



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

March 26, 2015 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Lloyd Closson, William King, Suzanne Liebelt, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda, John Ross, Dennis Spackman, Joan Hughson, Trevor Murray, Frank Larney, Brian Hills, Kristen Dykstra, Ross Ford, Tim Romanow, Cyd Cunningham, and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Roy Audet, Ken Brown, Ron McNeil, Paulette Fox, Darlene Sakires

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:33pm

2. Minutes from January 22, 2015 meeting

- Minutes were reviewed and the following amendments were made:
 - Page 1 – Ross Ford to be added to the absent list as he was not present at this meeting
 - Correct spelling of the word “amended”
 - Page 3 – correct the name “Onefour”
 - Page 7 - correct spelling of the word “endorse”
 - Page 8 – Part 10, second bullet should read: 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

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ross Ford seconded.

Carried.

3. Financial Statements Update

- a. January Financial Statements
- b. February Financial Statements
- January and February Financial Statements were reviewed as follows:
 - January closing balance was \$240,964.08
 - February closing balance was \$214,990.92

Motion: Suzanne Liebelt moved to accept the financial statements as presented.

Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

c. Ann Tollestrup Contract review

- Ann Tollestrup's contract was reviewed
- A cost comparison with OWC bookkeeping costs was made and it was found that MRWCC bookkeeping costs are significantly higher

Action: Get three contract bids from comparable accounting firms

- Staff accompanied by a Board member should visit Ann and request if she is willing to reduce the fees and explain services provided.

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to solicit three comparable bookkeeping bids from other companies and bring back to council at the May Board meeting. Will Lindeman seconded. **Carried.**

- The contract will not be signed until further investigation and approval by the Board

d. Audit vs Review

- Differences between audit and review were discussed
 - Current Cost Comparison for MRWCC:
 - Audit approx. \$5,600 to \$6,170
 - Review Engagement approx. \$4,500
 - Advantages of an Audit:
 - More extensive tests of the accounting records
 - Some grant applications require audited financial records. So far there has been one grant that required audited records
 - Looking for the Board's Approval to:
 - Keep conducting review engagements
 - Have an audit once in a while (after 3 or 5 years)
 - Conduct audited financial records
 - The consensus was to conduct the review this year and conduct an audit next year
 - Look into audit/review cost comparison with other companies
 - Will Lindeman will help look into this
- e. Status of current grant applications
- Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (ESRD)

- Have been granted \$70,000.00 for the Milk River Watershed Riparian Restoration Stewardship Program. Will fit well with Municipal environmental extension programs. Will look to establish project review committee with producer members of council at the May board meeting.
- The other two bioengineering projects did not get funding
 - Loblaw Water Fund
- Our proposal did not receive financial support from the LWF
- The competition this year for the LWF was very strong and, as a result, many high quality applications were not funded
- Only 14 projects received funding out of over 120 submissions received
 - Conservation, Community and Education Grants (ACA)
- Have not yet received feedback from the ACA application for \$25,000.00 that was submitted for education outreach programs. There is still opportunities to request additional funding for outreach and education program activities from the Prairie Conservation Forum if necessary.

4. AGM Planning – 10th Anniversary

a. Agenda

- 1:00 Welcome by John Ross, MRWCC Chairman
- 1:10 MRWCC Financial Statements Presentation by Will Lindeman, Treasurer
- 1:20 Milk River Watershed Council Canada Activity Report by Tim Romanow, Executive Director
- 2:00 Elections by Ken Brown, Election's Chairman
- 2:15 MRWCC Celebrating 10 Years by Tim Romanow, Executive Director
- 2:30 Coffee Break and Silent Auction
- 3:00 One-Four Research Station update by Brian Laing, ESRD
- 3:30 Fish Inventory along the Milk River by Tyler Johns, ACA.
- 4:00 Thank you to the MRWCC volunteers over the years by John Ross, MRWCC Chairman
- 4:15 Coffee Break and Silent Auction
- 4:30 Poster/Multimedia Contest Award Presentation by Dusty Stauth, Branch Manager, Milk River ATB Financial

- 4:45 Keynote Speakers: The Return of the Prairie Grizzly
 - Seth Wilson, Blackfoot Challenge, Wildlife Biologist, Montana
 - Jeff Bectell, Rancher/Chair, Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association
- 5:45 Awards presentation
- 6:00 Dinner by Laura Balog Catering Services
- Displays and end of Silent Auction
 1. Registration
 - So far 55 people have registered
 2. Presenters
 3. Keynote/entertainment
 4. Bylaw amendments
 - The Bylaw Review Committee met and proposed amendments to the bylaws February 26, 2015
 - Copies of the proposed amendments had been sent to the membership on time to meet the 21 day Bylaw stipulation for public review
 - Additionally, a proposed amendment submitted by Raymond Baril on a later date on page 7 for “First Nations” was discussed

The bylaw currently reads:

 - First Nations: Any person who is a member of First Nations and lives or works in the Alberta portion of the Milk River watershed may become a member.

Proposed amendment by Raymond Baril:

 - First Nations: Any person who is a First Nation member and lives, works or holds Aboriginal or Treaty rights in the Alberta portion of the Milk River may become a member.

Motion: William King moved to seek approval of the proposed bylaw amendments at the AGM. Darcy Wills seconded. **Carried**

- Need to have a policy to review bylaws regularly
- 5. Election’s Chairman**
 - Ken brown has agreed to be this year’s Election’s Chairman
- 6. Board of Director Nominations

- The following seats are open for nominations:
 - Recreation
 - Commercial/Industrial
 - Individual Member
 - Towns/Villages/Hamlets
 - Federal Government
 - Academia is currently vacant

b. Fundraising

1. Silent auction
 - Receiving items for silent auction
2. Gift Draw
 - Planning to have an antler with holes where tickets can be inserted. Once a ticket is purchased, the owner will write their name and phone number and the ticket will be entered in a draw.
 - Planning to have 3 gifts in the draw: 1. Fly the Milk, 2. Canoe the Milk, and 3. Trail ride the Milk/stay at the ranch house Bed and Breakfast
 - Tim is in the process of soliciting for the gifts

c. Volunteers

- Have had a good feedback from individuals willing to help with setting up as well as manning the registration desk

5. WOSPP Rodeo Grounds Erosion

- Received an email from Jen Doenz, who wrote on behalf of the Writing On Stone Riding Association expressing concerned with the erosion that is taking place along the Milk River at the Writing On Stone Rodeo grounds and is in desperate need of repair
- They were hoping that the MRWCC would be able to help with the project as more and more of the bank is deteriorating
- Upon inspection last summer it was observed that the erosion problem is significant
- Tim responded to Jen that MRWCC has no financial ability to take on the project work of that magnitude, however, the Council will be willing to facilitate the work
- The site is leased from Alberta Parks now under ESRD

- Would need to involve the Provincial and Federal Governments
- The site is not a good candidate for bioengineering work due to the site physical characteristics:
 - In the flood plain
 - Very sandy soil and vulnerable to erosion
- Need to research information on the site and report back to Alberta Parks

6. Upper Missouri Basin Research Project

- Received a letter from Dr. Dave Sauchyn, University of Regina, PARC
- Purpose of the letter was to inform the MRWCC about a new collaborative scientific project on the “Multi-century perspectives on current and future streamflow in the Missouri River Basin (MRB) and would like to list the MRWCC as a water management partner

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to accept Dr. Dave Sauchyn’s proposal to list the MRWCC as a water management partner on the project. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried**

7. SSRP Biodiversity Management Framework workshop report – Tim and John

- John and Tim attended the meeting March 18th, 2015 in Lethbridge
- The aim of the framework is to help move forward with communities and stakeholders in the work
- Key areas for discussion at the workshop included:
 - Proposed indicators;
 - Development of triggers for the indicators; and
 - Monitoring of indicators and management response
- Concerns:
 - Monitoring aspect relied on the Alberta Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Agency (AEMERA)
 - There was no mention of WPAC data incorporation which will avoid reinventing the wheel
 - Lots of questions that were not answered
- Ross attended the Medicine Hat session and there were concerns as to who AEMERA is and indicators and triggers might be too late by the time anything is done

- Brian commented on management framework and the need to identify parameters that they can monitor and report on
- Monitoring and reporting every two years allows for things to be proactive. Get together as a community where actions are needed and discuss solutions
- Brian went on to say that right now there is no consistency in reporting and AEMERA will provide that
- Tim advised that presenters at the framework were willing to present at the Board meeting
- An idea to take them on a tour was discussed
- Tim advised that they did a great job on recording feedback from the participants
- Sandi attended the Calgary session on behalf of the Council
- Tim and John advised that they attended the Premier Dinner

8. Office space update

a. Renovation quote

- Requested 2 quotes but got one quote from Scott Tollestrup at \$8,421.70
- Looked at two payment options;
 - Increase in rent
 - Split bill and have a 3 year lease agreement
- Ryan will take the quote to Town Council meeting and report later

9. Promotional items

- Coffee mugs and jackets have been purchased
- The Jackets were partly funded by DeeThree
- Council thanked DeeThree for the sponsorship

10. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)

- Youth Engagement Program Report
- Cyd had a display at the Lethbridge Teacher's Convention to promote the programs and there was a lot of interest in the programs
- Good to do every other year
- Early March attended the PCF Education Committee meeting
- March 12 presented the Deep Roots program for Grade 4 at the Stirling School

- Have received 82 posters from schools but have not received any multi-media work
 - Cyd and William judged the posters
 - WOSPP have placed the school field trips on their website
 - Environmental Stewardship Awards – Nomination
 - Received one Family nomination from William King for Roy Audet family
 - Award (gate sign) will be presented at the AGM
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
- Surface water monitoring update
 - Starting the first run of 2015 water sampling April 8
 - Having a refresher session for sampling crew April 7
 - Still no guarantee for GOA support
- c. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
- IWMP Update
 - Received support letters from all municipalities
 - Cardston has indicated that they will file the plan as a reference document
 - Will need to follow up with Cardston County
 - Outcomes of Cross Ministry plan review – Sandi (via phone)
 - Sandi provided a presentation to the committee, and a response from ESRD is anticipated within two months.
- d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
- Milk River Water Storage Update
 - Nothing announced from Community Resiliency program, request led by the County of Warner.
 - Waiting for budget report
- e. Transboundary Watershed Team
- April 15, 2015 Ron McNeil is attending a meeting in Havre, Montana and will take some SOW to give out
 - Ian Dyson has funding to host a Transboundary forum
 - Good opportunity for us set direction for a 2018 SOW

11. Upcoming events

- AGM 10th Anniversary – April 16, 2015

- Annual Canoe Trip – June 6, 2015
- Trail Ride – June 26, 2015

12. Round table discussion

- Brian Hills:
 - Remote Milk River irrigation metering project has discontinued
 - Data loggers we in need of maintenance
 - Will send a letter to advise all irrigators
 - Meters are still functioning and residents can still use them
 - Will need a factsheet to show residents how the meters function
- Ed Sloboda:
 - Two new species of dinosaurs have been found in Milk River Watershed
- Frank Larney:
 - There is an art exhibition on the Milk River Forks at CASA for those interested
- Tim Romanow:
 - Looking into the a drone project to map weeds along the river, there is interest from Public Lands and Ag Service Boards, funding dependent.

13. Other items

- Just received a letter from Minister Fawcett, ESRD in response to the letter that council sent in support of periodic grazing in the Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve which state that:
 - Grazing is not ecologically sustainable; however, periodic grazing in three to five year intervals can be effective and that grazing trials were implemented last year and will continue this summer
 - A full evaluation will be performed to help determine future management

14. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:22pm. **Carried.**

15. Next Meeting Date

- May 28, 2015 in Milk River at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary:
