



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

January 26, 2012 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Darcy Wills, Ken Miller, Lorraine Nicol, John Ross, Ed Sloboda, Greg Ottway, Mike Gervais, Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Joan Hughson, Don Welsh, Tim Romanow, and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Randy Taylor, Darlene Sakires, William Schamber, Ken Brown, and Terrence Lazarus

1. Welcome and introductions

- Vice Chairman, Ken Miller brought the meeting to order at 1:40pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Minutes from last meeting

Tim Romanow reviewed the November 24, 2011 Board Meeting minutes

Motion: Warren Cunningham moved to accept the minutes as presented. Lorraine Nicol seconded.
Carried.

3. Financial Statements Update

- Will Lindeman presented the financial statement
 - At the end of the year MRWCC is eligible to apply for 50% of the GST, hence the GST Claimable on the accounts summary
 - September expenses for Sandi's Executive Director work was paid under MiRTAP Contracts hence the decrease in the Executive Director's expenses and increase in the Contracts Expenses

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statement as presented. Darcy Wills seconded.
Carried

4. Banking Authorization

- a. Motion required to add Tim Romanow to the ATB Financial Accounts for MRWCC

Action: Will Lindeman to look at the possibility of signing up for telephone banking for ease of transactions

Motion: Don Welsh moved to add Tim Romanow to the ATB Financial Accounts for MRWCC. Mike Gervais seconded. **Carried**

5. Employment Status

- a. WPAC – HR report
- Sandi had started the process to change the status of employment from contract to permanent as per other WPACs
- Tim would like to continue with the discussions

Action: Tim to put an employment package together and review with the Executive and this has to be done before March meeting to ensure that the process is completed before the next fiscal year

6. 2012 WPAC Project Funding Expression of Interest

- a. Potential projects to be submitted on or before February 2nd 2012
- Alberta Environment and Water is looking for Expression of Interest for proposed project funding for 2012-13.
- So far, two projects have been identified: State of the Watershed and IWMP

- Sandi had suggested submitting a project for water monitoring data collection. Stating there is need to collect dissolved oxygen data which has not been done due to lack of data loggers
- A question on whether bank stabilization project can qualify was raised.
- Although the proposal for funding for Bacteria source tracking project was initially turned down, Alberta Agriculture has indicated that the project is being considered to still take place at a smaller scale than originally anticipated
- Tim asked the members if there are any suggestions for projects to be included for funding proposal
- John Ross will be meeting with the Minister of Agriculture on another subject but would like to take the opportunity to discuss the source tracking project with the Minister

Action: Tim to send Bacteria source tracking background information to John Ross for him to review prior to meeting with the Minister

- Question on working with the trans boundary Neighbors on water monitoring was raised and if there is need to proceed on a joint venture
- Ken Miller advised that the Joint Watershed Report has been ignored. He is happy to see that Sandi is getting active again and would like to use her expertise to get things going
- At the moment there is no strong connection with the Saskatchewan neighbors although there is an opportunity to work with them on the ground water level data acquisition project
- Ryan Davidson from AESB in Medicine Hat is going to assist in helping us get Saskatchewan contacts.
- There is need to look at the watershed as an entity
- Lorraine Nicol stated that she had concerns on the involvement of WPACs on the Land Use Frame Work Regional Advisory Committee and how the WPACs are going to work with RACs as they seek advice
- Discussion on weather now would be the time to provide feedback from the board level in response to the RAC recommendations prior to the draft SSRP.

Action: MRWCC need to send suggestions to Land Use Frame Work Regional Advisory Committee

Action: Tim to send out a Land Use Framework link to the board members for feedback

Motion: Lorraine Nicol moved to send a letter of concern to the Land Use Frame Work Regional Advisory Committee and copy to the Minister on the role of WPACs and others involved in land and water management. Darcy Will seconded. **Carried**

Action: Tim to draft a letter of concern and circulate to Board Members for input

7. Milk River Watershed Water Level Data Acquisition Project

- MRWCC was approached to implement a Milk River water level data acquisition project to improve on the MiRTAP numerical model
- The MRWCC proposes to meet with municipalities and water cooperative managers to collect available water level data and pump test data from each organization
- This data will be provided digitally to the Geological Survey of Canada, NRC for incorporation into the MiRTAP model
- Transboundary ground water managers in Montana and Saskatchewan will also be contacted for relevant information
- The proposed amount for the budget is \$15,000
- Project completion is scheduled for March
- Although the time line is short, Tim and Mary will strive to complete the work within the time frame
- Tim and Mary would like to attend the MRWA AGM in Montana and use the trip for data acquisition as well. Interested Board Members to give their names to Tim for registration

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to send Tim, Mary and any interested Board Members to attend the MRWA AGM in Montana and use the trip for data acquisition as well. Greg Ottway seconded. **Carried**

8. Water Well Monitoring Program Update

- As discussed

9. St Mary and Milk River Basin Study Report

- a. Response from the Council and/or teams

- The Bureau of Reclamation and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation are seeking feedback on the draft St. Mary and Milk River Basin Study report
- Deadline for the feedback February 6, 2012
- Does the MRWCC want to respond?
- There is only 1% change in usable water
- Rehabilitation projects have been pushed into the future due to other social, political and economic constraints
- There is need to thank the Bureau for acknowledging the MRWCC and to encourage to work cooperatively with them in the future

Action: Tim to send a thank you letter to the Bureau of Reclamation and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for their acknowledgement of the MRWCC and for the opportunity to provide feedback into the draft Basin Study Report, stating the importance of managing the St Mary/Milk System for the benefit of all stakeholders on both sides of the boarder.

10. WPAC – GOA Project Management Meeting Report

- a. Held January 10th 2012
- Monique Dietrich with Alberta Environment and Water sent an invitation to all Southern Alberta WPACs to discuss process of the Expression of Interest letters
- This meeting was called at short notice and was supposed to include Board Members, Team leaders from Alberta Environment and Water and WPACs
- Tim apologized to the Board members for not given ample time to inform Board members of this meeting which required their presence
- Alberta Environment and Water apologized for the short notice but stated there was need to push the meeting ahead
- Heather Sinton presented the status of funding ability
 - Budget for WQ monitoring was not cut despite rumors, only staff reorganization for other projects, which should not affect WPAC projects.
 - Corporate operations plan is not completed for AEW
 - Updates on Cumulative effects management is now incorporated but they are not sure how WPACs will fit in
 - 2012-2013 funding will be forthcoming without cuts
 - Minister Mandate Letter Items:
 1. Key actions under water for life with stakeholders and experts
 2. Develop appropriate partnerships for science based indicators
 - Modeling priorities were discussed – stating that lots of groups are using the ALCES model on cumulative effects
 - GOA have their own modeling software that they recommend for use and will not use models from private industry
- Alberta Environment and Water - the “Water” addition was questioned and it was advised that it meant to bring more attention and emphasis to addressing outstanding issues such as wetland policy, water allocation, wastewater management, etc.
- They will try to plan 2 of these meetings each year
- The meeting was constructive but there is need for improvement

11. 2012 AGM Update

- Draft agenda is attached
- Key note speaker confirmed
- Still need to fill one more spot for a speaker
- Invited the Minister of AEW but to date there has been no reply
- There is need to send another invitation letter to the Minister of AEW
- Darcy Wills has been appointed to conduct elections

12. 2012 WPAC Summit Update

- Tim had a meeting with other WPAC Executive Directors

- They agreed that the summit should take place end of September, proposed dates: 24, 25, 26 and 27
- They would like to see an expansion in terms of days
- There was a proposal to have a tour in Montana
- Accommodation for participants would be booked in Lethbridge
- Bus participants to Milk River Civic Center, Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park for some of the presentations
- Would like to incorporate Cultural, Economical and Historical aspects at the summit
- Possibility of having breakout sessions
- The Minister will be invited
- Planning for 80 to 100 participants

13. Milk River Watershed Invasive Weed Collaboration Meeting – March 2012

- a. In cooperation with Alberta Invasive Plant Council
 - Alberta Invasive Council approached Tim to host a stake holder meeting to talk about weed issues and improve communication within weed managers and how to undertake rapid response programs
 - The MRWCC would take this opportunity to collaborate and coordinate invasive species weed mapping with GOA and Municipalities to be used in the SOW report
 - The meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2012

14. Team Updates

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - i. 2012 Poster Contest
 - No meeting was conducted since the last report. The next meeting is scheduled in February prior to the Board Meeting
 - Schools within the watershed were contacted
 - So far only Milk River Elementary has indicated that they will submit posters
 - Posters will be showcased in the Milk River Town Hall in February
 - Judging will be first week of March
 - Award presentations for winners will be held at the AGM
 - ATB has agreed to sponsor prizes for winners
 - ii. Winter Newsletter
 - The newsletter was sent out a week ago
 - Hard copies are available for those who would like a copy
 - iii. 2012 Agrium's Caring for our watersheds
 - All schools within the watershed were contacted and packages were sent
 - So far there has not been any response
 - Brenda Stryker who resided in Foremost has volunteered to help with school recruitment in Foremost area
 - Mary and Leta, program Coordinator with Oldman Watershed Council will be hosting a booth to promote the program in Lethbridge during the Teacher's Convention February 23 and 24, 2012
 - Darcy Wills volunteered to meet with the Horizon School Division No. 67 to promote the program

Action: Mary to send CFW promotional materials to Darcy Wills

- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - A meeting was held Dec 16, 2011
 - Natalie Kromrey with AEW indicated that they might not increase monitoring funding so there will be need to prioritize such as focusing on the tributaries
 - Natalie was under the impression that the Environment Canada sites on the Western and Eastern Crossings were no longer going to include WQ sampling.
 - i. River2 D Model Update
 - There will be no additional funding for under ice data collection
 - ii. Surface Water Monitoring Update

- Sandi presented the water quality data summary at the IWMP team
 - iii. Ground Water Monitoring Update
- The project with AESB is almost done
 - iv. Milk River Bacteria Source Tracking Project Update
- Bacterial source tracking project – Alberta Ag has secured limited funding
 - c. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
 - i. IWMP Update
- A meeting was held January 24, 2012
- Sandi presented the water quality data summary at the IWMP team
- Sam Wirzba gave an update on the status of SRD report
 - Wildlife component is complete
 - They have not started the fisheries component yet
 - Public lands has completed the rangeland component but the industrial is not quite yet done
 - Looking at adding a component on Access Management Recommendations to the IWMP, a subcommittee of stakeholders will be established to look at possible recommendations.
- ii. WPAC – GVI workshop attendance
- A workshop is scheduled for Feb 13th, 9am to 2pm at the Lethbridge Research Centre. Board members interested in attending were asked to submit their names for registration

Action: Send email with workshop information to all Board Members

- d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - Urgency has diminished
 - Next meeting in March
 - Two meetings left
 - Work will be done late summer or fall

15. Upcoming events

- January 31 to February 1, 2012 – Irrigation Crop Production Update, Lethbridge Lodge
- February 7, 2012 – Holding the Reins Landowner Summit for OWC, Fort Macleod Community Hall
- February 16, 2012 – Southern Alberta Invasive Plant Seminar, Picture Butte
- February 21, 2012 - MRWA AGM, Havre, Montana

Action: Send agenda to the Board members

- February 22 – 23, 2012 – Wetland Courses, Edmonton
- February 29 – March 1, 2012 – Wetland Courses, Calgary
- March 2012 - Milk River Watershed Invasive Weed Collaboration Meeting – In cooperation with Alberta Invasive Plant Council (Date to be announced)
- April 4, 2012 – MRWCC AGM, Milk River Civic Center

16. Other items

17. Next Meeting Date

- February 23, 2012, AENV and Water Office Lethbridge 1:30pm
- John Ross will not be present due to health reasons – Ken Miller will conduct the meeting

18. Meeting Adjournment

- Warren Cunningham moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:20pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____