



Minutes

MRWCC Board Meeting

June 28, 2012 – 1:30 PM

Alberta Environment, 2nd Floor

Present: Ed Sloboda, Will Lindeman, Warren Cunningham, Don Welsh, Brian Hills, Ken Miller, Aaron Domes, John Ross, Darcy Wills, Paulette Fox, Joan Hughson, Sandi Riemersma, Tim Romanow and Mary Lupwayi

Absent: Darlene Sakires, Lorraine Nicol, William Chamber, Ken Brown

Guests: Gary Bikman, MLA for Cardston-Taber-Warner
Dave McGee, Senior Policy & Implementation Manager with ESRD

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross brought the meeting to order at 1:34pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting
- Introductions were conducted
- Aaron Domes, the new Provincial Government representative replacing Greg Ottway introduced himself to the group and stated that he was happy to join the team and is looking forward to working with the council.

2. Minutes from last meeting

- The minutes from May 24th, 2012 were reviewed. Brian Hills noted three areas that needed to be corrected before the minutes were accepted as follows:
 - Part 3 under Discussion, to following sentences should read:
 - Is there data available for the water for life progress metrics?
 - The province has put together a panel to come up with funding and monitoring governance recommendations
 - Part 5, the 1st bullet should read:
 - AEW has sent a grant funding agreement with an addendum that MRWCC will receive an additional \$100,000 for core funding for the fiscal year 2012/13

Motion: Joan Hughson moved to accept the minutes after making the noted amendments. Warren Cunningham seconded. **Carried.**

3. MRWCC overview report

- Tim presented a brief presentation on the MRWCC organization and activities. The outline consisted of:
 - A briefing about the MRWCC
 - A review of past activities
 - Project Teams
 - Plans as we move forward: 2012-2013
 - 2013 SOW report and
 - Integrated Watershed Management Plan report

4. MLAs address

- a. Mr. Bikman
 - i. MLA for Cardston-Taber-Warner expressed his appreciation for being invited to attend the meeting and stated that his first exposure to WPACs was two weeks ago when he was invited at OWC AGM
 - ii. The WPACs are doing impressive work

- iii. John Ross added that funding is always a challenge and that there is always need for support
 - iv. Gary advised that the constituency is always there to help and will pass on the message to Edmonton
 - b. Mr. Barnes
 - i. Was not available for the meeting

5. 2012 WPAC Summit Planning update

- Getting closer to finalizing the agenda
- Need more help on the planning committees
- Still need some speakers
- Looking for sponsorship for coffee breaks and banquet
- Letters soliciting banquet sponsorship have been sent to municipalities. The Reeves from the four municipalities within the watershed have been invited to give a greeting on behalf of their municipalities at the Banquet
- Hoping to have corporate support from industry and asking Board members with ties to industries to help with sponsorship requests
- Registration is at \$225 per person about \$50 more from last year
- Hoping to finalize planning committees mid-July
- The Montana optional tour on September 24, first registration opportunity will go to MRWCC folks
- September 25 will be at Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park
- Invitation letters will be sent to the Minister of ESRD and Alberta Premier and possibly use the opportunity to sign off on behalf of the GOA Water for Life and Alberta WPAC's agreement (MOU)
- Will need to invite our local MLAs as well
- Paulette and Ed will help with the planning of the cultural and historical aspect of the events
- September 26 will be in Milk River and will have the banquet in the evening
- Planning to invite the Black Foot Challenge to give a presentation on the Montana perspective
- September 27 will be in Lethbridge. The morning session will focus on business meetings for WPACs and the Chairmen will give brief presentations on outlining activities of their perspective WPACS
- There are still some speaker spots needing to be filled including the keynote speaker. Brian Keaton had been mentioned in the past

6. MRWA meeting report (SOW Report update)

- The Terms of Reference is underway for all 3 groups (Alberta, Montana and Saskatchewan) for the Transboundary watershed report
 - Has been well received
 - The Draft IWMP was sent in February for comments and March 1 to ESRD
 - Met with Research and Monitoring Team May 29
- May 29 Meeting Discussions:
- Should adopt the original 2008 SOW document appearance
 - Discussed what was good and not so good with the 2008 SOW report
 - Need to spent a little time on the icons
 - Report on CD
 - Include a foldup map in the report that shows features
 - Summary of health status on each page
 - Have all team members for Alberta but working on Montana and Saskatchewan
 - Tim and Sandi will be meeting with the Saskatchewan authorities July 25, 2012
 - Saskatchewan Government wants to setup an MOU for data sharing
 - Finding key people is looking increasingly doable
 - Geological Survey of Canada is already working with Montana
 - Would like to keep the SOW report easy to read and understand
 - Liz Saunders, who did the designing and layout of the 2008 SOW report has agreed to work on the 2013 SOW report at the cost of \$16,300
 - Blair Watke will work on cartography as long as all mapping and transboundary data is provided

- Sandi is collecting photos for the SOW report and asking anyone with such photos to send to her
- 2008 printed 1,800 copies of the SOW report. Planning to print 1,000 copies for the 2013 report since there are more copies left from 2008
- Darcy Wills is added on the recreation committee
- Sandi and Tim met with the MRWA team in Havre, Montana

MRWA Meeting Discussions:

- MRWA has hired a new Coordinator, Julianne Sather Snedigar who has replaced Jennifer Kenck
- Meeting was well received
- This is the first attempt to include transboundary reports
- The idea at the moment is to work with the available information and in future build from there
- The report will be meshed. Will not need to see three separate reports
- Sandi will do the editing of all reports
- Had a lengthy discussion on the issue of incompatibility of maps and jurisdictional differences between Alberta and Montana
- There are no maps that show continuation of streams between the boundaries
- Tim and Sandi will be meeting with the Saskatchewan authorities July 25, 2012

7. WPAC Forum report

- Tim and Mary attended the forum June 6 in Leduc
- Heather Sinton presented that it was time to start the implementation process after IWMP
- John Diiwu presented the plans to work towards refining shallow waters mapping
 - New Development using Wetland Extraction by LiDAR Exploitation tool
 - Data is available to WPACs now
 - Wet areas datasets covering an area of 14.2 million hectares have been produced and released to Alberta's forest industry and throughout the GOA
- Also an update on the new Provincial Wetland Policy which focuses on four outcomes:
 - Wetlands of the highest value are protected for the long-term benefit of all Albertans.
 - Wetlands and their benefits are conserved and restored in areas where losses have been high.
 - Wetlands are managed by avoiding, minimizing and, if necessary, compensating for impacts.
 - Wetland management considers regional context

8. Alberta Watersheds Toolkit Workshop report

- Tim and Mary attended the a Southern Alberta Water Leaders and Toolkit Advisory Committee meeting June 25 in Lethbridge that was presented by Lisa Fox
- Objectives of the meeting were to:
 - Present the Toolkit Project and the opportunities of water management and capacity building tools and resources
 - Social network water leaders and identify information and capacity needs of water leaders to manage watersheds
- Good concept as a directory but lacked information
- Also misleading as the inventory does not capture a lot of watershed groups
- Secured \$50,000 in funding for projects
- Has enough for five workshops for water managers
- The ongoing success of the project will depend on the value it provides
- Looking for feedback from WPACs to help establish success
- It was not very clear on how workshops will be delivered or funded
- Alberta Watershed Toolkit is live on the web, which could be of use for Municipalities but has minimal use at this time for WPACs
- Lisa has requested 30mins at the WPAC Summit to further explore the project and build a clear vision and usefulness for WPACs.

9. Urban Municipality Board representative

- The representative for the Urban Municipality currently is William Schamber
- He has not attended any meetings since appointed to the Board in 2011
- The Town of Milk River CAO has attended one meeting on his behalf
- Bill is working and unable to come to the meetings, need to appoint someone who is able to attend meetings
- Need to send a letter to Town of Milk River Town Council to inquire if someone can be appointed who is able to attend meetings
- If no one is available there is need to look at Village of Coutts for a representative

Action: Tim to send a letter to Town of Milk River Council to inquire if someone else can be appointed who is able to attend meetings

10. Financial Statement Update

- Will Lindeman presented the financial report

Motion: Will Lindeman moved to accept the financial statement as presented. Paulette Fox seconded.
Carried.

11. Team Updates

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - A meeting was held June 19, 2012
 - i. 2012 Canoe Trip report
 1. Was held June 23
 2. It was a successful trip, a lot of good comments from participants
 3. Good water flow
 4. Most of the banks looked health
 5. Dana Blouin and Kristie Romanow with Nature Conservancy gave a presentation at the Sandstone Ranch during lunch. They talked about the history and ownership of the ranch, environmental programs being carried out and the health of the ranch
 6. After the presentation, the group went for a hike around the ranch
 7. There was a concern about 4 out houses at the Del Bonita camp ground; that 2 of them are open pit and are too close to the river, about 25 to 30 meters and there is need to investigate if there is leakage into the river
 - ii. Hike Tour
 1. Is scheduled for October 13, 2012
 - iii. Bonanza day
 1. Will be held August 4, 2012
 2. The theme is "Salute to the Pioneers"
 3. Float design ideas have been discussed
 - Plan to have a trailer with an image of a watershed – river with an old canoe, some grass, shrubs, trees and some wildlife
 - Have people dressed as Lewis and Clarke
 4. Coutts has indicated that they would like the MRWCC at their parade as well. Coutts' parade occurs 3rd weekend of June each year
 - iv. Geocache sites
 1. The Geocache has been planted at a different location at the camp ground
 2. Seeking permission from Barry Snow to plant the 2nd cache at the areas where the bioengineering project took place
 - v. Spring/Summer Newsletter review
 1. Got favourable comments about the newsletter
 2. Well-designed since it was done by professionals
 3. The cost was not too different from the old format about \$300 more but with more pages
 4. Depending on content would like to continue with the format
- b. Research and Monitoring Team (R&M Team)
 - A meeting was held May 29, 2012

- Went through the SOW report update
 - i. Milk River Microbial Source Tracking Project Update
 1. Surface water monitoring underway at four locations: Writing –On-Stone Provincial Park Beach site, Highway 880, Up Stream Milk River and Down Stream Milk River
 2. Still need assistance with fecal collection to build fecal data library
 3. Samples can be dropped at MRWCC office, preferably on Wednesdays
 4. Preference of fresh samples
 5. If possible, samples to be collected close to the river
 6. Having problems getting the gate to access the Upstream Milk River site open but working with the Town of Milk River to have the issue resolved
 - ii. 2012 Surface Water Quality Monitoring Project
 1. DO meters are working well
- c. There was a question on how the Invasive weed Management is coming along
 1. Dave Matz, Agricultural Fieldman at the County of Forty Mile is taking the lead on the project
 2. County of Cardston will lend the project a boat to use for weed monitoring
 3. Nature Conservancy of Canada will lend the project Trimble GPS for weed mapping
- d. State of the Watershed Team
 - i. SOW report update
 1. As discussed part 6
- e. Integrated Watershed Management and Planning Team (IWMP Team)
 - The team met May 29, 2012
 - i. IWMP update
 1. SRD provided sections for comments
 2. There is nothing new or innovative with the submission
 3. Developing Private land and oil and Gas sections
 4. Water Quality Objectives established
 5. IFN and water quantity also established
 6. The idea is to have the draft ready in fall for public input to make sure it reflects what the community wants
 7. Planning to bring the plan in September
 8. Planning team meeting July 10 at 10 am and the Battery tour in the afternoon
 9. There was a discussion on oil and gas footprints and the effect age of the pipes and their potential to leak has on the water
- f. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)
 - i. Still on hold
 - ii. Montana and Alberta signed an agreement but since then nothing has happened due to lack of funding
 - iii. JIT's task was to investigate ways the two groups can work together on water sharing.
 - iv. There are two meetings left in August and October 2012 to provide final report

12. Transfers of water licenses in the Milk River basin - Dave McGee

- Dave McGee is the Senior Policy and Implementation Manager in Southern Region of Alberta.
- He has been a water manager for 30 years. Throughout his career he has focused on managing risk in water shortages, worked with many communities to survive droughts, negotiated water allocations for First Nations, and recently represented Alberta on a Task Force convened by the International Joint Commission.

Back ground:

- There is no approved plan for Milk River to authorize water transfers

- There were four applications submitted for transfer of water allocation licenses from the residents along the river who were interested in water transfers: Village of Coutts, Ronald and Karen Garber, Snow Ranches and Martin Snow
- An order from the Lieutenant Governor in Council authorized the Director to consider the four applications for water allocation transfers in the Milk River Basin under the authority of the Water Act section 81
- The process is not simple
- The paperwork started last fall but due to departmental changes in names and ministerial positions, things were slowed down
- It was presented after elections and the Lieutenant Governor has signed
- This does not mean that transfers will be approved. All it means is that transfers may be considered
- Dave will get the signed document for the MRWCC records
- Normal procedure is for notices in the paper for each application giving people directly affected the opportunity to submit statements of concern. There is also a 30 day appeal period for directly affected persons to appeal any decision made on the applications
- One of the conditions to accept transfers is good standing at time of application, if it's in use and there is historical use
- A question was asked on eligibility of inactive licenses for transfer. In general, applications can be reviewed due to inactive use. Part of that review will consider if investment in water conservation is the reason for the inactive use
- The Department will define inactive use to avoid impeding water conservation
- A question was raised on re-issuing cancelled water allocations. If the MRWCC wants to increase allocation, it can prepare and submit a water management plan to the government that includes that recommendation
- MRWCC already has a draft plan in place but were waiting for the Joint Initiative Team to complete their report to avoid conflicting results
- The plan can be submitted later this year after October JIT meeting and report

Action: To circulate the draft plan at the July 10 meeting and discuss with the IWMP Team

13. Upcoming events

- Youth Range Days – July 17 to 19, 2012
 - 35 youths have registered to date
- Bonanza Day – August 4, 2012
- 2012 WPAC Summit – September 24 to 27th, 2012

14. Other items

- a. Alberta Water Council meeting Report
 - i. Ken Brown could not make the meeting
 - ii. Les Gammie, WPAC Director sent the June meeting report to WPAC Managers to inform them that his term on the Council will expire at the October meeting. Ken Brown will take over for the March 2013 meeting as the WPAC rep effective March 2013
- b. Integrating Water innovation Forum
 - i. Will take place August 9 and 10 2012 at the Norsemen Inn in Camrose, Alberta
 - ii. The forum strives to bring together researchers, policy actors, and representatives from different watersheds to bring greater clarity and collaborative capacity to collectively recognizing three objectives as:
 1. The multiple dynamics and functions that complicate watershed level analyses, programing and public policy;
 2. The need to acknowledge and work within watersheds in a fashion that acknowledge integrative watershed management and planning;
 3. The need to better and more clearly address a core issue of horizontal (across policy domains) and vertical (across levels of authority or governance) integration that is often acknowledged rhetorically, but is rarely and explicitly included in policy making and programming in Canada.
 - iii. Those wanting to attend to let Tim know before July 6, 2012

15. Next Meeting Date

- September 20, 2012 – Milk River Town Hall at 1:30pm

16. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Joan Hughson moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:30pm. Brian Hills Seconded. **Carried**

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____