



Minutes
MRWCC Board Meeting
January 31st 2019 – 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, Ross Ford, Scott MacCumber, Darcy Wills, Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Suzanne Liebelt, Kandra Forbes, Tim Romanow, and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Ken Miller, Joan Hughson, and Kristen Dykstra

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:30pm

2. Approve Agenda

Motion: Brian Hills moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ron McNeil seconded.
Carried

3. Minutes from November 22, 2018 meeting

- Amendments were made for the following statements to read:
 - Page 3:
 - Have not yet received the balance of the 2018/19 grant
 - Page 5 and 6, part 10:
 - To be deleted
 - Page 11, part 16:
 - Program focusses on Agricultural related matters such as international trade, marketing, production, and resource management
 - David Hill is heading program development

Motion: Ross Ford moved to accept the minutes as amended. Lorraine Nicol seconded.
Carried

4. Financial update

- Financial statements update
 - November and December 2018 Financial Statements

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statements as presented. Ed Sloboda. **Carried**

- Grant application status
 - 2019/20 Fiscal, AEP grant application: Core and Projects planning update
 - Issues pertaining to the grant application due to the upcoming elections and possible changes in cabinet were discussed
 - There will be a hold of grant application review date with election called before May 30, may delay grants to end of June

- This will affect a number of WPACs with no operational reserve funding
- The Minister guaranteed three years of funding through March 2020
- With the uncertainty, the grant application is open ended and a discussion needs to be carried out with regards to any potential project funding
- Will need to be fiscally responsible to stretch the available funds and also seek out other funding opportunities
- Will not make solid commitments on project funding as of yet
- There was a proposition to plan the budget but delay grant application submission until more discussions on how the continuity of operations will go
- A Regional priorities and WPAC work plan alignment meeting will be held in March, this may provide some feedback and direction on possible activities for the 2019-20 fiscal year

Action: Core Grant Application and draft budget will be presented at the March board meeting for discussion and submitted to AEP by the end of March

- There were further discussions on other funding sources and what avenues the Council can take to secure funding in future

Action: Tim and John to present the idea of a joint funding development position with other WPACs for common programming areas and core operations

- Casino Fundraising: Motion to approve Casino License and funding application
 - The process is long and complex will likely take 18 months if approved
 - Will need to submit an application with a number supporting requirements
 - One of the requirements is a copy of minutes with a motion to approve casino license and funding application

Motion: Ron McNeil moved to approve casino license and funding application. The Board will review and have final approval on whether to proceed with the application. Roy Audet seconded. **Carried.**

- Eco-Action Grant
 - There was an opportunity to submit an application for the grant. Started the application process and submitted for review but were told that the monitoring component was a non-eligible component and eventually we decided to withdraw the application
 - Will try to submit for a future application on shovel ready projects
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation Grant
 - Submitted an application for \$8,000 on water conservation on projects such as xeriscape with the Town Council

5. Twin River Heritage Rangeland Reclassification and Expansion update

- AEP letter to MRWCC
 - Response letter from Hon. Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks was discussed

- The decision has to be made internally and there is no external communication regarding the outcome at this time
- The Board was thanked for their feedback
- There was some miscommunication with the information released by the media, and it was discussed that in future, to avoid such miscommunications, there should be an approved written response outlining the Council's response and messaging for the media

6. Alberta Water Council Projects update

- Water for Life – review
 - Review of water for life implementation will start shortly
 - BRWA will provide a representative on the review committee for 2019-20
 - The alternate will be from Athabasca Water Council
 - There will be a progress report for the final reporting for water for life coming out by November 2019

7. AB WPAC Manager's update

- WPAC funding model proposal – Deputy Minister discussion
 - Next Manager's meeting is on February 5, 2019
 - Working towards funding model
 - Looking to establish a meeting with Bev Yee to discuss the issue on how funding continuity can be improved
- WPAC Forum
 - Planning a regional WPAC planning meeting with the 5 Southern Alberta WPACs which will include some Board members

8. Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve update – February meeting invitation

- At the last Board meeting there was interest to have a subcommittee to accompany William King and represent the Council at their next meeting on February 15, 2019 in Foremost
- The subcommittee comprise of: William, John, Tim, Ron, and Darcy
- The delegation will discuss the monitoring strategy and possibly suggestions to improve communication, scientific reporting, accountability to the local community, and the incorporation of local observations in both the KCER and MRNA

9. Council appointments – Industry Rep, farewell to Scott McGarty

- Scott McGarty left Granite and will no longer represent Industry on the Board
- Have talked to Tyler Klatt who has indicated that they will appoint another representative to replace Scott
- A thank you email was sent to Scott and John Ross also communicated with him

10. Community Appreciation Forum (CAF) Planning update – March 19th

- Speaker ideas:
 - Chronic Wasting Disease update, possibly from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks since CWD has been confirmed south of Sweetgrass and Whitlash, MT

- Megan Jensen (Pronghorn Crossing Project, Transboundary work on migration routes)
- Megan Evans (Bees) Pollinators in the Grasslands
- Short Horned Lizards/Alberta Amphibians (Julie Landry-Deboer) possible keynote presentation
- Other WPAC, contacted Lesser Slave Watershed Council. Good tie into our programs and have used Sandi with WQ Monitoring and IWMP, very similar to our approach. Looking at a results-based approach presentation
- Fundraising:
 - Tours: Natural Area Tour – Confirmed that John Ross has agreed to donate a flight again. Thanks John
 - William has offered to tour a small group of people at the Natural area
 - Canoe trip and hike tour
 - 50/50
 - Need silent auction items
 - With the changes with Granite Oil it may make it more difficult to receive larger items
 - Asking everyone to help with the donations
 - Planning to adopt the same format as last year but one less presentation
 - School Poster contest awards will be presented after other presentations and just before dinner to avoid distracting other presenters
 - There will be no barrier setup in the presentation area
 - Tim will do a presentation to reflect stewardship work with Municipalities

11. OHS compliance and Insurance review

- Have had break-ins at two of the WPACs
- Looked at our insurance to make sure we are covered for theft
- We have a comprehensive insurance that covers for theft and other incidents
- OHS compliance with partnership with WOSPP
 - Looking to have an OHS policy with regard to education outreach work as a requirement of the grant
 - Opportunity to have an OHS policy for the entire organization for our operations areas, e.g. water sampling, educational tours, etc. and also have first aid training, will continue to work on this as time permits

12. Team updates:

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - Youth Engagement Program at MRE school on what a watershed is
 - Have done school programs with MRE School for grades 1, 2, and 3
 - Will do grade 4 and 5 next Thursday
 - Next is Warner and Foremost
 - Summer intern partnership project with WOSPP update

- Fill gaps in programming for the Council and WOSPP
- Kandra met with Suzanne and Jennell to go over details
- Jennell compiled the notes into a document to clarify roles and expectations
- Applying for federal and provincial funding
- Also potentially partnering with the Visitor info Centre
- Already had interest from one Lethbridge College student
- No commitment will be made until funding confirmation
- WOSPP has offered free accommodation for the summer student if needed

Action: Lorraine to circulate application package to University students

- Youth Range Days – update – Aden, AB July 2019
 - Booked Grain Hall at Aden for July 23-25th
 - Working on the TOR for the committee to ensure that everyone knows their roles and responsibilities
 - Swag
 - T-shirts would be preferred, possibly get some made in April with the new fiscal year if budget allows
- Community Award programs
 - Deadline for nomination submission for Environmental Stewardship Award and Heritage Tree program is February 4, 2019
 - Have a few nominations for the Heritage tree
 - No nominations as of yet for the Environmental Stewardship Award
- Spring Hike Tour – April 26, 2019
 - Same location as fall cancelled tour, Twin River Natural Area and Tree coulee area
 - WOSPP will provide vans if needed
 - Working to obtain a Temporary Field Authorization
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - Surface Water Monitoring – Collaboration meeting with AEP
 - Planning to get together with EMSD staff in February to discuss monitoring programming, objectives and collaboration
 - WRRP Phase 2 Project update
 - Still soliciting for additional projects throughout the watershed
 - Submitted the interim report and have received confirmation that we will be receiving the balance of the grant
 - Working Well Workshop – Warner

- Scheduled for March 7th, 2019 in partnership with SEAWA and the County of Warner
- Ads have been sent
- Groundwater monitoring project summary update
 - Working with Kristen Dykstra
 - Finalizing the report and should be ready to print 2nd week of February in time to be distributed at the Community Appreciation Forum
- c. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - Milk River Water Storage Investigation Study Summary Project
 - The Project is progressing, first draft has been reviewed by the team on Friday Jan 18th
 - Second draft for review of entire council will be available within a couple of weeks
 - On track to complete the project by the end of the fiscal year
- d. Transboundary Watershed Team
 - Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop report
 - 4th Annual Transboundary Grassland Partnership Workshop
 - Hosted by Alberta on December 3 -5th 2018
 - Started with MRWCC and WOSPP hosting a tour at WOSPP Dec 3rd and discussion regarding local stewardship, homesteading, and ranching in the watershed. Thanks to Robbie Wills for her presentation
 - Saskatchewan is planning to host Dec 2019
 - Thanks to Kandra who did a great job presenting on media communication
- e. Planning and Policy Analytical Team
 - Have not had an opportunity to meet with all municipal partners yet to discuss planning and policy review needs and value to Council stakeholders
 - Will continue to explore opportunities to host ad hoc committee meetings vs establishment of a team

13. Upcoming Events

- a. Spring Hike Tour, Twin River Natural Area - April 26, 2019
- b. Community Appreciation Forum (CAF) March 19th, 2019, Civic Centre
- c. AGM – Council Chambers, May 23, 2019
 - There has been interest expressed from the Alberta Beef Producers for a seat on the Board

14. Round table discussions

- Tim:
 - We got an email from Dr. Elizabeth McClain, advisor to the President at Aaniiih Nakoda College, Water Department in Montana looking for a hard copy of the 2nd edition of the Milk River Transboundary State of the Watershed Report

- They find both SOW reports have greatly expanded coverage on several topics that are of great interest to students and faculty
- The 2008 SOW Report is a wonderful document which has greatly expanded their knowledge of the Milk River outside the Fort Belknap Reservation
- Ron:
 - Planning a Fall Hike tour and are in conversation with WOSPP. This will be a strenuous tour
 - Seeking authorization to do a guided tour south of the river around Davis and Police Coulee
 - Ben, Ron, Kandra, and one person from WOSPP
 - Less than 5 people for a pre-tour in March or April
 - Kandra's role is to look after logistics but will also go on the tour
- Ron:
 - Has been donating and involved with corrections in naming and classifying the soil monoliths recently donated to Lethbridge College
- Darcy:
 - Success of YRDs in the area and the development of the TOR could be expanded throughout the province
 - There is interest in other areas
- Brian:
 - AER has announced the Supreme Court decision to hold responsible companies that file for bankruptcy without considering environmental liabilities. Tim will circulate the link to council
- Brian:
 - AER has published a water use report that can be divided by sub watershed and differentiates between surface and groundwater diversion or license by industrial activity

15. Other items

16. Meeting Adjournment

- Motion: Ed Sloboda moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:31pm

17. Next Meeting Date

- March 28th, 2019

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____