



## Minutes

### MRWCC Board Meeting

November 26, 2015 – 1:30 PM

### Town of Milk River Office

**Present:** Will Lindeman, Lloyd Closson, William King, Suzanne Liebelt, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda, Frank Larney, Ron McNeil, Kristen Dykstra, Roy Audet, Warren Cunningham, Ross Ford, Lorraine Nicol, Kathryn Romanchuk, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

**Absent:** Dennis Spackman, Trevor Murray, Paulette Fox, Brian Hills, Ryan Hall, John Ross, Joan Hughson

**Guests:** Raymond Baril, Peter Entz, Zach Wurz (MRWCC members)

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

- Ken Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:40 pm
- Introductions were conducted and Tim introduced Kathryn as the new EO Coordinator

#### 2. Bylaws Special Resolution Meeting

- Tim explained the need for the amendments and went through all the proposed bylaw amendments

**Motion:** William King moved to accept the bylaws as amendment. Ron McNeil seconded.

**Carried by unanimous vote of board and members in attendance.**

Ken Miller adjourned the Bylaws Resolution session of the meeting and the Board meeting session commenced at 1:50pm

#### 3. Minutes from September 24, 2015 meeting

- Last meeting minutes were reviewed
- An amendment was called to remove “cost of implementing” on page 3 and replace with “implementation of the plan”

**Motion:** Ed Sloboda moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ross Ford seconded.

**Carried.**

#### 4. Financial Statements Update

- September Financial Statements

- September closing balance was \$404,160.65
- October Financial Statements
  - October closing balance was \$393,242.78
- Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program Grant update
  - Received funding and we are in the process of advertising for funding applications
  - First ad will appear in the Meander Newsletter which is out next week
  - It will also be advertised on the MRWCC website

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

### **5. MRWCC Strategic Planning Meeting report**

- A strategic Planning Session was held on October 22, 2015 in Milk River
- The intent was to review the MRWCC vision, mission and goals, determine whether the Council is on track and also identify strategies for the MRWCC's future activities
- Thirteen Board members attended the session and provided input on the review of existing programming and future direction
- Some activities that were identified as proposed projects or programs undertaken by the MRWCC in the short-term (next year), medium term (3-5 years) and long-term (6-10 years) are as follows:
  - Winter Flow Needs Study
    - Need to put together a proposal for winter habitat studies
    - Need to meet with AEP, preferably in December to discuss the project and other activities
  - Renew activities to prepare a storage discussion paper
    - Come up with approximately 6 pages, with history synopsis, key findings of the Klohn-Krippin Report, site suitability, etc
    - Add AIPA report findings regarding value of Irrigation with Milk River proposal
  - Oil and Gas activity landowner information resources
    - Look at options for improving landowner and leaseholder information regarding oil and gas activities and best practices within the watershed

- Look at cooperation with AER for potentially producing pipeline landowner info packages similar to Montana examples, and place links to valuable information on MRWCC website under resident resources
- Water Supply and Management Team
  - Prepare a letter to develop a proposal from the Alberta Irrigators to ensure strong positive relations with the Montana legislators and protect security of summer irrigation water
  - Write a letter through IJC approach with solution that has the support of the participants
- Water use monitoring and reporting
  - Establish a working committee to look into ways of salvaging the work done with remote water usage and monitoring
  - Look at opportunities to effectively continue some form of inter seasonal reporting, economical metering or postcard reporting
- MRWCC Performance Evaluation
  - Develop a stakeholder survey in the New Year to better evaluate the performance and effectiveness of actions of the MRWCC
  - Each board member will fill out a survey based on their sector being represented
  - A second evaluation survey can be developed for watershed residents and membership
  - Try and consider building in metrics to gauge adoption and implementation of the guidance and demonstration work that has been implemented over the last 10 years of the council
  - Can inform the Performance Evaluation Plan for grant reporting with Environment and Parks
  - Review the Strategic Plan at the January board meeting
- A summary document of the session was circulated to the board for review.

## 6. 11<sup>th</sup> AGM

- The 2016 AGM is scheduled for May 31
- Agenda
  - Working on the agenda

- Speakers
  - There was a proposition to use the January meeting on Transboundary issues to scout for good speakers.
  - Jay White with Aquality Consulting on Wetland Policy
    - It was discussed that Jay would be better for a workshop format and would be ideal to team up municipal partners and invite him for a workshop
  - Claudia Sheedy, Water Scientist with Agriculture Canada on Water Quality
  - Other speaker suggestions from the AIPA workshop include:
    - Dr. Hans Schreier University of BC, Canada's Food Export strategy in view of water constraints
    - Dr. Stefan Kienzle University of Lethbridge, Mapping Climate Trends across Alberta 1950-2010
    - Brent Paterson, The Economic Value of Irrigation in Alberta

## **7. Water Supply Challenges update**

- Brian Hills placed an article in the upcoming Meander newsletter depicting the water supply challenges
- For the first time since the letter of intent, July/August water deficit indicated the need to use the American portion of water

## **8. Twin River Natural Area Planning Update**

- Brian Laing, Approvals Manager, Rangeland Management Operations Division, South Saskatchewan Region, AEP gave a presentation at the September Board meeting
- The presentation was circulated to Board members for feedback which was summarized as follows:
  - Generally the feedback received was supportive however there were some concerns
- Discussion:
  - There is need for a lengthy discussion
  - The MRWCC position needs to be strong and science based
  - There are fears that change of Natural Area to Heritage land might be construed as a park
  - Need to continue to graze

- No cultivation
- Limit development
- Should remove designation and leave lease holders to manage their areas
- There is a danger of limiting land use for lease holder
- A sub-committee was formed to further discuss the Twin River Natural Area planning issues and bring back to the Board. The following are the committee members:
  - Ron McNeil
  - Ken Miller
  - Ross Ford
  - William King
- Ed Sloboda will supply background information
- Tim will summarize the feedback and circulate to Council

## **9. Milk River Approved Water Management Plan Meeting Report**

- The process has 2 phases with ongoing public consultation
- Objectives of Phase One:
  - Establish Water Management Area(s) under the Water Act
  - Authorize the ability to transfer an allocation of water
  - Specify matters and factors that must be considered
  - Determine the need to either:
    - maintain or amend the current moratoriums in the basin; or close the basin to new surface water allocations
    - Develop policy options for future water management
- Objectives of Phase Two (separate Terms of Reference)
  - Develop a strategy for protection of the aquatic environment
  - Determine recommendations on water conservation objectives
  - Recommendations on water conservation holdbacks as required
  - Address community needs for security and storage
- The comment form is available on the web or by contacting the office
- Feedback to be submitted by December 31, 2015

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

- Kathryn introduced herself to Board members

- Ken welcomed Kathryn to MRWCC

## **11.2016 Board Meeting dates**

- The following dates are 2016 Board meeting dates:
  - February 4
  - March 24
  - April 28
  - May 31 – AGM
  - September 22
  - October 27 (Strategic Business Planning)
  - November 24

## **12. Team Updates**

- *Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)*
  - Heritage Tree nominations
    - William King nominated trees which were planted in the early 1900 by the Hall family on 2-10-W4, now owned by John Ross
    - Green cottonwood poles were driven in the ground for corral posts which later grew into big trees and are still evident today after over 100 years later
    - These trees are featured in the upcoming Meander Newsletter
    - The article will also be featured in the Town of Milk River newsletter
    - This is a good project to build community ties
    - The award should be presented at the AGM
  - Meander Newsletter
    - The newsletter will be distributed next week
  - Youth Engagement Program Report
    - YRDs
      - Next year YRDs program will be held in Cypress Hills group campground on July 5, 6 and 7, 2016
    - Poster Contest
      - This year's theme is "Ways to improve your watershed"
      - Students will be asked to draw a picture illustrating ways to improve their watershed
      - In the process of advertising the program to schools

- Also featured on the in the Meander
  - ATB has agreed to sponsor \$300 for winner prizes
  - Also applied for \$400 from Alberta Emerald Foundation for the project
  - Deadline for poster submission is February 22, 2016
  - Awards will take place at the next AMG, Mat 31, 2016
- Caring for Our Watersheds Program
  - In the process of advertising the program to Schools
  - Entry deadline is March 15, 2015
  - Final competition is on April 30, 2016 at the Ralph Klein Park
- *Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)*
  - Surface water monitoring update
    - 2015 Sampling now completed
    - AEMERA funded over 90% of the analytical costs of the program
    - Sandi is in the process of analyzing the data and producing a report
    - 2014 report is out and was circulated to the Board and also placed on the MRWCC website
  - Invasive weed mapping cooperative project
    - Data was collected for South and part of North Fork
    - Waiting for the raw data
  - Groundwater Quality Community Report – Industrial Summary Project
    - A handful of wells to be summarized
    - There is some spring data available from sites on the ridge
    - Data will be available after Christmas and summarized
- *Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)*
  - Next steps
    - The plan was finalized in September
    - The team has been dissolved
- *Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)*
  - Milk River Water Storage Update
    - Two Ministers have been updated and are looking into it
    - Jeff Patterson with MRWA in Montana has advised that they are in the process of revisiting the Alliance set up

- They are making a documentary to promote the MRWA in schools and the community
- They have received \$80,000.00 grant to bring together the 4 Conservation Districts and find a new coordinator for the Alliance
- They are looking forward to partner with the MRWCC again
- *Transboundary Watershed Team*
  - **Prairie Transboundary Workshop Update**
    - The workshop is scheduled for Jan 19 and 20
    - Have invited delegates from Saskatchewan and Montana
    - It will be a two day workshop that will focus on issues and brain storming on what needs to be done
    - The workshop is designed and mostly funded by PCF
    - Important Outcomes for the MRWCC:
      - 2018 Milk River Transboundary State of the Watershed Report
      - Transboundary Managers partnerships
      - Good opportunity to broaden opportunities with Transboundary neighbors and other stakeholders

### **13. Upcoming events**

- Verdigris Ducks Unlimited Fundraising Dinner and Auction, Milk River Civic Centre – November 28, 2015 – from 5pm
- MRWCC Board and Spouse Appreciation/Christmas dinner, Mr. Mikes Steak House Casual located at the 2375 Mayor Magrath Drive S., Lethbridge - December 3, 2015 at 5:30pm
- Milk River Community Business Association Annual Christmas Party – Milk River Civic Centre - December 12, 2015
- WPAC Forum – Leduc - Jan 14 to 16, 2016
- 2016 Irrigated Crop Production Update Conference, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Lethbridge Lodge Hotel and Conference Centre - January 19-20, 2016
- Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference February 16 -18, Saskatoon
- MRWCC AGM - Milk River – May 31, 2015

### **14. Round table discussion**

- Warren Cunningham



- Need to create name tags and business cards for Board members
- Add snow pack information on the MRWCC website

**15. Other items**

**16. Meeting Adjournment**

**Motion:** Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:19pm. **Carried.**

**17. Next Meeting Date**

- February 4, 2016 in Milk River from 1:30pm

**Signatures:**

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

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