



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

October 15, 2014 – 11:00 AM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: John Ross, Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Lloyd Closson, Ross Ford, William King, Dennis Spackman, Kristen Dykstra, Joan Hughson, Suzanne Liebelt, Roy Audet, Ron McNeil, Sandi Riemersma, Tim Romanow, Cyd Cunningham, and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Ken Brown, Paulette Fox, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Frank Larney, Trevor Murray, Brian Hills, Ed Sloboda,

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross brought the meeting to order at 11:08am and welcomed everyone
- Introductions were conducted

2. Minutes from last meeting

- May 22, 2014 meeting minutes were reviewed
- There was a request to correct the spelling of “misspelled” and to remove Hike tour from the upcoming events on the agenda since the event had already happened

Motion: Ross Ford moved to accept the minutes as amended. William King seconded.
Carried.

Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Update

- Sandi presented the IWMP update
- She gave the overview of activity including revisions made
- Planning process started 2008 and have had very good representation from all sectors
- 2009 to 2010 - the ToR completed and indorsed
- 2011 to 2012 – worked on the Draft IWMP
- 2013 – held stakeholder meetings
- Met with the Treaty 7 Water subcommittee to invite the First Nations to the table
- 2014 – received feedback from Municipalities

- Final review with the IWMP team and MRWCC board
- Addressed local concerns in the IWMP and for the future direction of the SSRP
- Passage of time has resulted in altered planning courses
- There was more focus on getting the plan right and that it reflected local ideas
- The revised statements were discussed
- Two motions were put forward that needed council's approval:

Motion: Ross Ford moves that the MRWCC supports the final draft of the Milk River Integrated Watershed Management Plan. Ron McNeil Seconded. **Carried.**

Motion: Suzanne Liebelt moves to encourage the IWMP Team to seek support and/or endorsement from municipalities in the watershed and from the GOA. Will Lindeman Seconded. **Carried.**

3. Financial Statements Update

- May to August Financial Statements were reviewed
 - a. May closing balance was \$164,588.12
 - b. June closing balance was \$404,666.84
 - c. July closing balance was \$373,926.57
 - d. August closing balance was \$362,305.07
 - e. Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (WRRP)
 - We submitted three grant proposals for three projects:
 1. Hilmer Site Riparian Restoration Project
 - The intent is to build a bioengineering structure that will help stabilize the river bank
 2. Milk River Cattle Co. Riparian Restoration Project
 - The intent is to assess the site and provide a conceptual design using the most effective streambank stabilization method and provide a recommended maintenance and monitoring evaluation program for the site.
 3. Milk River Watershed Riparian Restoration Stewardship Program
 - The intent is to apply for funding to initiate a program that will allow residents and agricultural

producers within reach 1 and 3 to seek support in acquiring resources that will help prevent and/or mitigate impacts of agricultural practices on water quality, as well as improve health of riparian areas to mitigate future flood and drought events within the Milk River watershed

f. Cannon's Take Root Grant Program

- Obtained a \$5,000 grant and a camera from Canon's Take the Root Program
- The funding will enable us to restore 6 sites on the Red Creek by planting desirable native vegetation to restore the healthy stream banks, and provide important habitat for fish and wildlife
- Soliciting volunteers to help plant native cottonwood and willows on the sites October 16th and 17th, 2014
- This is a joint project by County of Warner and MRWCC

g. Core and project Funding

- Received \$249,000 for core and project funding from ESRD. The joint application for both grants was 290,000
 - Submitted the interim budget report to ESRD. This is the first time this was requested
 - With this shortfall in funding, projects like Education Outreach are being funded by other donation funds
 - The Transboundary Watershed Team has delayed due to lack of funding
- Had an opportunity to work with a summer student provided by ESRD who put together a Literature Review of the Ecosystem Services Payment Programs to provide a holistic analysis of ecosystem services programs including success, shortcomings and lessons learned

Action: Tim to circulate the Literature Review to the board members

- The IWMP project is one of the deliverables requested by ESRD so it should be funded in whole by ESRD. So far there is a shortfall of approximately \$40,000 which if no additional funding is obtained, will have to recoup the funds from the funds in the reserve

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

4. Alberta Water Council update – Ken Brown

- Ken Brown sent his regrets for not being able to attend the meeting
- His term is coming to an end
- The last meeting will be October 29
- BRWA and OWC will provide the rep and alternate, respectively, to represent WPACs

5. 2014 WPAC Summit

- Taking place October 21 to 23
- 10 of the 11 WPACs will give presentations
- Tim will present on IWMP and Transboundary issues
- Some Ministers and MLAs have indicated that they will attend
- So far Lloyd, Cyd and Tim will attend. Board members are urged to attend

6. 2014 WPAC Forum

- Held past June in Nisku
- Discussed organization restructuring and biodiversity framework, specifically the SSRP Biodiversity which is scheduled to be completed end of the year

7. Strategic Fund Development Plan update

- Had a meeting September 19 to discuss funding strategies
- It is getting increasingly difficult to access funding
- Discussed fundraising ideas and associated issues
- Discussed whether it is necessary to secure a joint fundraising position with other WPACs and/or stakeholders

Action: Bring back recommendations from the committee to the next board meeting

8. SSRP update

- Final SSRP is available
- Enacted September 1st, 2014

9. Red Creek Stewardship Group Tour update

- Took place August 28, 2014
- Kerry Hyatt is doing a great job organizing events for the group
- The MRWCC will continue to provide support to the group

- Stopped at a few sites to view off site watering systems, conducted mockup riparian assessments and presentation on the state of wildlife on the landscape
- Looking for volunteers to plant trees October 16 and 17

10. Shell FuellingChange Grant “Partnering to improve water quality in the Milk River Watershed” Program execution update

- Received \$10,000 from Shell FuellingChange 2 years ago. The money needs to be spent by the end of this year
- Putting up two winter watering sites on Barry Snow’s property
- Chose the site because it is a great site due to the site’s accessibility as a future demonstration site and the site’s proximity to one of the long term sampling sites

11. MRWCC Environmental Stewardship awards

- This is a program to honour successful stewardship stories
- A great opportunity to highlight environmental achievements in the community
- Nominations will be in 3 categories: Individuals; families and commercial businesses that are good environmental stewards of the Milk River watershed
- The winners will be featured at the 10th MRWCC Annual General Meeting
- Closing date is February 20, 2015

12. MRWCC Heritage Tree Project Proposal

- Based on Roy’s Audet’s idea
- The Milk River Watershed Council Canada to launch a Heritage Tree Project
- The project will allow residents of the Milk River Watershed to celebrate the pioneering spirit of the community by identifying and nominating noninvasive trees of local significance within the watershed
- Residents may also plant and nurture young trees and witness them grow
- Will be soliciting for tree nominations
- The chosen trees will be recorded, noting their heritage tree details such as age, size, appearance and most importantly their cultural and historical significance
- The stories and photos of recognized trees will then be featured on the MRWCC website

- In addition, the identification of these trees enables the MRWCC and community-minded organizations to locate potential native seed/cuttings sources. Collecting these seeds will ensure the succession planting of legacy trees for future generations to enjoy
- Identified trees will also be provided with a wildlife/livestock proof protective surround and recognition plaque
- Plantings of new protected Legacy trees will also be encouraged under the program

13. MRWCC Board Appreciation Dinner/MRCBA Christmas Party

- Would like to support the MRCBA by having a joint event (MRWCC appreciation dinner and the MRCBA Christmas Dinner)
- The Christmas dinner is scheduled for December 13

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to support the MRCBA by having a joint Christmas Dinner with the MRCBA on December 13. Dennis Spackman Seconded. **Carried**

14. Office space

- Space is tight in the office
- The lack of space in the office was previously discussed with executive
- Initially there was a discussion to have space opening up in the building

Action: Suzanne will follow up with the Town of Milk River on space availability and report at the next meeting

15. Team Updates

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - i. Meeting report
 - Had a CAIT meeting September 19
 - ii. Youth Engagement Program Report
 - Education Outreach Coordinators are meeting to share ideas at the WPAC summit
 - School Field trips and Classroom presentations
 - MRWCC is currently working with WOSPP to provide science based material to field presentations that are being offered to interested schools at WOSPP
 - So far she has conducted field trips with the Milk River Elementary School

- Cyd is promoting these courses at other local schools as well
 - Update on CTS course
 - Cyd advised that the course was completed and is now on the MRWCC website
 - YRDs report
 - Successful event this year
 - Top hand award winner was Damien Bectell of Carway AB and the runner-up was Nicole Wensman
 - Next year's YRDs will take place in Cardston County at Kimball Park, at Highway 501 and St Mary's River.
- iii. Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup and Weed Pull Day
 - A joint program by WOSPP and MRWCC
 - Took place September 23, 2014
 - The shoreline cleanup was done in the morning at the Weir Bridge, the rodeo grounds and the beach site
 - In the afternoon we picked about ten large bags of Dalmatian Toadflax, a designated noxious weed in Alberta, along the hoodoo trails
 - Feedback on the shore cleanup was given to the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup Program
 - Thanks to the WOSPP management for keeping the park so clean
- iv. Bonanza Day Report
 - Went well but we did not win this year
 - Had a display at the Civic Center
- v. 2014 Hike Tour
 - 33 people participated
 - It is becoming a very popular event
 - This was the fourth year to host the tour and it has always taken place on the Northern part of Pinhorn. Would like to visit the South part but accessibility is difficult

- Wendy Sloboda presented on Paleontology and François Blouin presented on Key wildlife of the Pinhorn and Milk River Canyon
 - vi. 2014 Canoe Tour
 - Was cancelled due to weather
 - Participants who showed up went for a short hike through the WOSPP hoodoos
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - i. Surface water monitoring
 - One more sample to go and will be done for this year
 - Planning a wrap-up meeting for this year in November
 - Milk River Storage facility was also updated
 - County of Warner have submitted a funding proposal to build a water storage facility under the Alberta Community Resilience Program
 - The County of Warner also applied for the funding for the Gold Springs Bank Stabilization project
 - Ken Miller received a letter of support from the Provincial Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Honourable Verlyn Olson, on the water storage facility
 - The County of Warner is seeking a motion of support from MRWCC Council for the funding proposal to build a water storage facility

Motion: Suzanne Liebelt moved to support the County of Warner's funding proposal to build a water storage facility in the area. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

Action: John and Tim will work on a letter of support

- c. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
 - i. IWMP Update
 - As discussed above
- d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - i. Milk River Water Storage Update
- e. Transboundary Watershed Team
 - Delayed putting together due to lack of funding from GOA

- The Director of MRWA also resigned and communication with Montana has been at a stand still

16. Upcoming events

- Hike Tour, October 4, 2014
- WPAC Summit – Old Timers’ Cabin, Edmonton, October 21 to 23, 2014. Hosted by the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance.

17. Round table discussions

- Ross Ford inform the board that Mary will be going to Malawi, Africa on vacation and with Ebola crisis in the region, he wondered if Mary would be on quarantine for the recommended 21 days upon her return to ease those that would not be comfortable
- The region Mary is going is currently free of Ebola and this is not a concern. We wish Mary a safe and enjoyable visit home!

18. Other items

19. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ross Ford moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:27pm. **Carried.**

20. Next Meeting Date

- November 27, 2014 – Milk River at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____