



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

October 25, 2012 – 1:30 PM

ESRD, 2nd Floor (Alberta Environment Office)

Present: Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Ken Miller, John Ross, Darcy Wills, Joan Hughson, Lorraine Nicol, Aaron Domes, Paulette Fox, Don Welsh, Mike Gervais, and Tim Romanow

Absent: Darlene Sakires, Ed Sloboda, Brian Hills, Ken Brown, and William Schamber.

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross brought the meeting to order at 1:35pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

- The minutes from Sept 20th, 2012 were reviewed.

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the minutes as presented with corrections noted. Darcy Wills seconded. **Carried.**

3. Financial Statements Update

- Will Lindeman presented the financial statement. Closing balance as of September 30th, 2012 was \$322,584.66 requested: for clarification, next month a single month statement to be included with the year to date statement.

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statement as presented. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

4. 2012 WPAC Summit Report

- Feedback Survey – was presented and provided to the board for review, overall the event was well received with positive feedback. Some logistical concerns due to location and travel were noted; though many recognized the content, mix of field tours and lecture presentations were preferred.
- Comments - a large number of participants had never been to this part of the province before and were surprised by the landscape diversity and the complex issues the MRWCC is dealing with. Other comments were about how involved our board, teams, and partnership groups are; and how we work closely to accomplish our projects and goals. Some participants mentioned that hearing our perspectives on stewardship, watershed management was inspiring and they are going to try and incorporate some of those ideas in their work.
- Budget – net revenue for the WPAC Summit totaled \$3850.00 the projected budget and expenses were nearly exactly as was anticipated.

5. Urban Municipality Board representative update

- A letter was submitted to the Town of Milk River indicating it is important for the MRWCC board to be representing the interest of urban centres within the watershed; and that if the Town of Milk River representative is unable to attend that we would have to make other arrangements to help ensure the position is filled. Town CAO Mario Berthiaume indicated that they are having an organizational meeting at the end of October and that an available board representative would be appointed. As an

alternate, the Village of Coutts was asked if they would have interest in the work of the Council and a councillor from the village has offered to be an alternate representative for urban municipalities on the MRWCC board.

6. Alberta Innovates Energy and Environment Solutions update

- Research funding opportunity, The OWC would be interested in partnering with other WPACs to study arsenic in groundwater. Dr. Jon Sweetman, the manager of this program, attended the OWC Science Forum last week and said he would also entertain projects that are not related to the themes outlined in the program description.
- The program builds on the world class research and innovation that the Government of Alberta has supported through the investment in the Alberta Water Research Institute, now the Water Resources strategic area at AI-EES, and will help create and apply relevant, reliable and credible knowledge and information that will lead to a high-performing, innovative and responsive water system for the province of Alberta, as called for in the Alberta Water Research and Innovation Strategy (2006) and its renewal.
- AI-EES will invest up to \$10 million in total in the Water Resources Sustainability program. This investment will demonstrate the Government of Alberta's commitment to provide relevant knowledge needed to achieve the Water for Life goals. In order to achieve these goals, credible and reliable knowledge is required to allow well-informed decision making and policy development and support the strategic needs of Alberta's water resources system.
- The deadline for submissions has been extended until 3 pm MST, November 19th, 2012.

7. Date for the 8th Annual General Meeting

- Timing of the last AGM was too close to the March 31st project year end last year and caused a number of problems for both presenters and us organizing. To avoid these same problems and to ensure a successful AGM, **April 11th** (nearly two weeks later) has been proposed. This will give us time to have the 2013 SOW report printed in time for release at the AGM and to properly advertise and extend invites to guest speakers.

8. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)

i. Hike Tour report

- Hosted on October 13th nearly 30 participants, mostly different group than last year's tour, including a writer from the Western Producer who is interested in writing a story on the MRWCC and working with local landowners.
- Participants learned about the MRWCC, Water Quality, the local landscape, native grasslands, and the archeological and paleontological history of the area.

ii. Caring for Our Watersheds program

- Mary is helping deliver this program again this year, with increased focus on local service clubs such as the scouts, and 4H.

iii. Shell FuellingChange Program

1. Well decommissioning project

- a. Project advertisements are being placed in the local county newsletters as well as the MRWCC newsletter. One landowner with a flowing well has already been approached.
- b. Projected field day will be early spring 2013; AB Ag has offered to assist with decommissioning and presenting.

2. Partnering to improve water quality in the Milk River Watershed voting cycle

- a. The MRWCC was successful in obtaining a spot in the winter 2013 Shell Grant cycle for a project associated with Watershed Monitoring and Improvement projects. We are guaranteed 10,000 as before and potentially could receive 50,000 for projects. Funding may be used to further source tracking work in the watershed pending results from the 2012 pilot project.
- iv. Cenovus Energy Environmental Education Leadership Clinic
 - o The CAIT team is set to attend the clinic in November and will be developing a communication strategy and work plan. The clinic will also feature sessions on developing non-government funding, and incorporation of social media and new media for project promotion.
- v. Fall/Winter Meander Newsletter
 - o Currently soliciting for articles and content, if any board member is interested in a submission feel free to contact Mary and we will see where we are at with space.
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - i. Milk River Microbial Source Tracking Project Update
 - o Lisa Tymensen came and provided an update on the FST project, currently working in the lab to find tune the “resolution” of the genotyping and characterization of the B1 group.
 - o Primary sources across the watershed are similar, Cattle are making up less that 20% of sources in samples and that number will be less with clearer definition of B1
 - o Dogs and Humans are not a major contributor at any of the sample sites, though have been found present in a few of the samples.
 - o Lisa has offered to provide a Lab tour to the board in January, and we may wish to have the Jan board meeting at the Research Centre, second floor board room.
 - ii. 2012 Surface Water Quality Monitoring Project Update
 - o Sampling has wrapped up for the year; the last two samples collected will have influence from the Milk River/Del Bonita Fire.
 - iii. Milk River Fire Watershed Recovery Project
 - o The MRWCC in cooperation with UofA are prepared to capture runoff samples from selected drainages within the burn zone. Water samples, ash samples, and some initial run off samples have already been collected and are being analyzed at the UofA lab. Three parameters of most interest are Mercury, Phosphorus, and Organic Carbon.
 - o University of Waterloo professors have already been in contact with the Town of Milk River regarding complications in treatment systems from Organic Carbon.
 - o One of the most critical questions looking to be answered is what is the flushing time of harmful substances, and their impact on the aquatic environment.
- c. State of the Watershed Team
 - i. SOW report update
 - o Sandi Presented an update on the SOW progress, content is being developed and an Alberta Team meeting is being held on November 30th at which a full progress update will be presented and Blair Watke will present the preliminary mapping.
- d. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
 - i. Draft IWMP update
 - o Sandi led a brief (due to time) discussion regarding the IWMP progress, additional feedback from the board level is required on a few key areas prior to the Dec 6 Stakeholders meeting to review the draft to be held in Milk River.
 - o A meeting will be held most likely the week of November 5th with invites specifically to board members to review and provide comments to be incorporated into the plan.

- d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - There was no update

9. Milk River Transboundary Aquifer Project

- Canadian Geological Survey Staff will be conducting field sampling for water level and isotopic analysis for water dating at approximately 20 locations within the watershed in Canada. Sampling will occur in late November/Early December. 37 Key wells were identified and the MRWCC is assisting in making contact with the well owners advising them of the project and preparing them for Marie-Amélie to arrange a sampling date. This field work is also being conducted on wells on the Montana side of the aquifer, and data will help refine aquifer mapping and knowledge.

10. SEAWA Regional Monitoring meeting

- On Oct 11 2012, Tim attended a regional monitoring meeting being hosted by SEAWA. The intent of the meeting was to share experiences with Surface and Groundwater monitoring projects across Southern Alberta, SEAWA intends to develop their own monitoring program and is looking to build off the experiences of other WPACs. Five monitoring projects were highlighted from the MRWCC:
 1. Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program
 2. Groundwater Well Synoptic Survey
 3. MiRTAP
 4. Fecal Source Tracking Project
 5. Watershed Recovery from Prairie Fire

11. Alberta WPACs meeting

- AB WPAC's meeting was held the evening of Sept 24th prior to the WPAC Summit, most of the focus was on WPAC action planning and breakout session on Sept 27th of the Summit. New business included Shannon Frank leading the implementation of Watershed Entry and exit signs along major roadways, it is anticipated this project will be completed within the next year.
- Further discussion was held regarding the Alberta Watersheds Conference to be held in Red Deer in March 2013 partnership with the Canadian Water Research Institute and Land Stewardship Centre of Canada will guide the three day conference in the theme of Alberta Watersheds: Science, Stewardship, and sustainability. Further details to follow.
- 2013 WPAC summit was also discussed; the next summit is scheduled for North Central Alberta, and will most likely be hosted in Cold Lake by the Beaver River Watershed Alliance.

12. South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

- SSRB RAC committee open houses are to occur this winter across the area, local meetings are to occur in Cardston on November 9th and Milk River on November 21st board members are encouraged to review the RAC advice document prior to attending the open house meetings. Further discussion will be held at our next board meeting on November 22nd in Milk River.

13. Premiers Diner in Lethbridge

- John Ross had the opportunity to attend the Premier's Dinner in Lethbridge recently, and had a conversation with the Honorable Minister of ESRD, Diana McQueen she reiterated her apology for not being able to attend the WPAC Summit, and indicated she would make herself available any time the MRWCC wishes to meet with her. It was suggested that it might be worthwhile meeting with the minister prior to the completion of the regional plan. John asked the minister for

clarification regarding the role of our IWMP in the SSRP and possibility of being recognized as a sub-regional plan, and the Minister indicated that they have not yet determined what the role of the plans will be.

14. Volunteer Appreciation Christmas Dinner

- In order to thank all the volunteers for their hard work this year especially with the WPAC Summit, we would like to host a Christmas Dinner for volunteers, staff, and spouses early December. It was suggested that mid-week would be a preferred date, and in Lethbridge.
- Action: Tim to book a venue and to extend invites.

15. Upcoming events

- Cenovus Energy Environmental Education Leadership Clinic – November 5 to 8, 2012
- SOW team meeting, ESRD Office - October 30, 2012
- Draft IWMP Stakeholder input meeting – Nov 27, 2012 (to be confirmed)
- Draft IWMP Public input meeting – January 2013

16. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Mike Gervais moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:35pm, seconded by Darcy Wills.
Carried.

15. Next Meeting Date

- November 22, 2012 – Milk River Town Hall at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____