



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

July 4, 2013 – 1:30 PM

ESRD, 2nd Floor (Alberta Environment Office)

Present: Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Lloyd Closson, Ken Miller, Darcy Wills, Ed Sloboda, John Ross, Brian Hills, Lorraine Nicol, Sandi Riemersma, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Darlene Sakires, Paulette Fox, Aaron Domes, Clark Selk, Ken Brown, Roy Audet, Frank Larney, Mike Gervais and Joan Hughson

Guests: David Hill, Director of Centres and Institutes and Research Advocacy, University of Lethbridge
Rob Dunn, Agriculture Land Management Specialist, ARD

1. Welcome and introductions

- Ken Miller chaired the meeting. Ken brought the meeting to order at 1:36 pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Minutes from last meeting

- May 23 meeting minutes were reviewed

Motion: Warren Cunningham moved to accept the minutes as presented. Lloyd Closson seconded. **Carried.**

3. Financial Statements Update

- Will Lindeman presented the financial statements as follows:
Closing balance as of May 31, 2013 was \$283,383.23

Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to accept the Financial Statements as presented. Brian Hills seconded. **Carried.**

a. 2013/14 Project Funding

- Received a letter from ESRD stating that they will proceed with the budget of \$40,000 as determined from the review

b. Budget adjustment discussion

- Out of the \$260,000 that was requested, \$237,500 was approved for core grant
- An initial payment of \$50,000 was paid and the remaining amount has been sent
- Did not receive approval for the additional amount requested for the Youth Engagement Program part time employee
- Alberta Wilderness Association has expressed interest in funding the program

- Tim and Mary will be meeting with staff at Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park on July 9 to discuss possible partnership in delivering Youth Engagement Programs Darcy will have a follow up discussion with AWA at the next sage grouse meeting to see if funding outcomes would fit with a youth program of the council.

Action: Circulate outcome of the July 9 meeting to the Board

- There is a Co-op program delivered by University of Lethbridge where students can work for credits

Action: Lorraine Nicol to investigate on the Co-op program and the availability of University student who can work for credits

- The Youth Engagement program plans should be ready by the next Board meeting in September

c. Shell Fuelling Change Grant

- Received a cheque of \$10,000 from Shell FuellingChange Program as a contribution for towards the project “Partnering to improve water quality in the Milk River Watershed.
- The amount will be used in water quality monitoring and environmental stewardship projects designed to improve water quality along the Milk River
- The amount is to be used within two years

4. Office Space update

- The Building Sub-Committee met with the Town of Milk River CAO June 20th, 2013 to look at the potential of Town office renovations to accommodate MRWCC office needs

Building Sub-Committee Discussion:

- The Town Council made a motion to accommodating the MRWCC in the Town office
- Looked and agreed on the areas that would be renovated
- The CAO to take the matter to Town council and bring back a motion on the rental cost

Board Meeting Discussion:

- The rental rate is \$10.50 per square meter
- For the area that MRWCC will need it works out to \$295 per month including utilities
- The cost of the current building is \$320 including utilities

Motion: Darcy Wills moved that a letter be sent from the MRWCC Chair to the Town Council to indicate approval to move in the Town office and inquire on the time line when the office will be ready. Ed Sloboda seconded. **Carried**

5. SOW Report Progress update

- The SOW unveiling event took place May 31, 2013 and was well received
- 30 draft hard copies were printed by a local Lethbridge Printing company

- The copies were distributed at the event and participants were given two weeks to review the document and give feedback
- 30 DVDs and USB cards with supplemental data were also produced and given out with the draft SOW reports
- Minor corrections are almost done
- Two weeks over budget
- 1500 copies will be printed at \$16.50 per copy
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks have requested to pay printing costs for 100 copies. An invoice has been sent for \$2,000 US but we are working through tax issues with international money exchange
- A copy of the report will be given to all Board members and mailed to SOW report contributors
- Printing should be done in August

6. ESRD's 2013 WPAC Forum report

- Tim attended the WPAC Forum facilitated by ESRD in Leduc June 27
- Some of the presenters included:
 - Bev Yee who presented on Integrated Resource Management Planning Challenges and Opportunities as a comprehensive approach to decision making. Balance environment, economic and social impacts to ensure environmental sustainability. She pointed out the need to iron out overlapping programming
 - Andy Ridge gave an update on the Water Conservations. The intent has been to focus on priority issues in different areas and communities. In support for the sub-regional approach in the southern region and will be conducting some follow-up multi-stakeholder framing and policy planning work. There are additional considerations that need to be explored before moving ahead with project such as fracking
 - Ernie Hui presented on the Environmental Monitoring Agency. He mentioned that legislation to create the agency will need to pass Bill 21 in fall. Legislation is now in place for the GOA to charge fees from operators to cover monitoring expenses
 - Gord Edwards gave an update on the Alberta Water Council's major projects
 - SSRP had hoped to release Regional Planning and Dynamic Planning this summer with intent on getting public feedback of the draft during the fall and winter. The rest of the plans are to be completed in the next two years

Action: Tim to forward full presentations to Board Members

David Hill, Director of Centres and Institutes and Research Advocacy with the University of Lethbridge advised that he joined the University last September after leaving Alberta Innovates. He stated that he is surprised at the level of talent and expertise in addressing water issues.

- Organizations working on similar projects are disconnected
- Centres and Institutes and Research has a high level of interest in working with groups on the ground to see where research fits
- There is need to see what analytical tools and models can be used and how and if these can apply to the Milk
- Can incorporate past IFN studies already done

- Alberta Innovates has \$10 Million available for research
- David Hill or John Zhou can be contacted with research needs

7. AWC report

- Ken was not available to give an update
- Discussed in part 6

8. Team Updates

a. *Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)*

- Canoe Tour
 - Was cancelled due to the loss of a family member
 - Is there need to reschedule?
 - Can organize a canoe trip with a smaller group that will be done in honour of Mike Brown
 - John scouted the reach that we were supposed to canoe and found out that it was longer than suggested
 - Can use east end of the ranch to shorten the trip
 - John will work with Ken Brown to scout this area

- Hike Tour
 - Scheduled for October 5
 - A question of whether we should revisit Milk River Canyon or look at another area was raised
 - CAIT will scout areas to be visited

- Well Decommissioning Workshop
 - Tim, Mary and Ed visited Todd Coverdale and the well to be decommissioned
 - It is an ideal well for the workshop
 - Todd suggested the 1st and 2nd week of August will be best for him as he is going to be away
 - Jeff Gutsell and Joe Harrington have been contacted and they will be available to present
 - Growing Forward Program has funding available at 50/50 share cost
 - Would be good to video tape the workshop and post on the web
 - One company has been approached but they will not be available at the time
 - Life Water and Camfield will also be contacted

- Spring/Summer Meander Newsletter
 - In the process of proofing and will be ready July 12

 - Sage Grouse Recovery Committee It is important for the MRWCC to have a rep for the Sage Grouse Recovery Committee to understand what's going on

Motion: John Ross moved that Darcy Wills represent the MRWCC on the Sage Grouse Recovery Committee. Ed Sloboda Seconded. **Carried**

b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)

- R and M meeting report
 - The meeting scheduled for the morning of July 4 was cancelled due to low attendance
- 2013 Surface Water Quality Monitoring Project
 - Surface water monitoring on going
- Fire recovery project wrap-up
 - The analytical results have been normal
 - Dr. Uldis Silins with U of A is putting together a report on the project
 - All the analytical expenses on the project will be reimbursed
- Source Tracking project proposal
 - Submitted a Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (ACCP) grant application
 - The project objective is to develop a practical, rapid, and broadly-applicable test that will discriminate fecal and environmental E. coli in surface water

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

- IWMP Progress update and Draft Schedule for review and endorsement
 - SOW report is wrapping up and will concentrate on IWMP
 - Understand status of JIT activity and how their report influences the Water Management Plan component
 - Develop worksheets for meetings with municipal staff that summarize recommendations and provide space for comments on implementation actions and priority ratings
- Meet with staff from Municipalities:
 - August/September 2013 - plan to invite Engineers, Planners, Emergency Services, Agricultural Fieldmen, and CAO from each municipality to review recommendations and provide comments on implementation actions for the plan
 - August 22, 2013 - Cypress County
 - September, 2013 - Cardston County
 - County of Forty Mile – To be determined
 - County of Warner – To be determined
 - October 2013 plan to meet with ERCB, Oil and Gas Industry stakeholders
 - November to January 2014 present final plan to municipalities and seek municipal endorsements
 - February 28, 2014 submit to ESRD for support
 - March 31, 2014 final submission by March 31, 2014

d. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)

- JIT is still on hold
- Anticipate to have 2 more meetings to finish it off
- Work will wind-up late fall

9. Ecological Goods and Services Pilot Projects and Discussion – Rob Dunn, Agriculture Land Management Specialist, ARD

- Rob Dunn previously worked as District Agricultural Specialist and currently as Ag Land Specialist with ARD in Lethbridge
- Rob also represents ARD on the SSRP
- Rob gave an overview and progress report on the Ecosystem Services and the Southern Alberta Offset Pilot
- The project was implemented at the request of the Land Use Secretariat and is being led by AARD in collaboration with ESRD, Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures, ACA, Universities of Alberta and Calgary
- The objective of the project is to test key components and principles for a conservation offset system at a local and regional scale that can inform approaches at a broader scale
- The Pilot team continues to engage industry for input on proposed ecological impacts and encourage voluntary offset purchase for unavoidable impacts related to new development activity on native prairie landscapes
- The Pilot has also engaged local agricultural landowners for input on proposed offset for conversion on privately owned cropland to prescribed native prairie species mixtures
- Next year the team will finalize implementation protocols related to cultivated land conversion to native species, third party offset management and verification and offset ecological metrics

10. Upcoming events

- Well decommissioning Workshop – TBA
- South Alberta Youth Range Days – July 16 to 18, 2013, Cypress County
- Bonanza Day Parade – August 3, 2013
- 2013 WPAC Summit – September 23 to 26, Lakeland Inn, Cold Lake

11. Other items

- Strategic plan session to be planned for second week of October
- Chairman John Ross to address the issue of chronic absenteeism by Board members

12. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Darcy Wills moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:37pm. **Carried.**

13. Next Meeting Date

- September 26, 2013 – ESRD, Lethbridge at 1:30pm

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____