



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

May 25, 2017 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: William King, Warren Cunningham, Ed Sloboda, Ron McNeil, Lorraine Nicol, Ross Ford, Will Lindeman, Joan Hughson, Darcy Wills, Ben Ellert, John Ross, Ken Miller, Scott McGarty, Lloyd Closson, Suzanne Liebelt, Kristen Dykstra, Kandra Forbes, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Brian Hills, Roy Audet, and Dennis Spackman

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:55pm
- Introductions were conducted
 - Ben Ellert, the newly elected Federal Government rep introduced himself to the group

2. Minutes from April 27, 2017 meeting

- Past minutes were reviewed

Motion: William King moved to accept the minutes as presented. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

3. Organizational elections

- a. Member at large appointment

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to appoint William King, Member at Large representing the Milk River Natural Area and Kennedy Coulee Management Committee to the council. Ron McNeil seconded. **Carried.**

b. Executive Board Election

- **Chairman**
 - **John Ross** was nominated for Chairman
- **Vice-Chairman**
 - **Ken Miller** was nominated for Vice chairman
- **Treasurer**
 - **Will Lindeman** was nominated for Treasurer
- **Secretary**
 - **Warren Cunningham** was nominated for Secretary

Motion: Suzanne Liebelt moved to accept the executive nominations. Ross Ford seconded.

Carried.

c. Team Leaders Election

- Community Awareness and Involvement Team:
 - **Ed Sloboda**
- Research and Monitoring Team
 - **Will Lindeman**
- Water Supply and Management Team
 - **Ken Miller**
- Transboundary Watershed Team
 - **Ron McNeil**

Motion: Ross Ford moved to accept the team leader nominations. Joan Hughson seconded.

Carried.

4. Financial update

- The financial reporting spreadsheet has been refined as follows:
 - The payroll amounts are showing gross expenditures
 - A second spreadsheet depicting core funding revenue and expenses was presented
- The spreadsheet has been updated to make it more user friendly
 - April Financial Statements
 - April closing balance was \$246,281.98

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

b. AEP Grant status update

- We applied for \$390,000 and we got an approval for \$250,000
- A question as to whether the funds are adequate to carry out council's activities was raised
- Tim advised that it will be difficult but manageable and that we will need to look at other funding sources
- The \$250,000 for WRRP funds that was just approved will also help pay for part of the EO Coordinator's salary to do project monitoring

5. Review of the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Proposed SAR Action Plan

a. Committee suggestions and response letter

- The subcommittee was formed to come up with recommendations
- Ron brought forward recommendations that he drafted for the committee to comment. He stated that it is a simplified version of the plan which makes it

dangerous as it makes the process generic. Would like to see a group response which will present a much stronger response

- The committee was asked to review Ron's comments and supply feedback since his comments are mostly questions to the Board as a whole to comment on what fits and what doesn't
- Need to strongly point out that we have an Approved Watershed Management Plan in the basin
- Ken is available to give comments to the subcommittee if needed
- The document is outdated. Most of the member's information is not correct and therefore misleading
- It's vital to remember that the action plan will guide legislation and will impact social and economic community welfare, so it is imperative to supply feedback now before it's too late

Action: Tim to circulate the draft summary to the entire Board no later than June 5, 2017

6. 2017 AGM Report

- Consensus liked to have a professional present
- The presentation timing was good
- Need to update the website. It was missing the AGM information

7. Source Water Protection Workshop

- a. Report
 - Sandi put together a report post workshop

Action: Tim to circulate the report to the Board members

- b. Future direction – Whiskey Valley Aquifer, Water Coops

8. MRWCC Performance Evaluation

- a. Feedback Surveys
 - Reviewed the survey feedback
 - Great synopsis
 - Planning to send out a survey for the membership and later for the community
 - Good foundation for the strategic planning session framework

9. Fall MRWCC Strategic Planning Session

- a. Transportation
 - A question was presented to see if Board members would like to rent a bus for the trip
 - The consensus was that members would like to drive on their own
- b. General format and session structure discussion

- The Strategic Planning Session is scheduled for October 25 to 26, 2017 at Cypress Hills Resort in Saskatchewan and will comprise of Board Retreat, SODCAP Tour, and Strategic Planning Session

Action: Tim to ask Sandi to facilitate

Discussion:

- Darcy:
 - Would like to see a topic to explain why WPACs were formed and how they have evolved over time
 - Lorne Taylor can be a good speaker

Action: Tim to invite Dr. Taylor to give a presentation at the next AGM

10. Team update

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - Education Outreach report
 - Will give a presentation for grade 2s at the Milk River Elementary School on Monday
 - Will be presenting to 4 groups of 30 Calgary School students at WOSPP on Tuesday and Thursday on water quality monitoring
 - Looking to promote the program to Warner and Foremost Schools
 - Youth Range Days update
 - The agenda is set
 - Would like to get old timers to tell watershed stories at the camp fire on Wednesday
 - Fall Tour update
 - October 6, 2017
 - Eastern Watershed Tour
 - October 20, 2017
 - Canoe Trip update
 - June 24, 2017
 - 2017 Summer Meander Newsletter
 - Deadline for article submission is June 16, 2017
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - i. Surface Water Monitoring
 - Will be syncing up the program with AEP in June
 - This will allow MRWCC to drop sites that are being sampled by both parties, eliminating sampling replication and reduce program cost for MRWCC by approximately \$5,000

- Have placed substrates to monitor mussels at all main stem sampling sites of the Milk River
- c. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - Two reports done
 - The third will be done in a month
 - The Blackfeet Water Compact is an agreement among the Blackfeet Nation, the United States and the State of Montana that confirms and establishes the Tribe's water rights and confirms the Tribe's jurisdiction and authority to manage those rights
 - The compact required the approval of the Tribe, the State of Montana and the United States. The Montana Legislature approved the compact in 2009. Congress passed a bill in 2016, which provided federal approval of the compact as well as \$422 million in funding for water-related projects on the Reservation. Then on April 20, 2017, Blackfeet tribal members voted to approve the Blackfeet Water Compact and Settlement Act.
- d. Transboundary Watershed Team
 - MRWA – River Rendezvous Tour June 27th Planning discussion
 - Jenifer Anderson, Milk River Watershed Alliance Coordinator has set up the draft agenda as follows:
 - “American only” tour option:
 - June 26th - MRWA Quarterly Meeting 5:00 PM, Shelby
 - Canadian Option Tour:
 - June 27th
 - 7 am - Leave Shelby
 - 8am – Arrive in Milk River
 - 8:15am Leave Milk River
 - 9:00am Milk River Ridge Reservoir Constructed Wetland and edible forest project site
 - 9:30am Leave MRRR (will pass by a couple drop structures, a in canal power generation station, and the St. Mary's Main Canal)
 - 10:30am Arrive at St Mary's Reservoir Dam site (Alberta Irrigation Projects Discussion)
 - 11:15am Leave St Mary's Reservoir
 - 12:00pm At Carway Border Crossing
 - 12:30pm Meet Montana Tour Group for Bag Lunch
 - 1:30pm Arrive at St Mary's Diversion Dam

- 3:00pm View Siphons
- 4:30pm View drop structures and confluence of diversion and Milk River
- 6:30pm Arrive back in Shelby
- Joint Milk River Film Project update
 - The filming will be conducted on the day of the tour
 - AEP will not fund the project
 - Will need to ask our other partners for the project funding
 - The MRWCC's contribution is \$10,000
- The next Transboundary workshop is scheduled in January in Havre or Glasgow, Montana
 - 7th Annual Matador Ranch Science & Land Management Symposium is on June 14, 2017. Ian Dyson will give a presentation

11. Upcoming Events

- a. Sustainable Canada AGM – May 31st 2017
- b. Canoe Trip – June 24, 2017
- c. MRWA – River Rendezvous Tour June 27th 2017
- d. Fall Hike Tour – October 6, 2017
- e. Eastern Watershed Tour – October 20, 2017
- f. Board Retreat – October 25 to 26, 2017 – SODCAP Tour, and Strategic Planning Session - Cypress Hills Resort Saskatchewan, Tentative

12. Round table discussions

- Ron:
 - There is a request to develop a solar project just south of Milk River. The plan is to develop a small PV solar project. One idea was to revert the site back to native grasses with an active solar installation
 - Looking for feedback on whether there is any merit to this idea, how to contact interested parties to partner with and whether there is any opportunity to study the impact of solar on the vegetation
 - The consensus was not to be involved in this project
- Will:
 - Went to a meeting on Board Governance in Lethbridge on:
 - Finances
 - How to handle people
 - Board responsibility
 - This is a good session for the Board to attend

- They can also present at Board meetings
- Can invite them and have a joint session with other partners in the area

Action: Tim to look at hosting one in the area in January or February and look for interested partners

- Darcy had questions on the deferred contribution issue:
 - Is it possible to identify projects for the deferred dollars?
 - Will not be possible but we can ask
 - Can WPACs impacted by the AEP deferred issue write a joint letter to the Minister to ask if this can be pardoned?
 - Not the best way to go as we might antagonize the AEP staff and make things even more difficult for the MRWCC
 - Do we need to involve the MLAs?
 - Not at this time
 - Do we need to prepare a letter signed by the chairman?
 - Not the right time to do that
 - Can the money be deferred over several years?
 - It doesn't make a difference since we will have to give it back in the end

Action: Staff to go back and investigate if there is project money that was not spent and present the case to AEP

- William:
 - The Milk River Museum is requesting if the MRWCC is willing to place a display in the museum

Action: Tim to talk to the museum personnel about what their needs are

13. Other items

14. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:05pm. **Carried.**

15. Next Meeting Date

- September 28, 2017 in Milk River

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____