



Agenda

MRWCC Board Meeting

March 22, 2018 – 1:30 PM

Town of Milk River Office

Present: William King, Warren Cunningham, Ed Sloboda, Ron McNeil, Lorraine Nicol, Ross Ford, Joan Hughson, Will Lindeman, Ben Ellert, Jim Willett, Brian Hills, Suzanne Liebelt, Roy Audet, Darcy Wills, John Ross, Dennis Spackman, Kandra Forbes, Tim Romanow, and Mary Lupwayi

Conference Call: Kathleen Murphy (AEP)

Absent: Ken Miller, Kristen Dykstra, and Scott McGarty

1. Welcome and introductions

- John Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting and brought the meeting to order at 1:33pm
- Introductions were conducted

2. Historical Water Licensing Clarification from AEP - Kathleen Murphy (phone)

- Kathleen Murphy, the district approvals Manager with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) joined the meeting via conference call to answer questions the Board had regarding the comments made by the media on reviewing historical water license applications completed/uncompleted in 2001
- Kathleen:
 - The department has many applications on file and there is a backlog in the system that has not been a priority
 - The department previous practice was to accept applications for water licenses and start files in the que either complete or incomplete. In the South Sask Planning region (including the Milk basin) there were over 1100 applications on file, most of which were stagnant. In the effort to try and move some of the applications forward, letters were sent to landowners in the area regarding applications that were there since 2001. When the Water Act came in play there was an initiative to put applications for traditional Agricultural registrations through the process, which was done, and this created some licenses which were non-registerable, and these were part of the 1100 applications that were being dealt with
 - With the case in the media, there was one application with information on file that was incomplete. The department requested the information but did not receive it. In cases like that applications were closed. The landowner was allowed to submit new applications when the

information was available. The affected applications have been reopened. The department did not close any existing licenses, and registrations that were already approved. Only incomplete applications were to be cancelled

- Darcy: Will the 1100 applications be treated the same as this case?
- Kathleen: No, this only applied to incomplete applications
- Joan: Why did it take 16 years to cleanup these applications?
- Kathleen: Experiencing staff shortages, dealing with many applications and other issues such as floods affected the delay
- Ross: With existing licenses, there is a discussion of removing first in time, first in rate section of the licenses in emergency situations. Explanation?
- Kathleen: Have not heard anything about it, that is not the intent
- Darcy asked Kathleen to make a recommendation to those reviewing legislation that there is need to change terminology in the Act from expiry date to review or renewal date
- More questions followed, and the Board was advised that those with more questions on this matter should contact Kathleen's office directly

Action: Brian to liaise with Kathleen and submit an article for the spring/summer Meander Newsletter which is due mid-June with more information on this explanation

- The executive Board and staff were thanked for supporting this subject

3. Minutes from January 25, 2018 meeting

- Past Minutes were reviewed as follows:
- Regarding the Conflict of Interest draft policy on page 4 Lorraine would like it noted that she had added part B to strengthen the policy and would like it specifically noted in the minutes
- The Action item on page 2 should read: Board members to forward their comments on the draft Conflict of Interest policy to Mary to be reviewed and approved at the next Board meeting

Motion: Ross Ford moved to accept the minutes as amended. Suzanne Liebelt seconded. **Carried**

4. Financial update

- a. Financial statements update
 - January 2018 closing balance was \$330,784.77
 - February 2018 closing balance was \$307,216.08
 - Replace the word Accounts to Accounting
 - Project Coordinator should read Contract Expenses

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

- b. 2017/18 AEP Core funding status
 - Have received all the core funding
 - Good application but expecting around the same amount as last year
 - We are in good financial standing right now but will have to make harder decisions with project funding upon outcome of proposal

- c. 2018/19 Core funding application
 - Should have confirmation in 3 weeks

5. Draft Policies

- Received some additional feedback
- Have put a lot of effort into this and thanks to everyone who provided input
- There are 4 of the draft policies that required additional edits
- Looking for a motion to approve the draft policies
- Ross:
 - Policies 3, 4, 7, and 8 are good.
 - Policy 2 had a lot of duplication with bylaw, so will need bylaw amendment
 - Policy 4 and 5 minor change
 - Policy 6 needs more work done
- All draft policies to be circulated to the Board for review and to be discussed at the next Board meeting
- Need to set up a subcommittee to review the draft policies and the bylaws amendment

Action: Ross, Darcy, and Mary will be on the subcommittee to review the draft policies and the bylaw amendments and bring back for review at the next meeting

- Bylaw amendments must be done on time as they will need to be approved at the next Board meeting in order to advertise a notice of amendment and be passed at the AGM
- Lorraine would like to see the Conflict of Interest Policy strengthen but will not press the issue any further. The additions that she put in the draft policy can be removed and she will abstain from voting on the policy

6. Teams Terms of Reference (TOR)

- More feedback was given for the draft TORs which will need to be incorporated

Action: Mary to incorporate the comments to the TORs and bring back at the next Board meeting to seek approval

7. Planning and Policy Team development update

- Developing a core activities list and draft TOR before inviting participants
- Seeking involvement from municipal, GOA, and others involved in regional and municipal planning. Primarily address SWPP and IWMP implementation and review activities in the near term

8. Community Appreciation Forum

- a. Agenda
 - Finalized
 - All speakers in place
 - So far 132 registrants. 81 of those are for the main meeting and 51 are school students and their families for the poster contest
- b. Fundraising
 - Silent Auction

- 3 raffles: Fly the Milk, Private tour of 4 to the Milk River Natural Area, and Hike the Milk
- Will have a 50/50 raffle
- Thanks to those who have given donations
- Consensus was to open a bar at the meeting

Action: Mary to work with Suzanne to facilitate liquor license and other arrangements

c. Volunteers

- Have enough volunteers lined up to help set up the morning of March 27

9. 2018 AGM

- The same set up as last year
- This year's open seats for election:
 - Non-Government Organization (Environmental, General) x 2
 - Agriculture – Farmer
 - Agriculture – Rancher
 - Water Users
 - Municipal District/County x 2
 - Provincial Government x 2 (one must be Alberta Environment and Parks)
 - Health
 - First Nations
- Any member not running please let Tim know

b. Bylaw amendment

- The subcommittee will advise on the amendments at the next Board meeting

10. WPAC Managers meeting report

- Meeting held in Red Deer a few weeks ago
- There are some challenges
- Beaver River Watershed Alliance has merged with regional airshed Authority. Had been under the umbrella of the Lakeland Industry Community Association (LICA). First WPAC to merge with Airshed
- Lesser Slave Watershed Council has started independent water monitoring and contracted Palliser Environmental Service to help put together their monitoring program. Basically, a mirror image of the MRWCC program
- Battle River Watershed Alliance just completed their land atlas which is similar to the MRWCC SOW report

11. WPAC Education Outreach Coordinators report

- Attended a meeting with other Education Outreach Coordinators
- A good opportunity to meet and learn programs that other WPACs are doing
- OWC has adopted the AEP Deep roots program
- Could be a program that the MRWCC can adopt as well

12. Alberta Water Council Projects update – Source Water Protection Planning and Multi-Year Drought Planning Project

- 2 projects being brought forward:

- Source Water Protection Planning Team Program
- Multilayer Drought Planning Project
 - Done TOR
 - Workshop structure like Working Well Program
 - Program to be delivered by WPAC EO Coordinators in working with small urban and rural municipalities on drought planning and opportunities to build resiliency to multi year drought
 - Looking at funding \$65,000 for technical support
 - If approved by the Alberta Water Council Board, anticipated completion is October 2019

13. Wetland Education Network Workshop report

- Most EO Coordinators attended
- About 50 to 80 participants
- Facilitated by Ducks Unlimited as part of the North American Water Fowl Migration Partnership
- Wide variety of people attended, from municipal planners, Industry, biologists, and WPACs
- Come up with a unified approach and network for people to exchange ideas

14. Team update

- a. Community Awareness and Involvement Team (CAIT)
 - Team meeting report – March 13, 2018
 - Reviewed the draft CAIT TOR
 - Approved at Team level
 - To be presented at Board level to seek approval
 - Education Outreach Report
 - Youth Engagement Program
 - Attended meeting in Red Deer with the other WPACs EO staff from
 - Very useful meeting and great exchange of ideas and programs
 - Attended the Wetland Education Network workshop in Leduc. Lots of different stakeholders were present. Still in the beginning phases
 - Presented Caring for Our Watersheds at Erle Rivers and Warner schools. 2 students from Warner participated
 - Did 4 presentations in total on animals in the watershed with artefacts from Helen Schuler to promote the poster contest
 - Need to touch base with WOSPP again to make sure everything is ready for this year
 - We have started finalizing the agenda for Youth Range Days. The agenda is already jam packed with lots of awesome activities. We are also still contacting people and businesses for sponsorship. Have taken over responsibility for registrations as we will be trialing a Google form this year

- Put in two requests for funding for a summer student. One to the provincial program and one to the federal. Depending if and what we get we will then have to meet with WOSPP to see if they would be able to supplement the deficit. The student would likely split their time between MRWCC and WOSPP
- Xeriscape project
 - Talked to the Town Council. Thought it might be a good project to get CFW kids on board with. If not, there is an extension class that involves the kids volunteering so they could help
 - Suggested doing a community plant exchange. An invasive garden plant in exchange for a native
 - Steve McRae, the Xeriscaping landscaper is planning to come to Milk River to review the project
- Award programs
 1. Youth Range Days 2017 Top Hand Winner - Courtney Taylor
 2. 2018 Environmental Stewardship Awards
 - The Team nominated Ken and Wendy Brown for the Milk River Rafters as the recipient of the 2018 Environmental Stewardship Awards
 3. 2018 Heritage Tree Award
 - Awarded to “Jesse Tree” named after the Audet’s youngest son Jesse J. Audet, who cared and watered the tree to make sure the tree had a chance to grow in the harsh environment
 4. School Poster Contest Awards
- Spring Hike Tour
 - Scheduled for April 20, 2018
 - At Tree Coulee to visit:
 - Original site for the Spite Ditch
 - Sundance Circle
 - Whoop-Up Trail
 - Milk River proposed dam site
 - WOSPP and Ed have confirmed transport availability
 - Application for a Temporary Field Authorization has been submitted
- Canoe Tour
 - Scheduled for June 15, 2018
 - From Finstead’s lease to lower level crossing on the Pinhorn
 - John Ross will get permission for access from Lee Finstead
 - Ed will donate the use of the 15-seater van for the event
 - WOSPP approval for bus use is pending

b. Research and Monitoring Team

○ Surface Water Monitoring:

- Sandi is finalizing the 2017 water monitoring report
- The 2018 water monitoring plans are underway
- Planning water sampling refresher training on March 23, 2018
- Meeting with AEP on April 10, 2017 to review the 2017 collaboration and the 2018 program

○ DFO – Overwintering Habitat Stewardship Project

- Completed and working on the final report
- \$25,000 is still outstanding for the final grant, to be paid after submitting the final report which is due April 13, 2018

○ WRRP Phase 1 and 2 Projects

- About \$5,000 remaining for phase 1 program
- Phase 1 program will be closed March 31, 2018
- There will be a project tour with AEP early June
- In process of soliciting projects for phase 2 projects
- Starting to receive applications

c. Water Supply and Management Team (WSM Team)

- In the process of incorporating new members
- Proposed work plan in place
- Team's TOR to be reviewed
- Working on Request for Proposal (RFP) for a summary of past water supply studies done in the basin
 - Ken has done a preliminary review on studies on water supply
 - Off stream sites looked at in the 70s and early 80s are not feasible
 - If approved can easily boil it down to 1 or 2 sites. One of the sites is the Forks major dam site
- Milk River Water Users Association first organizational meeting took place on February 6, 2018
 - The Association is looking at getting registered as a society
 - Looking at Bylaws and incorporate other licenced water users as well in addition to irrigators
- John met with Minister Shannon Phillips
- Talked about the diversion and dam in Milk River
- The Minister advised that they have looked at the dam but there is no money for the project
- Assistant Deputy Minister Rick Blackwood's Letter

- Need to look at adaptation and climate change, there is potential for green energy developments
 - Can also look at private public partnerships
 - Helping Montana folks in making a case as to why they need to redo the infrastructure for the diversion, could push for their support for a structure on the Canadian side that can be managed to benefit both sides
 - Positive response from the ADM
 - Waiting to know the outcome of grant proposal and waiting for the Milk River Water Users Association to get organized before making a formal request for the RFP
- d. Transboundary Watershed Team
- Transboundary Grasslands workshop took place on February 13 to 15, 2018, in Glasgow, Montana, at the Cottonwoods Inn
 - Good attendance and discussion
 - A well received meeting by all 3 jurisdictions
 - Some interesting topics:
 - Connectivity
 - Antelope migration
 - Transboundary idea brings the 3 jurisdictions together and pivotal for antelopes in the area and some of the pronghorn research shows that corridors need to be between 1 and 5 km wide for the best movement. Fencing is the major barrier for them and improving the wires is showing results where antelopes are being habituated in 1 and 2 years
 - No Till drills
 - Migration pattern of Antelopes
 - Climate model
 - Benefit of data sharing
 - Watershed Alliance presentation
 - World wildlife fund
 - Ron presented on PCF activities
 - Irrigators in Montana have to cover 75% of the cost of the structure and one Senator has introduced a bill to get that reduced
 - Alberta is the host next year and currently looking at logistics
 - Urging MRWCC to be involved with planning and also involve WOSPP
 - Timing is January or February
- e. Planning and Policy Team
- In the process of team structuring

15. Round table discussions

- Ron:
 - About 200 people attended the Wildlife Society Conference
 - Renewable energy was a big part of it
 - One speaker talked about US fearing how the carp can be introduced via the Milk and what it can do to natural fishery
 - Concern: carp could get from the St. Mary to the Milk/Missouri
 - Can contact the researcher Mark Bush from UofA for more information
 - Could be a good issue to liaise with MRWA in Montana
- Lorraine:
 - Brent Patterson gave a good presentation on invasive mussels. Could be a good presenter at the Science Forum
 - Have received a grant of \$25,000 and will partner with Taber Irrigation District on precision agriculture in Southern Alberta. The survey will not be out until October and results by November or December next year
 - Have a great interest in Irrigation Agriculture and would be willing to share findings of the study with the new irrigation association in Milk River
- Will:
 - Information dissemination on a large scale. Big media cutting edge now is based on voice
- Dennis:
 - If anyone has use for woodchips, contact WOSPP
- Tim:
 - 2018 WPAC Summit is scheduled for June 21 to 24 in Peace River
 - Have booked a bus and those interested to please register with Mary

16. Other items

- There are changes in the GOA positions:
 - Andre Corbould is now the Deputy Minister of AF
 - Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations Division is John Conrad
 - New Deputy Minister of Alberta Environment and Parks and Climate Change is Eric Denhoff

17. Meeting Adjournment

- William moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:17pm. **Carried.**

18. Next Meeting Date

- April 26, 2018

Signatures:

Chairman: _____

Secretary: _____