivorman” Les Shroud was contacted but has not yet responded.
- Other ideas raised were:
 - Presentation on fisheries surveys conducted in 2014
 - Presentation on bear and wolf recolonization of eastern habitats and management in SW Alberta – Willow Valley Rod and Gun club had Biologist Bob Jamison speak recently and the thought was that he would be interested to present in Milk River.
 - Presentation to clarify what’s happening with Onefour Research Station

3. Bylaw amendments?

- A committee should be set up to go through the bylaws. The following volunteered to be on the committee:
 - Darcy Wills
 - William King
 - Tim Romanow
 - Mary Lupwayi

4. Open Board of Director seats

- Board members whose seats are open for nominations this year were asked to let Tim know if they plan to let their nomination stand
- Academia is currently vacant and there was a suggestion to contact the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology to see if the scientists could be interested

b. Fundraising

- Silent auction will be conducted
- Can conduct a draw
- Fly over Milk River program – organize an event where people can pay to be flown over the Milk. Need to contact John Ross for his input

c. Volunteers

- Looking for volunteers to help set up the hall
- The following volunteered:
 - Will Lindeman

- Warren Cunningham
- William King
- Ed Sloboda

5. WPAC Forum report

- December 9, 2014, Tim attended the WPAC Manager's meeting
 - NSWA hosted the 2014 WPAC Summit and there were some challenges
 - NSWA had a \$17,000 deficit after the summit
 - WPAC has \$12,000 that was raised from the joint conference with Canadian Water Resources Association in 2013. Initially the amount was to be spent on WPAC highway signage but there are plans to use the funds to promote WPACs on a provincial scale
 - WPACs are planning to collectively submit a grant application from the TD Friends of the Environment to be used for fundraising strategy
- December 10, 2014, Tim attended the WPAC Forum
- Other WPACs had elected official representation which was not the case with MRWCC
 - Discussed Water for Life Strategy that sets out mandate for WPACs but there is lack of clear direction on WPACs roles. There is need for feedback to provide clarity
 - As of November 1, 2014, all GOA data can be accessed free from the Provincial web
 - Alignment with SSRP – there was a realization that GOA need partners to carry out programs that were planned and that there is need to keep communications open with WPACs
 - ESRD was supposed to send grant application packages by January 9. The deadline for application is March 2. To date the application packages have not been received
 - There will be no WPAC Summit for 2015, however, there are plans to have four WPAC Forums with ESRD to improve communication between GOA and WPACs

6. Prairie Conservation Forum Annual General Meeting report

- Had casino revenue of \$65,000 and is looking for projects to fund

7. Office space

- It was reported that there are no plans for the other tenants to leave the building. In light of this, it was decided that an Office Building Committee be formed to figure out what steps to take to resolve the office space issue
- The following volunteered to sit on the Office Building Committee:
 - Warren Cunningham
 - Darcy Wills
 - Suzanne Liebelt
 - Tim Romanow
 - Mary Lupwayi

8. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)

- A meeting was held Jan 13, 2015
 - i. Youth Engagement Program Report
 - February 19, Cyd will have a display table at the Teacher's Convention in Lethbridge to promote Online courses, Youth Range Days, School Field Trips and Caring for Our Watershed Programs
 - Had a meeting with WOSPP staff and another meeting is scheduled in 2 weeks to discuss 2015 education programs
 - Planning to meet with the Horizon School District Academic Councilor to market Online courses
 - Ed and Cyd are planning to visit Warner School to promote education programs
 - Working on the School Poster and Multimedia contest. Multimedia contest is a new program for grade 9 to 12 that asks the students to create a 3 minute multimedia creation for the watershed to celebrate the watershed past and present
 - Plan to contact Ducks Unlimited to see if there is a possibility to partner in some education programs
 - ii. Winter Meander Newsletter
 - The Winter Meander Newsletter has been distributed
 - iii. Heritage Tree Project
 - The MRWCC is launching a Heritage Tree Project to allow residents of the watershed to celebrate the pioneering spirit of the community by identifying

and nominating trees of local significance within the watershed. Trees can be of any age (old or newly planted)

- The Board was asked to spread the word around and send any nominations they might have
- The program has been advertised on the web as well as in the Meander Newsletter

iv. Environmental Stewardship Awards

- Looking for nominations to honour individuals, families and commercial businesses that are good environmental stewards of the Milk River watershed
- The program has been advertised on the web as well as in the Meander Newsletter

b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)

- Meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2015
 - Looking for future project ideas
 - Some proposed ideas:
 - Water Well Monitoring to see the effect of fracking. Can select a well or few wells and use pre-existing data to compare. Can also compare deep and shallow wells
 - Research on fish habitat
 - Under Ice monitoring and use of data loggers. Lethbridge College has data loggers that can be used
 - Research on Downey/Japanese brome. Multisar has already done a lot of studied on this
 - Pipeline review across the river and its effect
 - Riparian areas sedimentation and erosion and the effect of cotton woods
 - The team needs to take ownership of programs
 - i. Surface water monitoring update
 - Sandi is working on data analysis
- c. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
- i. IWMP Update

- A two page letter to ESRD requesting a response for the IWMP and to initiate the Implementation strategy has been drafted

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to send the letter to ESRD as presented. Suzanne Liebelt Seconded. **Carried**

- ii. December 4th meeting with GOA report
 - Meeting went well
 - The MRWCC continues to seek support for the Milk River IWMP from municipalities
 - Motions have been passed by County of Forty Mile, County of Warner, Cypress County and the Village of Coutts in support the Milk River IWMP
 - Still waiting to hear back from the Town of Milk River and Village of Warner
 - A letter of response asking Cardston County Council to reconsider their Motion with the understanding that the Milk River IWMP is a guidance document and planning tool with no regulatory authority will be forwarded this month. The CAO is prepared to take this response letter forward
 - County of Forty Mile and Cypress County have endorsed the plan
 - County of Warner and Cardston County have stated that they will use the plan as a planning document
 - All feedback on the 12 page IWMP summary to be directed to Sandi
 - Planning to send the IWMP summary for printing in 2 weeks
- d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - i. Milk River Water Storage Update
 - Need to write to the Ministers concerned in spring to request feedback on this issue from GOA
- e. Transboundary Watershed Team
 - No meeting took place as planned but there has been some developments
 - Ian Dyson from ESRD had a meeting with the Transboundary Secretariat to discuss funding of Transboundary programs
 - Has been given a green light to go ahead with programming and that funding will be available

- Ron stated that it will not be immediate. PCF would like to carry this forward but it would be reliant on what Ian has
- Ken advised that he had a discussion with the MRWA Chairman, Jeff Pattison who stated that they are having financial problems due to funding irregularities which they are trying to resolve and that they currently don't have a Program Coordinator
- Jeff Pattison advised that the SOW report was well accepted in Montana
- They would like to carry on with the joint Transboundary SOW reporting and asked that the MRWCC provide a report on the next SOW report expenses that will be required from their side
- Jeff also stated that they are looking into the missing \$2000 US that was supposed to be paid to MRWCC as part of their contribution towards the 2013 Transboundary SOW report

Motion: Darcy Wills moved that the MRWCC provide a summary report on the next Transboundary State of the Watershed report detailing MRWA expenses. Ed Sloboda seconded. **Carried**

9. Upcoming events

- AGM 10th Anniversary – April 16, 2015

10. Round table discussion

- Darcy Wills:
 - Pinhorn meeting – There is need to build fire management structures to prevent fire destruction on sage
 - The rangelands of the Onefour research Station, formerly under AAFC have been transferred to GoA with research involvement from the University of Alberta. The physical infrastructure remains under the Canadian government control. They are putting together a committee to manage the station
 - MRWCC needs to be involved by having a rep on the committee to get a profile on the SE corner of the watershed

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to send a letter to the management committee offering MRWCC's support of the committee. Will Lindeman seconded. **Carried**

- Emphasize the importance of better communication with Urban municipalities in the watershed to improve public relations

- Need to simplify presentation to Urban municipalities as they are too scientific in nature
- The education outreach can look at producing a simplified MRWCC report that can be used by the community

11. Other items

Action: Send a letter to invite the Minister of ESRD to the 10th Anniversary AGM

- Promotional Items:
 - Looking to spend about \$2,500 to purchase the 10th Anniversary promotional jackets to honour volunteers

12. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:50pm. **Carried.**

13. Next Meeting Date

- March 26, 2015 – Milk River at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____