

Methow Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2009
Riverbank Building

Council Members present were: Chair Katharine Bill, Vice-Chair Mike Fort, Greg Knott, Vicky Welch, Marty Williams, Tim Johnson, MVID, Coordinator Lee Hatcher and Secretary Jackie Moriarty.

Council Members Absent: Ray Campbell, Nate Wehmeyer, Okanogan County and Tom Gehring, Council Member Town of Twisp.

Guests present: Rusty Post, DOE, Jennifer Molesworth, MRC and Lee Bernheisel.

Chairman Bill called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Council Member Welch requested time to update the Council on the Okanogan County Shorelines Master Plan.

MOTION:

Council Member Fort moved to approve the agenda with the addition. The motion was seconded by Council Member Knott and passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 18, 2009

MOTION:

Council Member Welch moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Johnson and passed unanimously.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Chair Bill reviewed the March timeline.

Coordinator Hatcher discussed the data tracking information that Council Member Wehmeyer is going to provide to the Council. Hatcher stated that since Wehmeyer was unable to attend this meeting he would contact him and work directly with him in updating the existing build-out information we have in the Highlands Associates report.

Rusty Post shared with Council reach/sub-basin maps he had found in DOE records. Coordinator Hatcher requested that Secretary Moriarty make copies for each Council Member and for Aspect Consulting.

DOMESTIC WATER STUDY – AGENDA ITEM #148

Coordinator Hatcher reported that a meeting was held with MWC representatives, DOE representatives and Aspect Consulting regarding the use of the Analogous Method for determining domestic water use. Hatcher explained that existing data from other WRIA's with similar conditions could be used to determine the amount of water, on average, used by a single family home; in addition some metering may be done.

Council Member Knott asked when a draft domestic water study would be presented to the Council. Chairman Bill shared that it would be ready for the April 16, 2009 meeting. Knott requested that a copy of the draft be distributed to the Council at least one week prior to the meeting for review.

The Council briefly discussed the need to find a way to fund a recharge study. Council Member Knott reminded the Council that there are other WRIA's as well as private companies that are researching this and that it would be better to wait or to join in with other WRIA's rather than take on such an expensive project alone.

Council Member Williams brought up the question of an additional rule revision needing to be done if a recharge study was developed and recharge information gathered. Williams stated that he believes there is information that has already been gathered that could support recharge benefits. Williams felt we could wait on the recharge study and not spend the money right now.

WATER TRANSFER MECHANISM – AGENDA ITEM #148

Chairman Bill reported that she had met with Lisa Pelly, Washington Rivers Conservancy and Tim Flynn, Aspect Consulting regarding a Water Transfer Mechanism. Bill reported that she had outlined the Council's priorities as municipalities, interruptible water rights and group A and B users. Chairman Bill reported that Mr. Flynn will come back to the Council with questions regarding managing water transfers. Chairman Bill shared that Walla Walla and Chelan are currently developing systems and that Mr. Flynn will report to the Council the details of that work.

Council Member Knott discussed out-of-basin transfers and wants to have research done regarding legal restrictions and managing those transfers.

Mr. Flynn is scheduled to present various water transfer mechanisms to the Council in May.

REVIEW DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PROGRESS – AGENDA ITEM #148

Coordinator Hatcher reported that there was no update on the Detailed Implementation Plan at this time.

TWIN LAKES AQUIFER COALITION SUPPORT LETTER – AGENDA ITEM #152

DISCUSSION:

Council Member Fort shared that he felt the instream flow issue could be solved by transferring water from the Early Winters reach to the Town of Twisp. Coordinator Hatcher was asked to add language to the TLAC support letter with Council Member Fort's proposal.

MOTION:

Council Member Knott moved to adopt the modified letter of support with amended language from Council Member Fort for the Twin Lakes Aquifer Coalition (TLAC). The motion was seconded by Council Member Fort and passed unanimously.

DOE IMPLEMENTATION GRANT BUDGET AND SCOP REDUCTION WITH MOTION TO ACCEPT – AGENDA ITEM #153

MOTION:

Council Member Knott moved to authorize Katharine Bill, Lee Hatcher and other interested Council Members to work with Rusty Post, DOE and Aspect Consulting to reduce the FY-09-11 request from \$485,000 to \$200,000 as per DOE's request to match grants to reduced funding levels. The motion was seconded by Council Member Fort and passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION:

Rusty Post shared with Council that funding had been cut and that the initial amount of \$200,000 for Phase 4 and the requested amount of \$285,000 for the Rule Revision Phase II grant had been collectively cut by \$285,000 because of DOE budget cuts. Post shared that the entire Central Region (which includes WRIA 48) funding was cut to \$900,000 for the biennium. Post relayed that WRIA 48 was fortunate to be getting such a large portion of the entire budget. Chairman Bill along with Coordinator Hatcher, Mr. Post and interested Council Members will work to pare down the budget while keeping as close as they can to the Council's goals.

REVIEW LETTER FOR TWISP ON EARLY WINTERS TRANSFER REQUEST – AGENDA ITEM #154

Coordinator Hatcher discussed the draft letter of support regarding the transfer of water from the Early Winters reach to the Town of Twisp. Hatcher shared that the Town will be putting in a request for the transfer of .33 cfs (approximately 236 acre feet) per year.

Lee Bernheisel stated that when Bob Barwin, DOE was present at a MWC meeting he stated that a transfer to the Town of Twisp would be subject to instream flows thus would be interruptible.

Council Member Knott shared that in his opinion the intent behind writing this letter of support was to get a conversation going between the DOE and Town of Twisp. Chairman Bill shared that she wanted the letter to represent the position that the MWC is taking regarding the priorities for water management and planning in the Methow Valley.

Chairman Bill and Coordinator Hatcher agreed to rework the letter and bring it back for approval at the next meeting.

OKANOGAN COUNTY SHORELINE MASTER PLAN

Council Member Welch shared that at the last meeting she attended regarding the Okanogan County Shorelines Master Plan she felt that the document was far from ready for adoption. Council Member Knott asked if there were any particular areas of the plan that the MWC should review. Welch shared that the Council may want to review the section regarding water storage.

Mr. Bernheisel, a committee member for the project, shared that it would be best if the MWC saved their comments for the hearings that will be held by the DOE.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

A motion was made by Council Member Knott to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 pm. The motion was seconded by Council Member Williams and passed unanimously.

Katharine Bill, Chairman

ATTEST:

Jackie Moriarty, CMC
Secretary