



Agenda
MRWCC Board Meeting
December 9th, 2019 – 1:30 PM
Lethbridge College

Present: William King, Ben Ellert, John Ross, Ron McNeil, Brian Hills, Joan Hughson, Aaron Domes, Darcy Wills, Lorraine Nicol, Ross Ford, Will Lindeman, Scott MacCumber, Warren Cunningham, Kandra Forbes, Tim Romanow, and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Ed Sloboda, Devon Ford, Suzanne Liebelt, Ken Miller, and Stephen Kirkpatrick

Lethbridge College Tour:

Board members and staff toured Lethbridge College Hubbard Wildlife collection and the soil monolith collection from 1:30 to 2:10pm. The tour was guided by Brad Taylor, the Chair of the School of Environmental Sciences.

- Ron and Ben gave a brief overview of the soil monolith collection
- Ben and Ron were thanked for their input
- The public is allowed to view the wildlife displays, just inform security if you are interested in gaining access and they will open the labs
- Brad also indicated that there may be opportunities to have student independent study projects related to the Milk River watershed as a future partnership opportunities

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 2:26pm

2. Approve Agenda

Motion: Ross Ford moved to approve the agenda as presented. Lorraine Nicol seconded.

Carried

3. Minutes from September 26, 2019 meeting

- Part 4, the name in the Motion should read Nicol
- Part 12, first sentence should read Western Producer
- There were plans to invite Cam Lockerbie, the Regional Park Ecologist to give an update on Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve Management plan. Cam was not able to make the meeting but would be available to make a presentation at a future Board meeting or the next Science Forum
- Planning to invite Margo to update the Board on the Alberta Irrigation Districts Association at a future Board meeting and could ask the Milk River Water Users Association to schedule their meeting same day to make it more convenient for her

Motion: Scott MacCumber moved to accept the minutes as amended. Lorraine Nicol seconded.

Carried

4. Financial update

- Financial statements update
 - September and October, 2019 Financial Statements
 - The financial statements were presented

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statements as presented. Warren

Cunningham seconded. **Carried**

- WPAC core and project grant status
 - Just received and signed the grant agreement
 - It is an amendment of the 2019/20 agreement which states that the Council will receive \$1,100,000 for 4 years from 2019 to 2023
 - 2019/20 fiscal year the Council received interim funding of \$100,000, so will receive an additional \$175,000 upon execution of the agreement, conditions of the new agreement will replace the interim conditions
 - The Council will receive up to \$275,000 after April 1 upon submission of an interim report for each year from 2020 to 2023 fiscal years
 - The Council shall provide by April 15 an annual interim report each year and a full summary report in 2023 no later than June 30
 - Eligible use of funds includes:
 - Human Resources and organization and Administrative
 - Convening and Collaborating
 - Monitoring and reporting
 - Policy and planning, and
 - Literacy and education
 - Non-eligible use of funds includes:
 - Establishing or contributing to a reserve/contingency account
 - Donations to other organizations
 - GST/HST payments
 - Individual capital asset purchases exceeding \$5,000, and
 - Monitoring, modelling, or capital infrastructure projects
 - There are some discrepancies on Schedule A on water monitoring and reporting on eligible and non-eligible use of funding, which will need clarification
 - The funding agreement is more generic as it does not specify how funds will be used within the eligible programs
 - Will still need to be fiscally responsible, a 2020-21 workplan is required

- This is the last fiscal year for the WRRP funding which pays \$20,000 towards Education and Outreach wages for monitoring and administration of the program
- Tim gave an overview of the WRRP program

5. Evaluation of accounting review of engagement proposals

- We received four proposals from four Accounting firms:
 - Insight - \$3,800.00
 - BDO - \$5,300.00
 - KPMG - \$6,200.00
 - Avail - \$7,560.00
- After discussions the consensus was to go with Insight Chartered Professional Accountants for economic reasons as they had the most competitive proposal

Motion: Ross Ford moved to award Insight Chartered Professional Accountants to prepare the Milk River Watershed Council Canada's Financial Review Engagement for three years, to year ending 2023. Ron McNeil seconded. **Carried**

6. WPACs Manager's report

- Discussed WPACs that have dissolution bylaws and the decommissioning process in the event that funding was discontinued
- There was a discussion that in the event that offices were closed for good, we would follow the society's Act that deals with dissolution of society in Alberta
- AWC just initiated Water for life strategy review project
 - AWC Source Water Projection project has just completed
 - AWC/AB WPAC multi year drought project is just wrapping up with the pilot workshop in Camrose hosted by the BRWA, train the trainer session will be held for WPAC staff delivery at summer WPAC summit

7. PCF Connecting Corridors meeting report

- Tim and Ron attended the meeting mid-October
- Looking at better connection of prairie and parkland ecosystems in Alberta for wildlife
- A lot of work has been done on the ground that benefits a wide range of habitats
- Need to realize that this cannot be accomplished without the support of producers and municipalities. So, there is need to look at ways to reward producers for their involvement
- There is some follow up work that needs to be done to refine the discussions
- There is a report coming up from PCF which the MRWCC can provide further updates and tie into the Council's strategic planning

8. Grasslands Conservation Markets Symposium

- Presented in November
- Alberta Innovates proposed the workshop for preservation of natural habitats
- About 120 people attended the workshop. Mostly Albertans and some Saskatchewanians
- Covered carbon footprint, biodiversity, and stewardship credits
- Good opportunities for the community and if there is interest, MRWCC could help to facilitate the program for watershed producers
- Dr. Edward Bork could be a keynote presenter at the Community Appreciation Forum

9. Environment Canada – Conservation Tax credit incentive project

- Conservation tax credit incentive led by municipalities, funded through SARPAL funding
- Environment Canada is looking at a possibility to enter into an agreement to take a lead on the incentivized tax credit program with municipal partners both on the Saskatchewan and Alberta sides of the watershed, initial focus could be Sage Grouse EPO region.
- The initial grant is for \$75,000
- The County can be reimbursed directly by Environment Canada for giving a tax credit to their producers, for both deeded and leased land, who would buy in the program
- The Council can benefit by collaborating or facilitating the agreement with the municipality concerned for an agreed upon fee
- Reno County in Saskatchewan has entered into an agreement
- Joan to bring the issue to the County of Forty Mile and report back to MRWCC the County's interest

Motion: Will Lindeman moved that MRWCC support the program by exploring further to see if it's a good fit for the MRWCC, upon getting feedback from County of Forty Mile. William King
Seconded. Carried.

10. Southgrow Water Security Forum

- The forum scheduled in fall was cancelled and will be rescheduled in spring
- Looking for municipal support for the project

11. 2020 Proposed meeting dates

- The following meeting dates were approved:
- Board Meeting dates:
 - January 31 at 9:30am
 - March 26
 - May 14 (after the AGM)
 - September 24
 - November 26

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.

- Other Important Dates:
 - February 12 Annual workplan Planning Session
 - March 19 - Community Appreciation Forum
 - May 14 – AGM
 - November 10 – Science Forum

12. Municipal Representative to MRWCC Appointments

- County of Forty Mile rep:
 - Joan Hughson – Director
- County of Warner reps:
 - Ross Ford – Director
 - Shawn Rodgers – Alternate
- Town of Milk River – Suzanne Liebelt
- Village of Coutts – Scott MacCumber

13. Christmas Dinner

- John and Kathy Ross offered to host and provide food for the Christmas dinner at their Lethbridge residence
- Thanks to the Ross' for their generosity

14. Team updates:

- Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - Youth Engagement Program
 - 2019 Fall Meander Newsletter
- Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - Surface Water Monitoring
 - WRRP Phase 2 Project update
- Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
- Transboundary Watershed Team
 - 2020 Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop

15. Upcoming Events

- Strategic Planning review – February 12, 2020
- Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop – February 25-27, 2020, Regina, Saskatchewan
- Community Appreciation Forum - March 19, 2020
- AGM – May 14, 2020
- Science Forum – November 10, 2020

16. Round table discussions

- Aaron Domes:
 - Gave a brief presentation on the annual community meeting
 - Working on work plans including one with MRWCC
 - Meg Berry, the WOSPP Archeologist will be ending her contract with the Park end of December 2019. She was quite an asset to the Park and partner organizations
 - UNESCO has invited WOS to participate on a world heritage conference, One of the items discussed at the conference will be combining tourism and indigenous culture
 - One of the Park seasonal interpreters has been invited to attend
- William King:

Fence construction between Milk River Natural Area and the Ecological Reserve has been delayed due to weather

 - There are concerns with grazing the natural area given the fencing issues
- Lorraine Nicol:
 - Attended and presented at the Women in Agriculture Conference
 - It was well attended and good to meet amazing women in agriculture

17. Other items

18. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: William King moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:24pm

19. Next Meeting Date

- Next meeting will be on January 31 at 9:30am in Milk River

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____