



**Minutes**  
**MRWCC Board Meeting**  
**November 22, 2018 – 1:30 PM**  
**Town of Milk River Office**

**Present:** William King, Lorraine Nicol, Ben Ellert, John Ross, Brian Hills, Ron McNeil, Aaron Domes, Ed Sloboda, Roy Audet, Scott MacCumber, Kandra Forbes, Tim Romanow, and Mary Lupwayi

**Absent:** Warren Cunningham, Suzanne Liebelt, Ken Miller, Ross Ford, Joan Hughson, Will Lindeman, Kristen Dykstra, Scott McGarty, and Darcy Wills

**Guest:** Margaret McCanna; representing Town of Milk River

**1. Welcome and introductions**

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

**2. Approve Agenda**

- An addition to the agenda:
  - New Agricultural Enterprise Program at University and College

**Motion:** Ed Sloboda moved to approve the agenda with the addition. William King seconded. **Carried**

**3. Minutes from September 27, 2018 meeting**

- Minor corrections of past minutes on pages 5, 7, and 8 of the agenda package

**Motion:** William King moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ron McNeil seconded. **Carried**

**4. Financial update**

- a. Financial statements update
  - September and October 2018 Financial Statements
    - Have not yet received the balance of the 2018/19
    - This grant was supposed to be received in October after submission of the grant interim report
    - Running out of funds and are now dipping into other projects funds
    - Executive Directors received an email that the Department has a new grant coordinator

**Motion:** Lorraine Nicol moved to accept the financial statements as presented. Roy Audet seconded. **Carried**

**5. Twin River Heritage Rangeland Reclassification and Expansion update**

- a. Final Response Letter to AEP
  - Have not received update from Jennell Rempel
  - Provided feedback to the Department from last Board meeting
  - Jennell had a meeting with some leaseholders directly impacted by the reclassification and the leaseholders are in support of the reclassification
  - The Council will have an opportunity to provide feedback and input for the management plan

## **6. Alberta Water Council Projects update**

- a. Multi Year Drought project guide development
  - Were supposed to have a meeting but the project manager left the position
  - Getting close to completion
  - There might be a request for some WPACs to provide additional feedback
  - Looking into how it will fit with AEP emergency preparedness programs

**Action:** Tim to send an AWC link to the Board members for more information

## **7. AB WPAC Manager's update**

- a. WPAC funding model proposal
  - Had a WPAC manager's meeting on October 30, 2018
  - Need to communicate with AEP to discuss challenges with the current grant process
  - Putting together a funding proposal to split expenditure into 25% by April; 50% upon signing of the grant agreement; and 25% at the end of the interim report to help iron out funding issues
- b. Summit and Forum updates
  - Next summit to be hosted by Athabasca in 2020
  - Working closely with AWC to have a Water for Life Summit
  - There is a commitment made by AEP to reinstate WPAC Forum
  - There is a possibility of having a forum in January in Leduc
  - Forums are good for GOA to recognize WPACs as a partner and discuss opportunities to work together and reduce some work duplication

## **8. Board Governance Workshop report**

- Good attendance
- Hosted the workshop in conjunction with OWC and SEAWA
- Felt rushed. Do we need a 2-day event once a year?
- Good to work with other WPACs and learn what others are doing
- Got a lot of valuable information out of it
- Some outcomes:
  - Organizational Chart
    - Put together an Organizational Chart for the AGM
  - New Board Member Orientation
    - Need to produce orientation manual for new Board members with synopsis of MRWCC activities
    - Seasoned Board members to shadow new members
  - Meeting Time Management

- Homework before meetings
  - Updates on staff activities
  - Risk Management
    - Annual insurance reviews
    - Contingency funding plans in times of budget cuts
      - Reliance of GOA funds not realistic
      - Fund development
        - E.g. Investigate casino fundraising
  - Performance evaluations
    - Stakeholder surveys
    - Internal evaluation
- Discussion on strategic vision and budget coordination was valuable
- Felt it was just right
- Good reference material
- Other WPACs are looking to mirror the workshop format
- Future theme: How WPACs can work cooperatively as a region and as a province
- Would like to see more commonality between WPACs

#### **9. Kennedy Coulee Ecological Committee monitoring plan feedback – Discussion**

- In 1990 - Management plan completed
- 1992 – Plan signed by Minister
- Now looking back for what has happened in the past 25 years
- Draft plan was circulated to Ron, Darcy, and Joan for feedback:
  - The plan is a monitoring plan
  - Does not record lessons learned and it has not recognized successes and failures
  - Missed some valuable stakeholders
  - MRWCC was not formally asked to provide feedback
  - There is need to have a list of plants found in the area
  - There are relevant comments on grazing, fire management, etc.

**Action:** Tim to contact Cameron Lockerbie and ask for a digital copy of the draft plan for circulation

**Motion:** Ron McNeil moved to have MRWCC provide feedback and comments on the draft plan in the next 2 weeks and should be taken back to the Committee upon review of comments by William and Joan. William King seconded. **Carried**

#### **10. St Mary/Milk Rivers Fish Multi Species Recovery Plan – Feedback**

- Shane Petry, Fisheries Biologist with AEP gave a brief overview of the plan at the November 15<sup>th</sup> Research and Monitoring meeting
- Thanked Shane for the opportunity for MRWCC to provide feedback
- Deadline for providing feedback is November 23, 2018
- Looking for additional comments from the Board
  - Comments:
    - Looks like most of it was cut and paste from the original plan

- A few holes not reflected in the report
- Did not take into account the many valuable stewardship projects that have taken place in the watershed
- Need to look at other good work done by other organizations
- Putting together a list of comments
- On page 17 – There is a sentence which states that “one of the greatest potential threat....” This is true but need to realize that it is also an opportunity because it is a water storage and diversion and not a dam and can make fish move better
- One example of opportunity is having ecosystem-based instream flow needs that help fisheries
- The report may make the process of water security harder for Milk River watershed
- Need to include mitigation measures that can be implemented when putting together the water storage study
- The plan is light on some of the St. Mary’s issues and contributions

### 11.2019 Board Meeting Dates

- All Board meetings start at 1:30pm in the Milk River Town Office Council Chambers on the 4th Thursday of the stated month (unless stated otherwise)
  - January 31
  - March 28
  - April 25
  - May 23 (after the AGM)
  - September 26
  - November 21
- Other Important Dates:
  - March 19 - Community Appreciation Forum
  - May 23 – AGM
  - October 24 (Strategic Planning Review or Regional WPAC Workshop)
  - November 7 – Science Forum
    - Discussion on Science Forum
      - Is there enough science in the Milk River to warrant having this forum annually?
      - Do we make it an open educational forum instead of just science?
      - Podcasting presentations online is a good opportunity to learn about research happening in the watershed
      - Need to speak to the audience
      - Will try to have it for 2019 and may cancel it if we don’t get enough and good presenters

**Action:** Lorraine Nicol to contact U of L scientists for the 2019 forum

### 12. Municipal Representative to MRWCC Appointments

- County of Warner:
  - Ross Ford and Shawn Rodgers as alternate

- Village of Coutts:
  - Scott MacCumber as alternate Director for Urban Municipality

### **13. Planning and Policy Analytical Team – Formation challenges discussion**

- The Municipalities were contacted
- Have heard from County of Warner and Cypress County
- Not receiving the proper representation for the subject matter
- Tim will visit municipalities to give presentations and elaborate on what we are looking for
- It was suggested that if there is no support for proper representation, a subcommittee would be formed instead of a Team to carry out the Planning and Policy Analytical duties
- Ross Ford, Team Chair was not present for this meeting, so further discussion will be carried at the next meeting when Ross is available

### **14. Team update**

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
  - Youth Engagement Program
    - School Programs:
      - Working on a Deep Roots program with the PCF Education and Communications Committee, intended to help organizations, schools, and other groups receive grassland programs. It is intended to both encourage field trips and motivate feedback
      - Gave a presentation at a Hutterite Colony School near Foremost, was a great opportunity to get different youth interested in the watershed. Was really impressed with the library and resources that the teacher had
      - There is more interest in Hutterite Colony School
      - Contacting schools to setup spring programming
      - Continuing to formalize partnership with WOSPP for spring programs
  - YRDs
    - Planning the 2019 YRDs program
    - Working to secure program location at the Grain Community Hall, Aden
    - Thanks Wendy Sloboda who will be presenting on Paleontology
    - Budget balanced with revenue from 2017 camp but will need to start fundraising in Jan 2019
  - Fall Meander Newsletter
    - Completed and distributed to approximately 1000 households within the watershed and all members
    - Additional copies available for coffee shops or partner offices upon request
  - Community Awards Nominations
    - Environmental Stewardship Awards: Seeking nominations
    - Heritage Tree

- 2 nominations:
      - Deer Creek trees
      - Tree coulee
  - Board Governance Workshop – October 25, 2018
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
  - November 15, RandM Meeting report
    - Water Monitoring
      - MRWCC/AEP water monitoring program collaboration update
      - Concern on AEP/EMDS monitoring budget cuts and how it affects program collaboration
      - 2019 monitoring program – EMSD tributary monitoring budget
      - Planning a meeting this winter between the two parties to discuss collaboration amidst budget cuts and what it entails for future collaboration
      - Working on a proposal to look at some limited groundwater sampling at three sites above the 880 bridge that maybe contributing to the TDS winter exceedances in the SSRP-WQF
      - 2018 Monitoring Program report
        - Completed in October
        - Palliser is finalizing the report which should be done this winter
        - No invasive mussels were observed during monitoring on 5 Milk River locations
    - HSP Overwintering Habitat Stewardship Project
      - Discussed and a brief video of fish distribution within observed locations was shown
      - Overall a good report
      - Over 300 fish occurrences and observations
      - There were delays in producing the final report due to the amount of extra time it took to go through the additional observation data
      - Draft of the report to be circulated to the team for review before finalization
      - Additional footage clips are available for promotional and educational purposes of council partners
    - St Mary/Milk River SAR Alberta Recovery Plan
      - Shane Petry, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Grasslands District, South Saskatchewan Region, Alberta Environment and Parks gave a brief update on the Milk and St. Mary rivers multiple species recovery plan
      - The draft recovery plan has been sent to selected stakeholders to review

- The goals have not changed a lot, but the focus has been to monitor distribution of the 3 species and protect or maintain them and work with DFO to develop techniques to set up appropriate monitoring program
- Deadline to submit stakeholder comments is November 23. After which, the plan will go for policy in Edmonton then released for public consultation in the New Year
- Phase 2 Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (WRRP) update
  - Project implementation is underway
  - Still receiving applications
  - There is a balance of \$150,000 from the total grant
  - Phase 2 is to be completed by March 2020 and final report to GOA by March 2021
- Science Forum Report - November 8, 2018
  - Working on videos for the Science Forum presentations for online distribution within the next two weeks
  - Groundwater Research and Science note completion
  - Requested to partner with AHS to produce a 4page summary science note identifying long term trends and promote groundwater sampling and domestic water well maintenance

Action: Mary and Kristen to work on the summary which will be produced by the end of the fiscal year

- Potential opportunities for Environment Canada SAR habitat projects
  - Is there a fit for MRWCC to facilitate additional stewardship work?
  - Would voluntary paid Native Grassland EGS fit in well with this?
  - With funding concerns, it would be good to work with other partners to avoid duplication of work and receive non-GOA core operation funds
  - There is need to have a discussion with other stakeholders
  - Municipal participation is critical for grassroots approach
  - More discussion with Environment Canada and other local groups at the TGP Workshop Dec 3 to 5
- 2019/20 RandM Team Proposed Workplan
  - Looking for new project ideas
  - Team members to send proposed project ideas to Tim for vetting and possible inclusion in the 2019/20 grant application
- c. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
  - Milk River Water Storage Investigation Study Summary Project
    - The committee had a conference call meeting on October 5, 2018

- Discussed the Milk River Water Storage Investigation Summary Project for Past investigations and recommendations for long term storage options:
  - Outlined and reviewed work plan proposal
  - Reviewed draft TOR for the Project
  - Set deliverables
  - Set project timeline and roles and responsibilities
  - Project Timeline:
    - Oct 2018 – finalize Project TOR and solicit RFP
    - Oct 2018 – award contractor for project
    - Nov 2018 - WSM Team/project committee meeting, selection of past studies to summarize finalize work requirement for contractor
    - Dec 2018 – First draft of summary from Contractor
    - Jan 2018 – Finalize Report with WSM Team
- The Milk River Water Storage Investigation Summary Project reviewed 4 proposals that were ranked by all team members
- After careful deliberations, the contract was awarded to Palliser Environmental Services
- All 4 proposals were good, and it was suggested that the companies be kept in mind for future project bid submissions
- Public Release of the Klohn Crippen reports and associated feasibility studies have been conformed and initial documentation has been provided to the contractor
- Thanks to Brian for ensuring timely release of the reports
- The committee had discussions on November 8 after the Science Forum

**Action:** Tim to send out proceedings of the November 8 discussions to all Team members

**Action:** Tim to identify the next WSM Team meeting date and circulate to Team members as soon as possible

d. Transboundary Watershed Team

- 4th Annual Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop update
  - Scheduled for December 3 to 5, 2018 in Lethbridge
  - Alberta is hosting
  - Agenda is available
  - Registration is at 70
  - Helping to organize the Workshop
  - Currently helping to coordinate the breakout workshop sessions for day 3
  - December 3rd tour will occur at WOSPP with presentations from area leaseholders/producers and related to WOS WHS nomination
  - Montana MRWA partners will be in attendance, as well as reps from multiple SASK organizations

- PCF is subsidizing 20 students to attend the workshop at \$30 instead of \$100
- All Board members attending to be registered by tomorrow
- Milk River Watershed Alliance Film Project/CBC news
  - No communication so far
  - Have new Executive Director
  - Thanks to John Ross and Ross Ford for being part of the interview
  - Thanks John Ross and Ken Miller for the interviews they had with the Film Board
- e. Planning and Policy Analysis Team
  - Have started the process of recruiting team members

### **15. Upcoming Events**

- Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop - December 3-5, 2018, Lethbridge
- Community Christmas Party - December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Milk River Civic Centre

### **16. Round table discussions**

- Lorraine:
  - 5 years ago, University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College received \$5 Million to promote Ag business program. 2-year program at the college level and transition into a 2-year program at the University level
  - Program focusses on Agricultural related matters such as international trade, marketing, production, and recourse management
  - David Hill is heading the program
  - If there is interest, this is a good program to enroll into
- Ed:
  - A 65 to 70-million-year-old mummified 4 to 6 feet long alligator has been found in the watershed
- Ben:
  - Working on a new project on dugout water for livestock impacted by blue/green algae
- Aaron:
  - Denis Spackman has retired
  - The Park is looking to replace the CO with a Park Manager
  - World Heritage nominations – in the middle of evaluations
  - WOSPP is planning 2 consultation and information sharing meetings next week:
    - With adjacent landowners and municipalities
    - First Nations

### **17. Other items**

### **18. Meeting Adjournment**

**Motion:** Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:35pm

### **19. Next Meeting Date**

- January 31, 2019

**Signatures:**

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

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