



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

February 28, 2013 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Will Lindeman, Joan Hughson, Ken Brown, Warren Cunningham, Ed Sloboda, Lloyd Closson, Clark Selk, Aaron Domes, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Darlene Sakires, Brian Hills, John Ross, Lorraine Nicol, Mike Gervais, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Don Welsh, and Paulette Fox,

1. Welcome and introductions

- Will Lindeman brought the meeting to order at 1:37pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

- January 24, 2012 minutes were reviewed

Motion: Warren Cunningham moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ed Sloboda seconded. **Carried.**

3. Financial Statements Update

- No motion was passed for the October finance statement since there was no quorum at the November meeting. Financial statements from October were approved at this meeting.
- Closing balance as of October 31, 2012 was \$293,337.82

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to accept the October statements as presented. Lloyd Closson seconded. **Carried.**

- Will Lindeman presented the January financial statements as follows:
- Closing balance as of January 31, 2013 was \$233,528.73

Motion: Clark Selk moved to accept the Statements as presented. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

4. 2012/13 Project funding update

- A 2013/14 core funding application for \$260,000 has been submitted
- Submitted an invoice for the sum of \$60,000 for the draft Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) to Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.
- Plan to submit an invoice for the State of the Watershed Report (SOW) for \$70,000 before March 31, 2013. Invoicing of SOW report expenses will need to be completed before March 31 to ensure compliance with the terms of our SOW project grant.
- There were concerns presented by the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance that the inability to get funding at the beginning of the fiscal year will make it hard for them to deliver their programs. ESRD has responded by granting a further contribution to each WPAC in the amount of 25 percent of their 2012/2013 core operations grant. This is an advanced payment for the 2013-14 year, though for accounting purposes it will be added to the current fiscal year with an amended grant agreement; For the MRWCC this will total \$50,000.00 to assist with core operational expenses.

- This agreement will be an amendment of the Agreement dated February 22, 2010 as amended by Grant Amendment Number 01 dated June 14, 2011 and Amendment Number 02 dated May 30, 2012 the eleven WPACs will receive a grant in the sum of \$562,000 to assist with core operational costs for the period of January 1, 2010 to March 31, 2013

5. Water Conversation Conference ESRD report (February 20, 2013)

- Two sessions in Milk River on February 20, 2013
- Afternoon meeting was for invited guests only and Evening meeting was for the public
- For the afternoon meeting the initial invitation stated that only 2 reps were to be invited from MRWCC but eventually 10 Board Members of the MRWCC attended. Also in attendance were 2 MRWCC Research and Monitoring Team members, a Water Matters rep and a rep from the Irrigation District outside of Milk River or St Mary River systems
- The meeting was focused on 4 areas:
 - Hydraulic fracturing Discussion
 - Good material but this was not the forum to discuss policy as no one in the discussion was knowledgeable enough to make informed recommendations
 - A technical panel would be best suited to carry out this discussion
 - Healthy Lakes Discussion
 - There is a significant difference in management of lakes and reservoirs
 - GOA staff acknowledged that reservoirs had to be dealt with differently in Southern Alberta
 - There is need for support for Agricultural Best Management Practices and management of contaminants entering reservoirs in Southern Alberta
 - There is need for change over the existing enforcement regulations
 - GAO needs to work closely with Municipalities to control development around irrigation reservoirs
 - Recognition and increase in monitoring of Aquatic invasive species
 - Recognition of WPACs in facilitating stewardship is the key
 - Funding of Agricultural Best Management Practices
 - Drinking Water and Waste Water Discussion
 - Attendees were more urban focused and little acknowledgement for the rural water concerns
 - Lack of funding for water co-ops for better management of rural water. 25 to 30 years without capital
 - Source water protection and availability for treatment systems
 - Water Management Discussion
 - Local WPAC planning needs to be taken into greater consideration across the province
 - Clarity of WPACs role in regional planning initiatives
 - Feasibility studies need to be re-evaluated for the Milk River Water storage since water shortage is a major limiting factor for economic growth and ecosystem habitat

- The public evening session was only attended by 4 individuals, 3 of were board members of MRWCC
- There is need for local representation for the industry
- Neither Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, or a senior GOA official attend the meeting
- There were 8 praxis consultants, and at least 18 GOA staff members at the meetings

6. Verdigris Coulee Project letter

- Irrigation from the system was unsuccessful and the project was abandoned in 1990
- Although there has been no irrigation, the project has continued to be operated for wildlife enhancement under the agreement between SMRID and Ducks Unlimited
- The agreement has since expired and Ducks Unlimited would like to hand over operation of the project to ESRD
- There will be a meeting for adjacent and directly affected parties to discuss options on what should happen to the project
- Interested parties are invited to attend a meeting March 7, 2013 from 1:30pm at Elks Hall in Warner
- A rep from the MRWCC should attend to bring back a report of the meeting to the next meeting
- Warren Cunningham, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda and Tim will attend

7. Land Owners Rights and Energy Information Session 1 update

- A meeting took place in Warner January 30, 2013
- Tim, Mary, Warren and Darcy attended
- Tim gave a presentation on the MRWCC's activities
- Good mixture of presentations
- The second session was held February 26, 2013
- Warren, Darcy and Will attended
- Informative presentation
- Discussed opportunities to work with both D3 and Crescent Point in reviewing the IWMP and possibly having them give a presentation at the board meeting.
- Warren will get Tim the contact info for D3 and invite their reps to a meeting.
- Cardston County will be hosting a similar meeting March 15, 2013 at the Cardston Seniors Centre.

8. Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference Report

- Sandi attended this conference and presented on behalf of the MRWCC on two presentations, the first on State of the Watershed reporting and conservation planning and the second on Transboundary watershed management and the approach the MRWCC has taken to engage partners in Montana and Saskatchewan.
- The conference was also an opportunity to meet with some of the contributors of the SOW report from both Grasslands National Park and the South of the Divide project.

9. Bioengineering/Bank Stabilization Demonstration Projects update

- At the last board meeting it was discussed that Tim will investigate further and bring more information from a follow-up meeting. Due to time limitations was unable to do more investigation on the topic. Will follow-up and bring the report at the next board meeting
- Need to have a meeting on site and have a preliminary budget to see if this project is feasible
- Will follow-up to see if there is interest from Municipalities to partner on the project and bring the expenses down, there is still interest from Cardston County to continue with the Hiller Bridge project if feasible.

10. MRWCC 8th Annual General Meeting Draft Agenda update

a. Presenters

- A draft agenda was presented as follows:
- 1:00 Welcome - John Ross, Chairman
- 1:10 Minister's Address (To be confirmed) - The Honorable Minister of ESRD, Diana McQueen
- 1:30 Milk River Watershed Council Canada - Activity Report
 - Tim Romanow, Executive Director
 - Sandi Riemersma, Project Coordinator
- 2:00 MRWCC Financial Statements Presentation - Will Lindeman, Treasurer
- 2:15 Elections - Darcy Wills, Elections Chairman
- 2:30 Coffee Break and Silent Auction
- 3:00 Impact of the Milk River Fire on water quality and grassland recovery
 - Dr. Uldis Silins, University of Alberta
- 3:30 Microbial Source Tracking Project Update - Dr. Lisa Tymensen, ARD
- 4:00 Aquatic Invasive Species – Bill Dolan, Alberta Tourism, Parks & Recreation (To be confirmed)
- 4:30 Poster Contest Award Presentation
- 4:45 Coffee Break and Silent Auction
- 5:00 Keynote Speaker - Historical Climate Modeling through Dendroclimatology
 - Dr. David Sauchyn, University of Regina
- 6:00 Dinner (provided), Displays and end of Silent Auction
 - After Dinner presentation - Birds of Prey (to be confirmed)

b. Silent Auction items

- We are currently accepting items for donations for silent auction.
- Clark Selk and Aaron Domes were thanked for their donations

11. Jalen Hulit's presentation at the Excellence in Rangeland Management competition in Oklahoma

a. Recognize him at the MRWCC level?

- Jalen Hulit who was the "top hand" winner of the 2012 Southern Alberta Youth Range Days had an opportunity to compete at the Society for Range Management High School Youth Forum in Oklahoma City; where he ranked third out of 28 State champions, as the only Albertan and Canadian in the competition. He also presented at the 10th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference held in Red Deer, February 19 to 21, 2013 as the 'future' of rangeland management and stewardship in southern Alberta.
- From this, he has been asked to take part in a digital story workshop hosted by Cows and Fish in Calgary and capture his stewardship story and experiences with YRD and SRM.
- The cost to attend is \$1000.00 and the MRWCC will be splitting the expenses with the County of Warner to send Jalen to the workshop. The MRWCC will be able to use Jalen's story as a promotional tool for YRD, and for stewardship work in the Milk River Watershed community.

b. Jalen to present at the Board meeting?

- There was a question of whether we should invite Jalen to present at a Board meeting in April
- Consensus was to invite Jalen to give a presentation at the board meeting in April

c. Do we present him with an award or gift?

- It was also decided that it was not necessary to give him a present but nominate him for the Emerald Award Youth Category for his involvement and contributions
- d. Emerald Awards nomination
 - Tim has submitted a nomination for Jalen

It was agreed that MRWCC send a congratulations letter to Jalen for his accomplishments

12. Team Updates

- a. *Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)*
 - Caring for Our Watersheds program
 - We still have no participation from schools
 - Had a conference call with ACEE to discuss challenges faced with recruiting schools and we were given some ideas
 - Poster competition
 - We received 60 posters from local schools (50 From Milk River Elementary School and 10 from Erle Rivers School)
 - Posters are displayed in the Town Hall until March 20, 2013
 - Judging will be done March 20th, 2013
 - Judges for the posters are: Ed Sloboda, Raven Mabbott, and Mayor Michaelis
 - Shell FuellingChange Program: Well decommissioning Workshop
 - Planning to host the workshop end of April
 - Todd Cloverdale's flowing well has been chosen to be decommissioned
 - Ed contacted Todd to see if the timeline would work for him and Todd has agreed to the timeline
 - Will Lindeman's hand dug well was also chosen but Will stated that his well has already been assigned to be decommissioned
 - Joe Harrington and Jeff Gutsell have been contacted to present at the workshop
 - In the process of identifying a contractor to complete the decommissioning
 - Need to have a field tour to look at the well site prior to the workshop and determine logistics.
- b. *Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)*
 - There was no meeting and there was nothing to report
 - Will regroup after IWMP to look at ideas for future direction on the team
- c. *State of the Watershed (SOW) Team*
 - SOW report update
 - Still working on the final draft, content is starting to be formatted by Liz Saunders.
 - SOW report Launching event
 - Unveiling event is scheduled for May 31, 2013 at the Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park. Draft agenda is as follows:
 - 1:30 Doors open – mingle and browse SOW maps
 - 2:00 Official Welcome
 - 2:15 Overview of the State of the Watershed Report
 - 3:00 Team Acknowledgements
 - 3:15 Celebration! Tour of W-O-S-P-P (Bus?) or Presentation (Interpretive Centre) – depending on choice/mobility for some?
 - Free Time

- 5:30 Barbecue and Cake?
- 8:00 Group campfire and Social
- June 1 Hoodoo Hike or Milk River Float Trip (Coffin to Weir Bridge) (Weather permitting)
- Camping option available for June 1 to 2 if people interested in staying?
- Copies of the SOW report will be distributed at the event

d. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)

- Draft IWMP update
 - Public meeting is scheduled for March 6 from 6:45 to 8:45pm at the Heritage Hall in Milk River
 - Copy of the draft IWMP is on the web and hard copies are available at the office
 - More review is required for the Industrial landuse oil/gas recommendations.
 - Darlene Sakires, Marc Dubord, Sandi and Tim are having a meeting to discuss the content and approach for recommending industrial beneficial management practices.

e. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)

- There was no meeting and there was nothing to report

13. Upcoming events

- IWMP Public input meeting – March 6, 2013
- Water and the Environment: Watershed Planning and Management in Alberta Conference, Black Knight Inn in Red Deer – March 12 to 15, 2013
- Landowners Rights and Information Session, Tanner Center, Cardston – March 15, 2013
- MRWCC AGM – April 11, 2013
- SOW Unveiling event, Writing on Stone Provincial Park - May 31, 2013

14. Other items

- Office Space
 - Bob Bogle (Owner of the Office Building) stopped by Feb 26, 2013 and had a meeting with Mary as Tim was busy on the phone
 - He stated that he is planning to have a newsletter in town and need space for once or twice a week preferably Wednesdays.
 - He wondered if we could share space in the office. The production is done in Lethbridge but would need space for someone with a computer to design the newsletter and location for distribution
 - He stated that renting would go down if this was feasible
 - He also stated that if this proposal would not work, he would need the building back although he is happy with having the MRWCC in this building
 - No discussion on timeline but Bob is looking into logistics of the business first
- Discussion:
 - Our concern would be:
 - Loss of space
 - Privacy concerns
 - Disturbance from people coming in and out
 - Office layout is not adequate for multiple use

Motion: Warren Cunningham moved that it was not the best fit for the MRWCC to share office space at this time due to shortage of space in the office and would like us to start looking for other options incase Mr. Bogle will need the office room back. Clark Selk Seconded. **Carried.**

➤ **Fire Recovery Monitoring**

- Working with University of Alberta on the fire recovery of the Milk River fire
- Have a meeting with Dr. Uldis Silins March 8th and will visit the burnt areas
- Had a phone conversation with Dr. Silins about the results of the lab analysis from the sample that was supplied from Milk River site
- Parameters were too high for the recommended guidelines
- Dissolved carbon can bind with chlorine and produce carcinogenic problems
- There is fear that with the ash buildup on the coulees, spring melt and run off can worsen the problem
- A question was raised whether the Town of Milk River and Montana neighbours need to be informed of possible flush.
- We will need to be proactive before it's too late
- Kevin France is no longer with Public Lands. He accepted a position with Saskatchewan government

➤ **Annual Report**

- Putting together the Annual Report
- Would like to have the same style as last year's Annual Report
- Last year's report was partly donated by All Rush Printers
- Looking to see if we could get donation for printing this year again

➤ **Bill 2**

- Trudy Niggli sent an email with her concerns over the lack of participation in the Bill 2 at the engagement session sponsored by the Alberta Government in Lethbridge
- This session was to give input for the regulations that will govern the Responsible Energy Development Act (Bill 2).
- The last session will be held in Claresholm on March 13.
- For more information contact event organizer Energy@buksa.com or go to <http://www.energy.alberta.ca/Initiatives/RegulatoryEnhancement.asp>

➤ **2013 Alberta Water Council**

- AWC will host a global conference on water management for about 200 guests this coming year.
- Still working on conference logistics, will most likely be in southern Alberta

➤ **2013 Annual Canoe Tour**

- Proposed date for the tour is June 22 (weather and river flow permitting)
- Looking at having the tour on the eastern reach of the Watershed (John Ross's to Pinhorn Ranch). Different reach than past tours
- It's a slow flowing reach so will need to try and shorten the length of the tour
- Ken will discuss with John Ross to see if there are better entry point
- Need to have a scouting tour prior to the tour to confirm time and logistics.

15. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:00pm. **Carried.**

16. Next Meeting Date

- March 28, 2013 – ARD Office (Research Centre) Lethbridge - 2nd Floor room 201 at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____