



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

March 27, 2014 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: Ross Ford, Ed Sloboda, Dennis Spackman, Ken Miller, Warren Cunningham, Lloyd Closson, Lorraine Nicol, Kristen Dykstra, Suzanna Liebelt, Will Lindeman, Darcy Wills, Joan Hughson, John Ross, Sandi Riemersma, Tim Romanow, Cyd Cunningham and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Brian Hills, Roy Audet, Paulette Fox, Ken Brown, Frank Larney, Darlene Sakires

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross brought the meeting to order at 1:50pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting
- Introductions were conducted

2. Minutes from last meeting

- February 27, 2014 meeting minutes were reviewed

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

Carried.

3. Financial Statements Update

- *February Financial Statements*
- Will Lindeman presented the financial statements as follows:
 - Closing balance as of February 28, 2014 was \$206,212.26
 - The increase in the accounts expenses is due to end of year financial review of engagement by KPMG
 - Insurance expenses were for the following 2014 coverage:
 - Property
 - Commercial General Liability
 - Directors and Officers
 - There was an increase in the phone bill expenses due to the contract renegotiation of 2 phones; one for the EO Coordinator and the other to replacement a broken phone
- *IWMP Project Funding*

- A \$40,000 invoice was submitted to ESRD for IWMP
- Most of the deliverables were met except the finalization part which has been delayed due to the release of the SSRP in the fall 2013, the subsequent concerns raised by municipalities, landowners and leaseholders with regard to the Milk River IWMP and the additional meetings and discussion that were required to address local concerns
- Have not yet received confirmation that full funding will be received

4. Alberta Water Council update – Ken Brown

- Ken Brown was not available for the meeting so Tim presented on his behalf
- The water literacy project is underway
- North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance will provide the rep for WPACs
- Ken Brown's term will be up after one more meeting

5. Sage Grouse – Manyberries community initiative update – Darcy Wills

- Darcy had to attend another meeting so Tim presented on his behalf
- Sage Grouse Partnership Committee became ineffective and underrepresented the interests of the community and industry within the area.
- A letter was sent to the Province with a misrepresentation of the number of people supporting the Protection Order. The letter indicated that all participants at all meetings held in 2013 were in favor of simply making minor amendments to the EPO and not needed to be rescinded in favor of collaborative recovery approach of the Provincial Government Plan.
- Most of the community members felt the Federal EPO needed to be rescinded
- About 50 residents and industry representatives attended a meeting on March 10th 2014 to express concern with the AWA led Sage Grouse Partnership and to oppose the order and current efforts.
- The community has since formed their own group that met last week where about 200 participants attended
- Darcy Wills made a request as to whether MRWCC should continue to support the AWA led Sage Grouse committee, the correct approach to build credibility within a community is work to foster support through a voluntary stewardship work in full understanding of the ramifications of any actions towards not only the environmental but the social and economic integrity of

the impacted communities. Supporting legal actions to enforce protection measures as was spearheaded by the AWA under Ecojustice is counterproductive and disrespectful to existing stewardship processes, beneficial management practices, and recovery actions. The resulting Environmental Protection Order for the Greater Sage Grouse has forced the hand of the Federal Government hastily and is negatively impacting other initiatives including the MRWCC IWMP.

- The new committee will hold a meeting April 7, 2014 at Manyberries

Motion: Ken Miller moved that the MRWCC remove support for the Sage Grouse Partnership and extend support to the new community group as requested. Ross Ford seconded. **Carried.**

6. AGM Update

- Presenters

- An agenda has been set as follows:

1:00 **Welcome - John Ross, MRWCC Chairman**

1:10 **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/Ed Sloboda, Election's Chairmen

2:30 **Coffee Break and Silent Auction**

3:00 **Oil and Gas Exploration in the watershed**

Trevor Murray, Vice President, Land, Dee -Three Exploration Ltd

3:30 **Habitat Selection and Survival of Translocated Greater Sage-grouse in a Highly Fragmented Landscape**

Kayla Balderson, MSc Candidate - Dept. of Biology, University of Regina

3:45 **Strategies to Maintain or Enhance Silver Sagebrush Habitats for Greater Sage Grouse in Southwestern Saskatchewan**

Ron McNeil, Landwise Inc.

4:00 **Coffee Break and Silent Auction**

4:30 **Poster Contest Award Presentation**

Dusty Stauth, Branch Manager, Milk River ATB Financial

5:00 **Keynote Speakers: Paleontology within the Milk River watershed**

Dinosaurs and Discoveries

Dr. David C. Evans, Curator of Vertebrate Palaeontology, Royal Ontario Museum

Dr. Michael J. Ryan, Head of Vertebrate Palaeontology, Cleveland Museum of Natural History

6:00 **Dinner by Laura Balog Catering Services**

Displays and end of Silent Auction

➤ Call for 2014/15 nominations

The following are new individuals that have been nominated:

- William King has been nominated for the Member at large seat, representing Milk River NA Kennedy Coulee Management Committee
- David Hill has been approached to represent Academia but has not confirmed if he is interested in taking the seat

Action: Lorraine Nicol to contact Dr. Hill and confirm if he is interested in running

- Ron McNeil has been nominated for the Non-Government Organization (Environmental) representing the Prairie Conservation Forum while Ed Sloboda will be nominated for the Non-Government Organization (General)
- Registration
 - 50 people have registered to date
- Silent Auction
 - Have received some silent auction items for the AGM
 - Still soliciting items and board members were asked to let Mary Know if they would like to donate
- Volunteers
 - Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham and Ed Sloboda have indicated that they will be available to help setting up at Civic Center, April 9, from 1pm to 4pm
- Poster contest time slot
 - Will be at 4:30 after coffee break and before the keynote speakers
- Bylaw amendments
 - Nomination Process

- Currently the MRWCC bylaw states that “Members of the Board of Directors will be required to commit to a two-year term from the date of the Annual General Meeting in which they were elected as a Director”. And the “The term of office of a Director is renewable for a second term upon nomination and election by the members but Directors must stand down for at least one term, *unless uncontested*. *Should the office of a Director be uncontested or vacant, a Director may serve for additional terms until contested*”.
- It was advised that the term is too short for the new Directors to get acquainted with the duties and responsibilities and that there is need to amend the bylaw to allow more time on the board

Action: Tim to bring up the bylaw amendment for the length of the director’s term next AGM and accommodate for the 30 days waiting period.

7. Team Updates

- *Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)*
 - There was no meeting so no report was presented
- *Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)*
 - Surface water monitoring
 - 2014 program will start April 16
 - Sampling is done twice a month from April to June and once a month July to October
 - Sampling on Shanks tributary will be discontinued
 - Planning to also sample Hwy 880 if the dates don’t align with ESRD sampling days
 - Pathogen Microbial Source Tracking Project
 - There is a chance that there will be funding available for the project
 - WPACs have shown interest in the project and would like to use the same model as the MRWCC
- **Action:** John Ross- follow up with Alberta Beef Producers regarding funding
 - Invasive weed mapping cooperative project

- Planning to do a collaborative weed mapping project with the Municipalities and Provincial Parks within the watershed for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds and other invasive plant species and also follow up with Montana
- *Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)*
 - Meeting report
 - Had a productive meeting this morning
 - Went through each recommendation and placed value for importance
 - Also discussed water supplies, setbacks, industry standards, stewardship, beneficial management practices, current legislation, agriculture and biodiversity
 - Look into whether the Government can recognize areas to compensate landowners for property restrictions
 - Next meeting has been set for April 7, 2014 in Milk River
- *Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)*
 - Team Update
 - The first joint meeting between Montana and Alberta will be scheduled before Christmas this year
 - Will develop full report on compilation and history of chronology
 - And finally have a meeting April/May to settle the Alberta part and then have a joint initiative with Montana
 - Milk River Water Storage Update
 - Political shakeup put things on hold meanwhile there is a push ahead with the new acting Premier
 - There was a question if MRWCC needs to conduct a public survey to see if there is support for the dam.
 - Past studies and history of the storage area were discussed and at the time no serious environmental concerns were raised

- There was discussion that board members should have the freedom to abstain their voting right if the matter poses a conflict of interest with their employment

Motion: Ken Miller moved that MRWCC support to resume investigations on the previously identified feasibility of water storage projects. Ross Ford seconded.

- For – All except Dennis Spackman
- Abstain - Dennis Spackman
- Against – None
- **Carried**

8. Upcoming events

- AGM – April 10 2014, Civic Center, Milk River
- Canoe Trip June 14, 2014
- WPAC Summit – to be hosted by the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, October 21-24 in the Capital Region
- CWRA Conference - March 23-25, 2014, Calgary

9. Other items

- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)
 - There is support for funding monitoring mussels in Alberta
 - Alberta Parks are currently conducting voluntary monitoring
 - Tim represents WPACs on the AIS outreach committee
 - There is support from the province to get legislation in place for monitoring
 - A question was posed as to whether staff can start monitoring for mussels during scheduled water sampling days, we will look into the need to establish monitoring points at the sample locations.

10. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:30pm. **Carried.**

11. Next Meeting

- Next Meeting Date is April 24, 2014 in Milk River at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____