



## Minutes

### MRWCC Board Meeting

September 24, 2015 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

**Present:** Will Lindeman, Lloyd Closson, William King, Suzanne Liebelt, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda, John Ross, Joan Hughson, Frank Larney, Brian Hills, Kristen Dykstra, Ross Ford, Lorraine Nicol, Tim Romanow, Mary Lupwayi and Sandi Riemersma by conference call (IWMP update only)

**Absent:** Roy Audet, Warren Cunningham, Dennis Spackman, Ron McNeil, Trevor Murray, Paulette Fox, Suzanne Liebelt

**Guests:** Brian Laing, Environment and Parks and Ryan Hall, Granite Oil Corp.

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:36 pm
- Introductions were conducted

#### 2. Minutes from May 28, 2015 meeting

- Last meeting minutes were reviewed
- There was a past motion to support the Milk River Ag. Society to purchase a screen for the Civic Centre. Tim advised that he had talked to Mr. Bob Matlock, Chairman of the Milk River Ag. Society who advised that Civic Centre already purchased a good screen and Public address system, Mr. Matlock thanked the Watershed council for the support and welcomes additional suggestions to make the civic centre more effective.

**Motion:** Darcy Wills moved to accept the minutes as presented. William King seconded.

**Carried.**

#### IWMP Team meeting report

- Sandi Riemersma gave an update via conference call
- She presented a review and comments from the Cross Ministry Steering Committee on the Milk River IWMP

- Cover letter from Robert Stokes was fairly general and congratulated the effort of the MRWCC and partners
- The MRWCC should celebrate the local support for the IWMP and acknowledge provincial recognition of effort
- She also gave an update of the Milk River IWMP Team Meeting
  - A few minor revisions were made to reflect the comments received from the Cross-Ministry Steering Committee and others
  - Minor changes were noted and accepted by the Team
  - Rather than a signature page, notable quotes will be included in the front of the document
    - a request from specific groups/individuals had been made to submit notable quotes
      - Joan Hughson, Ross Ford, Ken Miller and Suzanne Liebelt (Town of Milk River) to submit quotes
      - Joan Hughson presented a quote from County of Forty Mile
  - Final Plan, including quotes, should be complete by the end of September
  - A dozen hard-copies will be printed, bound and disseminated to all jurisdictions represented in the watershed
- She also presented a Message from the Milk River IWMP Team to MRWCC Board as follows:
  - “We are pleased with the outcome of the Milk River IWMP. The Team views this as a valuable planning tool for the region and looks forward to its implementation.
  - The Milk River IWMP Team has disbanded, effective September 17, 2015 and encourages the Board to work with Partners throughout the implementation phase.”
- Final Community Meeting
  - Met with Phil Boehme, GOA lead for the Milk River AWMP
  - GOA is planning a Community Meeting late October or early November at Heritage Hall
  - A brief presentation/update of the final Milk River IWMP will be presented at this meeting providing a segue to the AWMP

- Sandi thanks the IWMP Team and Board members for their input
- John Ross thanks Sandi and Ken Miller for all the work they did to complete the IWMP

**Discussion:**

- Darcy asked whether the timing and completion of the Milk River IWMP was comparable with other WPACs
  - Sandi stated that it was comparable and that all WPACs are in different stages of IWMP execution
- Lorraine Nicol inquired about the implementation of the plan
  - Sandi advised that IWMP is a living document and will be used as guidance document for the future
  - Responsibility for implementation is the responsibility of all stakeholders not just the MRWCC

**3. Twin River Natural Area Planning Update**

- Brian Laing, the Approvals Manager with Rangeland Management Operations Division, South Saskatchewan Region, Environment and Parks presented on the proposal for reclassification and boundary amendment for the Twin River Heritage Rangeland Natural Area
- He gave the history and background of the Twin River Heritage Rangeland Natural Area
- Brief overview of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)
- Discussed the proposed change with regard to:
  - Reclassification
  - Expansion
- He also discussed the outcome of the changes and future expansion potential, noted that expansion would be based on historical resource significance and value for biodiversity. Any additional expansion would be through a differing process and not 'on the table' at this time
- Primary benefit to the leasee on reclassification is potential for 30 year lease agreements, which allows for long term stability of local operators

**Discussion:**

- The Milk River watershed has a huge stake in the plan

- Written comments should be submitted to Tim and will be compiled into a response that will be reviewed at the council at the November board meeting before being submitted to the GOA
- It is good to see that grazing is included, and recognized as a necessity for sustainable management
- There will be a 60 day consultation period, with a public survey on EP website
- Should be included on the next Board meeting agenda

#### 4. Financial Statements Update

- a. May Financial Statements
  - May closing balance was \$219,482.09
- b. June Financial Statements
  - June closing balance was \$184,523.86
- c. July Financial Statements
  - July closing balance was \$168,414.11
- d. August Financial Statements
  - August closing balance was \$431,716.42
- e. Core and Project Funding update
  - Receive \$280,000.00 from E and P for core and project funding

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

- f. Budget Discussions meeting with Finance Minister Joe Ceci
  - Will Lindeman and Tim attended a meeting with the Minister of Finance during the Chamber of Commerce Meeting
  - Had a brief about 20 minute discussion with the Minister
  - Discussed the need to address funding shortfalls
  - Were supposed to meet with the Minister of E and P but she was unable to attend the meeting
  - Tim has sent a note to reschedule the meeting
- g. Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program Grant update
  - E and P
    - Received \$70,000 funding from E and P in support of the projects that address water quality concerns by assisting producers to implement their projects
  - ARD

- Secured \$130,000 under the WRRP through the ARD, Growing Forward funding, the primary target audience is individuals within the Milk River watershed wishing to complete a project
- Interested landowners will have to complete an application form
- This amount will be disbursed by ARD, the MRWCC's role is to help coordinate the selection of eligible projects that align with our proposal objectives
- The WRRP Project Review Committee Met on September 22, 2015 and discussed the following:
  - An application form to be used by the applicants
  - A project agreement has been produced, to be signed by successful applicants prior to commencement of the project to ensure that stewardship projects are undertaken accordingly
  - Ranking sheet to ensure that project prioritization is achieved during project selected
  - Project advertisement
    - a. Factsheet and Brochure
    - b. Meander Newsletter
    - c. MRWCC Website
    - d. Prairie Post
- WRRP Project Review Committee will be responsible for determining funding eligibility
- Two producers from the Milk River North Fork have shown interest

**Motion:** Darcy Wills moved to proceed with the WRRP project as proposed. Ed Sloboda seconded. **Carried.**

h. Alberta Ecotrust – Declined

- A grant application submitted to Alberta Ecotrust for \$30,000 for invasive species mapping was declined

## 5. 11<sup>th</sup> AGM date

- The CAIT team met and proposed May 12
- Ann Tollestrup and KPMG were contacted and Ann had concerns with timing as she and KPMG will not have enough time to prepare records
- Still waiting to hear from KPMG

- The Board proposed May 31, 2016 and in the condition that the accountants can't make the timeline, July 12, 13, or 14 could be the fall back date

**Action:** Mary to follow up with KPMG and Ann Tollestrup to ensure that May 31, 2016 will work for them

**Motion:** Ross Ford moved that May 31, 2016 should be the next AGM date and in the event that the accountants can't make the timeline, July 12, 13, or 14 should be the fall back date. Lorraine Nicol Seconded. **Carried.**

## **6. Bylaws Special Resolution**

### a. Bylaws amendments

- The bylaw amendments passed on April 6, 2015 were submitted to Service Alberta (SA) and rescinded as some of the content was outdated
- The required changes were made and a draft amendment was sent back to SA for review and we were told they are good to file
- Based on the decision made on the AGM date we will need to change the date. The current bylaw states that "The Annual General Meeting of the MRWCC shall be held no later than April 30th of each year".

### b. Change of Financial Reporting Period

- E and P advised to change the reporting period from the calendar year (January to December) to Fiscal year (April to March). The change has come about because the current reporting period does not coincide with the funder's (GOA) reporting period which is April to March and it makes it very difficult to review and compare financial reports
- E and P has requested that the changes are to be implemented this year
- Since we are already in the fiscal year, SA advised to proceed by filing the financial statements report for January to December 2015 and then submit a partial report for January to March, 2016 after which the changes will be in effect upon approval
- Will need to amend the bylaws by adding the approved date

### c. Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the members

- The Consensus was to call for a special meeting during the November 26 Board meeting

## **7. Water Supply Challenges update – Brian Hills**

- It was a dry late spring and summer

- There was no natural flow back into Montana mid-June to Mid-August, creating a deficit on Montana flow
- Based on hard coded numbers, last 2 weeks of August to 1<sup>st</sup> week of September, there was less than 1,000 deciliters of water
- If the dry weather persist next year, will have to look at other alternatives
- This year, diversion flow ended by mid-September
- By July/August:
  - North Fork had .4 cubic meters per second
  - South Fork, no flow
  - Town of Milk River, .8 cubic meters per second
- There is a concern within the Town of Milk River, Village of Coutts as well as water coops that if there is a cold period in winter, it could result in total freeze up
- Current usage is approximately 17cubic metres per second per month for everyone, the Town of Milk River estimates they have 6 weeks supply maximum, not including fire suppression needs
- Working with The Town to understand what should be done to conserve water

**Action:** Brian will provide information on flow, and assist in preparing an article that can be used to better inform community members and municipalities of the situation and potential water supply challenges/need for conservation.

- Ross Ford added that E and P could provide a presentation on the water sharing agreements and drought planning at the AGM next year

## **8. Milk River Approved Water Management Plan update**

- Terms of Reference – Oct
  - Terms of Reference will be available in a couple of weeks and a meeting will be scheduled for end of October
  - Only Water License Transfers will be addressed at the meeting
  - Water conservation objectives will not be addressed

## **9. Office Renovations**

- Office renovations are completed
- The budget was over by about \$1,300
- Staff are happy with the space
- Tim thanked the Board for the office renovations

- Proposing an open house warming for resident and businesses October 14, 2015

**Action:** Send a thank you letter to the Town of Milk River

### **10. Education Outreach Coordinator Position**

- At the May Board meeting we were advised to hold on hiring the EO Coordinator until we were certain of the budget.
- The funding is now confirmed and funding is available to continue with dedicated staffing and programming
- CAIT team met and recommended that the position be filled
- Falling behind on school projects due to staffing shortages
- There has been no bookings from WOSPP

**Motion:** Darcy Wills moved that the EO Coordinator position be filled with the same terms and conditions as previously specified and the same hiring committee should be convened. William King seconded. **Carried.**

### **11. Team Updates**

#### *a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)*

- Youth Engagement Program Report
  - YRDs
    - Cameron Beazer was the top hand winner for this year
    - There is currently no interest for competing in the SRM high school youth forum competition in the US
    - Next year YRDs program will be held in Cypress Hills
    - Predicting lower cost
    - Have about \$2,000 left in budget
  - Hike Tour
    - Scheduled for September 26, 2015
    - So far registration is full – 34 people registered
    - A lot of interest
    - Laura Balog will provide lunch
    - Have obtained a TFA for the tour from Public Lands
    - Will have an emergency car to follow the bus
  - Heritage Tree nominations



- William King nominated a line of trees on John Ross's property that grew from fence posts about 100 years ago
    - Will be acknowledged on the MRWCC website and Meander Newsletter
  - Milk River Natural Area Tour
    - Took place August 15, Good unofficial tour for staff and board members to see the south side of the natural area.
    - Thanked William King for guiding the tour
    - Noted that future trips should be kept small and reduce trailing on native grasslands.
  - Meander Newsletter
    - Deadline for article submission is October 23
    - Some Items to be included:
      - a. IWMP update
      - b. WRRP Grant advertisement
      - c. Water levels
      - d. AGM date
- b. *Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)*
  - Surface water monitoring update
    - One more sample to run in October
  - Surface water sampling for MR2 project
    - Working with ARD
    - The objective of the MR2 study is to follow-up on the Microbial Source Tracking study in 2012, to determine whether naturalized E. coli populations remain stable across time
    - Lisa Tymensen will provide an update upon completion of the study
  - Invasive weed mapping cooperative project
    - Started late due to budgetary constraints
    - Have managed to map South and part of North Fork
    - Collecting GIS Data layers
    - Will have full ownership of data, and can be used for additional research or projects
  - Groundwater Quality Community Report – Industrial Summary Project

- Trevor Murray is putting together a request to Crescent Point for more data on ground water, Ryan has been working on this project as well
- To be completed end of December and Sandi will compile the data
- c. *Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)*
  - IWMP Team meeting report (Sandi Riemersma)
  - Next Steps
    - As discussed
- d. *Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)*
  - Milk River Water Storage Update
    - Tim received a call from Hydrologist in Calgary who is interested in studying subsurface reservoir within the Milk River watershed
- e. *Transboundary Watershed Team*
  - Prairie Transboundary Workshop Update
    - Prairie Transboundary Workshop in Elkwater Community Hall on November 17-18, 2015 is going to have to be postponed due to invitee availability being low, new date is likely beginning of December or January. Please watch for additional details
    - Will be funded by EP, and co-hosted with PCF and MRWCC. Breakout sessions on monitoring and reporting, building transboundary relationships, and dealing with SAR and Grassland related issues

**12. Strengthening Regional and Agricultural Economic Security to address Extreme Climate by VACEA Workshop invite**

- Two spots reserved
- If there is no interest from the board to attend, Tim and Mary will attend

**13. MRWCC Strategic Planning Meeting**

- a. Facilitated meeting?
  - Planning for October 22, 2015 from 10am to 3pm
  - Tim will contact Lisa Talavia-Spencer from Alberta Culture to see if she is available to facilitate the meeting
- b. Review current strategic plan – update
  - Will review existing projects and discuss long term projects
  - Will discuss IWMP project implementation
- c. Alignment with regional priorities and IWMP implementation

**Motion:** Ross Ford moved to have the Strategic Business Plan meeting October 22, 2015.  
Lorraine Nicol seconded. **Carried.**

**14. Upcoming events**

- MRWCC Hike Tour - Pinhorn and Milk River Canyon - September 26, 2015
- Workshop: Strengthening Regional and Agricultural Economic Security to address Extreme Climate by VACEA research work - Cypress Hills - September 29, 2015
- MRWCC Strategic Planning Meeting - Milk River - October 22, 2015
- Prairie Transboundary Workshop - Elkwater Community Hall - November 17-18, 2015
- Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference February 16-18, Saskatoon

**15. Round table discussion**

- Lorraine Nicol advised that she is involved in an Economic Value of Irrigation in Alberta Study with a few people. It will take a while to complete
- More information can be found on the AIPA website at <http://www.aipa.ca/>
- Could be a good topic to present at the AGM

**16. Other items**

**17. Meeting Adjournment**

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

**18. Next Meeting Date**

- October 22, 2015 – Strategic Management Plan Meeting in Milk River from 10 am

**Signatures:**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary:** \_\_\_\_\_