



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

January 24, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Tom Gilchrist, John Ross, Ken Brown, Don Watson, John Byrne, Andrea Hohne, Sandi Riemersma

Guest: Sean Robison

Agenda

1. Welcome

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Ken moved to adopt the Minutes from November 22, 2007 and John R. second. All approved.

3. Sean Robison, Public Health Inspector – Drinking Water Officer for Chinook Health for Water for Life

Alberta Health and Wellness asked for projects related to drinking water. Karen Emde put together to review drinking water facilities across the province.

Licensed facilities make sure there is monitoring taking place. Other sites fall under the Health Authorities jurisdictions.

Ensure that there is at least one person in the Health Authority with appropriate training. Will take water treatment program to be able to inspect smaller facilities (i.e., rural systems, churches, community halls, work camps) anything that falls outside of the jurisdiction of Alberta Environment.

Currently identifying the facilities – at least 5 000 systems that will be reviewed.

Chinook region – 300 facilities have been identified. Will be reviewing which should be included for auditing purposes. Project funding will end in 2009.

Health and Wellness will review the number of facilities that will be requiring review. Hopefully, funding will be available for each Authority to hire a Water Specialist.

Sean will be contacting individuals to identify all of the potential facilities

An initial assessment will be done on each facility. Water quality, quality of cisterns...water under the influence.

The owner of the facility would be responsible for any upgrades that may be necessary.

All campgrounds must provide potable water – lots of campgrounds post signs telling public to boil water prior to drinking.

Possible exemptions for campgrounds if proper signage alerting public that water is not potable.

Is there a report available outlining incidents? Many non-reported incidents.

Is there water treatment associated with some of these community systems? Is there adequate monitoring to support the use as a potable source.

If water quality can be demonstrated as potable, there is likely no requirement for water treatment systems. But probably an annual, bi-annual, quarterly requirement for inspection or monitoring.

Main concern is with public health – private systems are still under the sole management of private owners.

Sean could provide information to the MRWCC to help disseminate the results to the public.

4. Directors Liability Insurance

Real copy of the policy and a sample policy for the general liability
Is the insurance per incident, per Director or per year?
What is the relative level of coverage?

What is the deductible?

Volunteer events: Watershed Clean Up; Canoe Trip

Ken Brown moves to obtain D&O insurance to \$ 5,000,000 and to ratify the General Liability Insurance at the next meeting. John Ross second. All approved.

5. Meeting with Peter Watson regarding contract

Letter to Peter Watson

General feeling that there is a reluctance on behalf of AENV to really back the program and acknowledge the expertise that each of the WPACs provide to the Province.

6. Meeting with the Town Quad-Council to discuss Board membership

Coutts, Milk River, Warner, County of Warner discuss mutual items of interest. Have attended to bring group up to date. Occasionally, MRWCC has attended to update the Committee and request a new representative on the Board.

Town Council meeting was cancelled, so no word yet.

February 13, 2008 is the next meeting date for the Quad Council.

7. Response to Bow River Keeper's Renewal Strategy

WPACs should decide to make a proper detailed representation

John Ross moved to pursue the communiqué that was to be sent to the Minister and pursue production of a common document on the Renewal of Water for Life at the Executive meeting in Red Deer on January 30, 2008. Ken Brown second. All approved.

Suggest WPAC chair persons form a sub-committee to compile common issues on a quarterly basis?

8. Financial Update

John Ross moves to adopt the financial report. Ken Brown seconds. All approved.

Is it time to go back to the Municipal Governments for a levy per head. Still have 10 000.00 in the Water Management Committee account – we would need to get authorization to move the money to the MRWCC account.

The initial levy was \$10.00 per head generating approx. \$27,000.00. We have two more meetings to discuss this.

9. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

Bob Balog will attend the meeting to auction off the State of the Watershed Report. Bob Kauffman will be developing the cover for the two.

Tool Kits developed for the Schools. Louella C. and Shannon Frank have visited two schools and delivered the kits.

Video is still in the works.

Canoe trip – possible dates were June 21 or 28, 2008. From Weir Bridge to Tom's house. Bag lunch at Writing on Stone – interpretive centre. Head to Deer Creek Bridge – go to park ~ 12 miles down the river. Barbecue in the main yard or back at Writing on Stone.

Canada AM is looking for spots to broadcast from this summer. Ken B. submitted Writing on Stone as a potential place.

Website – Vic Brown is no longer available. Virtual library to post .pdf files on-line. Blog site on-line for flood and ice floe watch – community hotline.

David Swanson does websites in Milk River – D.C. Swanson Computers. Office is on main street.

Ken B. will contact David to see if he is interested/ able. Cost to maintain site.

Sharpie markers ready for AGM.

AGM – hall and food is organized – beef on the menu!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Babb Trip attendees

Arrive at 10:30

Trip to Remote Monitoring Site

12:00 Lunch brought to Civic Centre for Board Members and Honoured Guests.

Dan Jewell

USGS

Invite the whole reconstruction committee (Through Larry Myers)

Jennifer Coordinator for the Joint Management Committee (Irrigation Districts)

Poster Presentations – Farah McFadden

State of the Watershed Donation – to be run with the Silent Auction

Two people to man the registration desk – Andrea Hohne and Darlene Sakires

Display should be updated.

b. Research and Monitoring Team

First draft of the Sedimentation and Erosion report.

Meeting on January 31, 2008 to review draft and finalize.

Good tool for future watershed management planning.

Follow-up to see if Environment Canada's report is finished.

Terry Clayton – creating a map to mark km's on the River. River changes yearly based on cutoffs – may not be the same every year. Put one map together.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

Klohn Crippen Berger working on supplemental water supply study.

December 11, 2007 – Chuck Slack and Wes Dick met to discuss the project.

Put together the Screening Assessment on route options available. Discussed the volume that should be used (the capacity).

Simple design of pipeline should be at 4 cms.

Design capacity should be reduced from 8.5 cms that Laurent Conard suggested to 5.5 cms.

System should be designed to provide irrigation water without the diversion flow volumes.

If there is a shortage of supply in Ridge Reservoir, there can be a shortage in the Milk River.

Chances of US diversion failing and Ridge Reservoir failing at the same time is slim, although possible.

Agreed design capacity would be 5.5 cms for pipeline and canal scenarios. A note would be provided to suggest what a design capacity of 4 cms would do for cost of project.

Klohn provided earthwork calculations for scenarios. Ruled out Verdigris as an option due to salt issues and cost of earthworks.

Montana – December 20, 2007

Will provide data from Fresno to see if a reservoir had any benefit to Montana for flood-flow retention.

The data will be provided in the beginning of the year. Larry Myers has offered to make sure this happens.

Laurent Conard has been provided time to work with the MRWCC.

d. SOW Update

February 4th, 2008 – next meeting for Team.

Documents are delivered to

10. Annual General Meeting

- a. Board of Director's Elections - Nominations Committee
- b. Agenda
- c. Special Invitations to Montana

11. Next meeting – February 28, 2008 – 1:30 pm

Tom to leave February 10 to March 28, 2008.

12. Adjourn



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

February 28, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Alberta Environment Office, Lethbridge

Minutes

Present: John Ross, Ross Ford, John Byrne, Andrea Hohne, Joan Hughson, Darlene Sakires, Ken Miller, Sandi Riemersma

1. Welcome

Ken offered a gingerbread man to the most outstanding contributor for the day!

Ken welcomed everyone as acting Chair.

Action: Ross Ford will discuss nominee for a Town/Village representative with Milk River and Coutts.

Other Business

About \$10 000.00 remaining in the pre-existing Water Management Committee. Chair and Vice Chair would like to approach the original funders (i.e., County of Warner, with all reports completed to date and ask that the \$ 10 000.00 be dispersed to the MRWCC for discretionary funding. Would also like to request funding on an on-going basis (per capita).

Would there be a danger in losing the money if not spent on similar project? Hope that our work will show that we have been prudent/diligent in spending the money. Refresh the mandate.

Contact for SOW Oil and Gas section: Doug Dent (Encana) 403-645-8313; 403-650-8649; doug.dent@encana.com

2. Minutes from last meeting

Ross Ford moved to accept the Minutes and John R. second. All approved.

3. Provincial Wetland Policy – Review Recommendations for Alberta Water Council

Received the document just recently, no one had time to read prior to the meeting. Suggested that everyone read the Wetland Policy and answer any questions that stand out as important and forward to Sandi by March 6, 2008.

4. 2008-09 Budget Update

- a. Contracts vs. Grants

Andrea Hohne moves to approve the revised 2008-09 budget for re-submission to AENV on February 29, 2008. Darlene Sakires second the motion. All approved – unanimous.

5. Financial Update

Don Welsh could not attend today due to calving. Don to provide financial update to Sandi for Minutes.

6. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

Sharon Heirath – Erle Rivers may be a good contact for MRWCC when wishing to involve schools in our program.

Karen Ellert-Garber – Coutts school.

4-H clubs may also be a venue, Multi-club – beef club/horse club.

b. Research and Monitoring Team

Sediment and Erosion Project is completed. 10 hard copies, one CD available.

Action: Sandi to burn a number of CDs to provide to Board members and Team members at the next meeting.

River Watch Program – web blogs and photos.
Benthic invertebrate study.
Water quality monitoring project.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

Consulting group, Klohn Crippen Berger – forwarded first draft of report.
Toured the 2 engineers to the alternative routes. Have looked at five routes.

Modeling work that Laurent is doing on our behalf – uses similar process as that used to model southern AB rivers (Oldman, South Sask, Bow, Red, Deer)

Our model dead ends in Fresno Reservoir. Requested information from Montana to verify the outflow and water levels in Fresno Reservoir. Management possibilities are incorporated into the model to show how we can get an extra 5% of the rivers flow to put to use. Taken some time for Montana to provide the data required.

d. SOW Update

SOW went to the printer on March 12, 2008.

7. Annual General Meeting

a. Board of Director's Elections - Nominations Committee

Discussion on First Nations representative. Audra Foggin wishes to be part of the Board of Directors. She will ask for letter of support from the Blackfoot community and, if successful, will run for Board of Director.

b. Agenda

Agenda is set.

c. Silent Auction

Action: Each Board Member to seek items for our Silent Auction.

8. Important Dates:

a. Oldman Watershed Council AGM – March 12, 2008

9. Next meeting – March 27, 2008 (Milk River) – 1:30 pm

10. Adjourn – Ross Ford moves to adjourn.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

March 27, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Town Office, Milk River

Draft Minutes

1. Welcome
2. Minutes from last meeting

Action: Don Watson will look into the wetland policy to see if there was any type of response provided to the AWC on behalf of WPACs or other organizations.

Don Welsh moves to accept the Minutes and Louella Cronkhite approves, all agreed.

3. Watershed Management and Planning in Alberta – MRWCC Future Direction

Brief presentation on watershed management planning and discussion.

4. Review of Executive Director Meeting March 17, 2009

Appointment to Alberta Water Council:

The Representative and the Alternate should both attend the AWC meetings among others where possible.

Overall, the process looks good.

Ken Brown moves that the framework proposed for the selection of a representative to the Alberta Water Council meets with the Milk River Watershed Council Canada's approval. Don Watson seconds the motion, all agreed.

The Council looks forward to more definition in the future as the process moves ahead.

Alberta Environment Conference

Presentations by WPACs on April 21-23, 2008.

5. 2008-09 Budget Update

Louella provided

New deputy Minister – Peter Watson, new DM for Energy. Jim Ellis was the ADM for the Environmental Management section and is now the new Deputy Minister.

Last Monday, met with Jay Litke who needs to sign the applications for the WPACs in the south. Presented the amount of money each WPACs require. Our budget was a little bit of a surprise, but was defended by others – the Watershed Management Plan will cost, the smaller watershed doesn't have the same resources that others may have. We are in line with what other WPACs are requesting.

We in the south are ahead with WPAC establishment. Haven't heard whether Water for Life will be better resourced in terms of dollars. The pot may be diluted by the number of WPACs establishing.

A new grant application was issued as of two weeks ago. Louella cut and pasted from the grant application that we submitted. Our request is being submitted as a grant. No contract will be requested. Possible that the Grant Selection Committee will come back to us with our application divided into contract and grant.

Grant selection committee will be meeting in early April.

Louella C. moves that the Council signs and submits the grant application. Unanimous

6. Financial Update

Don Welsh provided an update. A full audit has been undertaken and it should be completed by the AGM.

7. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

Conference call yesterday to make sure that we are ready for the AGM. Things seem to be moving ahead.

Set up the hall the night before with some help.

Norm Vornebrooke

Website – will be updated – virtual library, web blog. Hired a private web designer to update.

Continue to send information to the schools to put in their tool kits.

Sharpie markers have been ordered and will hopefully be ready for the AGM.

b. Research and Monitoring Team

Water quality monitoring program initiated as of today. April 9, 2008 will be the first sampling date.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

Laurent Conard is looking at water supply monitoring. Met in Montana in late November – they were going to forward data, historical records for inflows to Fresno, outlet of

Fresno and water levels. Communication problem encountered. Bureau of Reclamation has been included and communication improved. Establishing sense of trust.

Request for re-opening 1921 Order. Work is complete. In the recommendations, IJC is not going to re-open this, but a cross-border council be established. Supported by the Montana people and Albert people. Governor to provide information indicating a conceptual framework for establishing an International Water Authority on the Milk River. Eight irrigation districts, tribal councils, Canadian users, recreation entity. A draft will be provided to us for review.

Since 1921, only two instances where consensus could not be achieved among the IJC commissioners (e.g., 3 American, three Canadian). Both instances occurred on the Milk River.

Species at Risk – Western Silvery Minnow has been put to rest. St. Mary Sculpin is now under review. Recent population studies completed stating that there are over 1 million on the North Fork of the Milk River. Concern over loss of the species is not as great as that a year ago. Only a couple of meetings away from having recommendations put in place. The status of the St. Mary Sculpin may not change, but the concern has decreased. Coffin Bridge to Aden Bridge is considered habitat. East of Aden Bridge, not considered habitat. There have been a few observed Sculpin on the South Fork. The American portion of the St. Mary River and the North Fork of the Milk River seem to be the best areas of habitat.

d. SOW Update

The SOW is currently being printed. Will hopefully be completed by the AGM!

8. Annual General Meeting - Update
 - a. Board of Director's Elections - Nominations Committee

Academia – Cam Goater, Henry Komadowski (LCC)
Provincial Government – Terrence Lazarus
Federal Government – Not known
First Nations – Audra Foggin
Towns and Village – Dave Hawko, Town of Milk River

Research and Monitoring Team - Encana

- b. Agenda
- c. Silent Auction

9. Important Dates:

April 3, 2008 – SEAWA Annual General Meeting
April 8, 2008 – MRWCC Annual General Meeting

10. Next meeting – April 24, 2008 – Annual General Meeting 1:30, Lethbridge

Other:

Study will be released on storage sites in the province of Alberta. Have indicated the ones that have enough information associated. For each of the major watersheds in the Province, will indicate the ones that are viable. No recommendations provided, will indicate the ones that are feasible.

Adjourn: Ross Ford moved to adjourn 5:00.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

April 24, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Alberta Environment Office, Lethbridge
2nd Floor, 200 5th Av. S

Present: Tom Gilchrist, Terrence Lazarus, John Ross, Ken Miller, Warren Cunningham, Don Watson, Don Welsh, Ross Ford, Terry Michaelis, Darlene Sakires, Sandi Riemersma

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introduction

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Motion: John R. moves that Minutes are accepted as presented. Ken Brown second, all agreed.

3. Executive appointments (Chair, Vice-chair, Treasurer)

Treasurer Nominations:

Don Welsh accepted nomination.

Vice-Chair Nominations:

Ken Miller accepted nomination.

Chair Nominations:

Tom Gilchrist accepted nomination.

Team Chair nominations.

Communication Team Chair:

Ken Brown Co-chair.

Action: Ken Brown to ask David Hawco if he would like to be a member of the Communication Team.

4. Sandi's Contract

Amend wording of the MRWCC to increase funding by 2500.00.

A bonus of \$ 2500.00 is to be provided for 2007.

Sandi can carry over 150 hours accumulated in 2007 for the SOW report to 2008.

Motion: John Ross moved amendments to contract, Ken Brown second. All approved.

5. Review AGM

The AGM went well; it was a fun event that everyone enjoyed. Speakers were well received.

April may not be the best time for the event if we have people attending from Montana.

Crews should be put in place to help set up prior to the AGM. Volunteers did help set up and take down – and it was much appreciated!

Format was well done, wouldn't change the time from 1:30 to 8 pm.

Wes Dick was asked to present his talk on the Supplemental Water Supply Investigation in June by the AIPA and would like our permission. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea as long as proper acknowledgement was provided to MRWCC and the PFRA for funding.

6. Thank you's for exiting Board Members

Action: Move forward with the Thank You's for exiting Board members.

7. 2008-09 Budget Update

As discussed in Minutes. Contract will have to be signed, there really is no alternative.

8. Financial Update

GST will have to be addressed. Municipalities may be requested to participate. Request that the funds collected for Water Supply in the beginning (\$ 10,000.00) be used to help offset GST. In addition, request a tariff from the Municipalities.

May 22, 2008 – Tri-county Council – municipalities (20 people).

Motion: John Ross moves to pursue the release of municipal funds in hand, 2) request for long term funding. John Byrne second. All approved.

Motion: Don moves to adopt the financial statement as presented. Ken Miller second. All approved.

9. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

- i. Alberta's Environment Conference
- ii. Sharpie Markers
- iii. Canoe Trip – June 28, 2008
 1. Weir to Deer Creek Bridge (4 hours)
 2. Stop Writing on Stone
 3. Stop at Roy Audets
 4. Stop at Deer Creek

Special invitations to Montana, Minister of Environment.

Youth Range Daze.

The municipalities are hosting a Youth Range Daze camp for youth at Writing on Stone Park in July. They have requested sponsorship from the MRWCC.

Motion: Ken Miller moves to sponsor the Youth Range Daze to a sum of 500.00. Ross Ford seconds. All approved.

b. Research and Monitoring Team

Water quality monitoring is continuing.

We would like to request that an addendum be added to the erosion study to model 850 cfs. We will apply to PFRA for the additional funds required to complete this.

We have been discussing additional monitoring stations, tributaries from the U.S. – flow monitoring.

Sediment monitoring will be conducted this year if the contract dollars are approved by AENV. The sediment samples will be analysed for phosphorus to determine how much of the nutrient is stored.

An Invertebrate Study will be undertaken if funding is approved through the Fisheries and Oceans stewardship in action program. Cam Goater from the University of Lethbridge will help conduct the research by revisiting sites from the 1980s and doing a comparison of the invertebrate population. Invertebrates are indicators of water quality and fish habitat.

Motion: Ken Brown moved to undertake additional study on erosion for the volume of 850 cfs. John Ross second. All approved.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

Draft report from Klohn Crippen Berger provided at the Annual General Meeting. Costs per acre of development. Maintenance, capital and pumping costs were quite. Where do we go next? 5.5 cms was used to develop a full service. Current practice should be explored (i.e., 3.5 cms) to identify costs.

Action: Sandi to talk to Jim Craig and Bunny Mah to discuss timeline and funding.

Water Supply and Management Team Priorities

IJC will likely not change apportionment.

We should be sitting down and discussing wants, discussion with appropriate people in Montana. Develop wish list (storage, diversion from Ridge, Montana wants 4% more water, not much more than 12 or 18 acre-feet of water). What do we need to do to make these happen? Develop a plan at grassroots. Layout reasonable scenarios.

May be three cost-benefit analysis. One demonstrating costs if we act alone, one demonstrating costs if Montana acts alone and one showing cost-benefits if we act together. Flush out a broad-brushed approach.

What is value to irrigators of additional water, What could we charge Montana for impounding flood flows etc., what is value of the 30,000 acre-ft that we can't divert etc.

- d. SOW Update
 - i. SOW Distribution

Colleges and Universities –

All major partners – 10 copies.

WPACs – 1 copy

Action: Sandi will have CDs produced in mass quantity for insert into the SOW and prepare letter to attach to SOWs as they are distributed.

10. Other?

11. Next meeting – June 26, 2008 – 1:30 pm

12. Adjourn – Ken Brown moves to adjourn.



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

September 25, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Alberta Environment Office, Lethbridge
2nd Floor, 200 5th Av. S

Minutes

1. Welcome back!

Present: John Ross, Ken Miller, Warren Cunningham, Don Watson, Joan Hughson, John Byrne, Greg Ottway, Terrence Lazarus, Darlene Sakires, Ken Brown

2. Minutes from last meeting

John Ross moves that the minutes be accepted as read, Darlene Sakires second, all approved.

3. Montana – Alberta St. Mary & Milk Rivers Watershed Management Initiative

In the last couple of months there has been about 6 meetings put in place for the initiative. Second meeting with Montana counterparts was held this past week. Montana agreed that the initial request to open the Apportionment Agreement be closed and instead, this collaboration approach be pursued. Two year position to pursue the Watershed Management Initiative. Two people from the Milk River Watershed Council Canada will be appointed to the group. Three meetings in October to bring entire group up to speed.

Can look at 6 options for water management, with modeling, to predict if there can be a greater amount of useful water available from the existing system. How will Alberta/Montana share existing water? Constraints of the system to deliver the water makes ability of Montana difficult to use entitlement.

The Steering Committee will make recommendations to the Federal government as to the Montana/Alberta relationship.

Terrence Lazarus, along with Sal Figliuzzi, on the Working Group behind the Steering Committee.

Motion:

Darlene Sakires moved to nominate Board members Tom Gilchrist and Ken Miller as the Milk River Watershed Council Canada representatives on the Phase Two Team of the Montana - Alberta St. Mary & Milk Rivers Water Management Initiative. The Board recommends Tom and Ken for their experience necessary to address the issues. The Board is confident that Tom and Ken will fully and carefully report the progress of the Initiative to the Board and that suggestions made by the Board concerning the issues under discussion will be carried forward to the members of the Phase Two Team. Don Welsh seconds, all agreed.

4. Watershed entry signs

Darlene Sakires moves that we move forward with the 10 locations for the watershed entry signs. John Byrne seconds, all agreed.

Ken Brown moves to cover lunch costs for watershed entry John Ross seconds, all agreed.

5. Action Plan for 2008-09

Acquire information on Strategic Planning and Issues identification.

At the next meeting we should have a plan in place and identify some people to help outline the process.

6. 2008-09 Budget Update (Grants vs. contracts)

Send a letter stating dissatisfaction with process, timeline for the MOU to be issued.

Action: Sandi to prepare letter and signed by Tom.

Suggestion to go to agricultural societies for funding.

County of Forty Mile and the County of Warner have agreed to fund the MRWCC to an amount of 3.00 per person, annually.

Action: Sandi to ask Terry Michaelis about Town participation.

7. Financial Update

Don Welsh provided an update on the financial status. Received a few donations.

Action: Sandi to look into the Charity status for the Milk River. Pros, Cons,

8. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

b. Research and Monitoring Team

c. Water Supply and Management Team

“Don’t put tubes in here.” To be added to the river signs.

No river access signs should be provided on private roads.

9. Board travel reimbursements - review

10. Upcoming Conferences

WPAC Summit in October: Terrence Lazarus and Ken Brown to attend, along with Sandi.

Sandi to present poster presentation on our research.

11. Other?

Lorraine Nicol from U of L potential Board member. Economist.

Water for Life Implementation Review Committee

Motion: John Ross moves to nominate Ken Brown to put name forward. Ken Miller seconds, all agreed.

Terrence is heading up a policy prototype (review options) group for water allocation and security. Land use framework.

Action: Sandi to put website for land use framework document and the storage site document on the website.

12. Next meeting – Milk River

13. Adjourn: Ken Brown moves to adjourn 4:00.



Agenda

MRWCC Board Meeting

November 27, 2008 – 1:30 PM

Alberta Environment Office, Lethbridge
2nd Floor, 200 5th Av. S

Minutes

Present: Ken Brown, Tess Larson, Greg Ottway, Ross Ford, Tom Gilchrist, Don Welsh, Warren Cunningham, John Ross, John Byrne

Guest: Marv Anderson

1. Welcome

Tom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Ken Brown moves to accept the Minutes from September 25, 2008, John Ross second, carried.

3. Marv Anderson – Discussion of economic benefits of the supplemental water supply investigation Ridge Reservoir/Milk River

Marv provided some background on the original 2003 Feasibility studies regarding onstream and offstream storage. Marv is contracted to put the supplemental water supply options into the same framework as the 2003 study to compare the feasibility of the Ridge/Milk River water supply study. Would like to refine the agriculture side of the feasibility study and work with the modeling people with Alberta Environment to gain a better understanding of water availability. Would like to focus on the non-agriculture side.

Tuesday – met with some Water Co-ops: Warner West, Milk River East and Milk River West. Also met with the Towns. Municipal side are very keen on piped water supplies to meet domestic needs (pipeline/canal to the Milk River is not expected to be helpful for the Village of Warner or Raymond). Town of Milk River and Village of Coutts are different. May be some benefit to having higher flows in the fall. Fine potable water – hinged on sustainability on the aquifer. No convincing evidence that the aquifer is being depleted. Improved water flows would be an insurance policy for the cow/calf operators. If a large feedlot wished to develop, where would the water come from? Recreation and tourism can benefit. A longer season would be beneficial (fall season) – sometimes end of summer season is not achieved. Tourism industry could be developed. There is good future economic potential (e.g, food processing, specialty crops) due to proximity to the border. Supplementing the 8200 acres is also a benefit.

What are some of the other economic benefits that we could realize from this project?

Overall sustainability and growth of the region is difficult to quantify.

Existing users would benefit immediately. The gradual increase in irrigable acres would be in the next 5 or 10 years. There would be feed grains to provide assurance to livestock operations.

Oldman is fully allocated now – that should enhance the opportunities in the Milk River. 35,000 acre-ft is benefiting Montana rather than Alberta.

Natural flow of the Milk is about 100,000 acre ft, St. Mary flow into the Milk River is about 175,000 acre ft per year and overwhelms the system because it occurs in about a 4 month time period.

Laurent modeled flows so they would not detract from the system.

Writing on Stone Park – Milk River East – shower buildings and irrigation system for sod areas – increase aesthetic value for the area – taxing the system – to be able to withdraw from the Milk River would be a great benefit – need to water trees, more water throughout September would keep the visitors coming. Manage beach as a natural feature. To put in grass, pop-up irrigation. Shoulder season, day use areas are being developed and will need water. Beach closures impact the number of visitors – higher flows would dilution

4. Montana – Alberta St. Mary & Milk Rivers Water Management Initiative

First meeting will be in Lethbridge on December 10 and 11, 2008. This will be an introductory information meeting. There will be a series of three meetings to bring members up to speed on volumes etc. January and February will be second and third meeting. Working sessions will follow.

Discussions with Montana have been pleasant. John Tubbs is the Chairman. Insight into the Blackfeet process has been provided (John Wilson).

Tom and Ken's names need to be ratified by the Minister. Montana has not shown its members.

5. Water for Life Implementation Review Committee – Ken Brown's Appointment

Ken was interviewed and was oriented.

Mentioned the 5% GST – could add an extra 5% to the contract.

First Board meeting on December 5th in Calgary and a conference call on Friday November 28, 2008.

Board members include scientists from BC.

6. Water for Life 5 yr Celebration

Sandi, Darlene and Terrence represented MRWCC at the Celebration in Calgary. Darlene accepted an recognition award from the Minister on our behalf.

7. WPAC Summit (held in October); Land Use Framework

WPAC Summit

8. Contracts update

The MRWCC has not received the Contract from AENV yet.

Motion: Ross Ford moves to sponsor the Cows and Fish Gala, Ken Brown second all carried.

9. Financial Update

Discretionary funds should be obtained.

Motion: Ken Brown moves that municipal funds designated for GST, Tess Larson second, all agreed.

Motion: Don Welsh moves to accept the financial statement, Warren Cunningham second, all agreed.

10. Team Updates

a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team

- i. Annual report is being worked on.
- ii. Website is moving along.
- iii. Window display being planned for Milk River.

b. Research and Monitoring Team

- i. Team has not met.
- ii. Water quality monitoring finished for the year.
- iii. Benthic invertebrate study field work is complete.

c. Water Supply and Management Team

- Tom Gilchrist and Don Welsh met with the Minister Renner, George Groeneveld, Broyce Jacobs, Len Mitzel, Weedick.
- Were not able to make the point clearly that the MRWCC would like agreement in principle to make use of water that we are entitled to. Options could be storage on the Milk River, supplemental flow from Ridge or expanded letter of intent.
- December 11, 2008 will be a meeting with Minister of Agriculture.
- Minister Renner more than content to let the transboundary committee to make decisions.
- Debits and credits on the River. Water trading?

d. Watershed Management Plan

11. Next meeting – December 5, 2008 – Cobblestone Manor, Cardston (9:30 am)

12. Adjourn – Ken Brown moves to adjourn 3:45 pm.