



Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2025

Location: Twisp Town Hall; Zoom

Council Members Present: *David Asia, Chair; Boo Turner, Wren Soperanez, Murray Taylor, Seth Miles, Hans Smith (until 4:30 P.M.), Andy Hover.*

Council Members Absent: *Bill Tackman, Lorah Super*

Others in Attendance: *Jack Owen, OCD; Jordana Ellis, OCD; Susan Crampton, Elinana Rosenthal, WDFW; Kraig Mott, Foghorn Irrigation; Chris Pasley, Wolf Creek Irrigation; Chris Allen, AESI; Sandra Strieby, MWC Project Coordinator*

Minutes recorded by: *Sarah Lane, MWC/MWF Administrator*

[Recording available here](#)

Common Abbreviations:

BOCC: Board of County Commissioners

DIP: Detailed Implementation Plan

ECY: Ecology

IG: Initiating Government (Okanogan County, Towns of Twisp and Winthrop; previously Methow Valley Irrigation District)

LDPP: Local Drought Preparedness Plan (Ecology Grant)

MWC: Methow Watershed Council

MWF: Methow Watershed Foundation

OCD: Okanogan Conservation District

OCWB- OCD Water Bank

Non-Procedural Motions:

Motion #	Short Title	Yeas	Nays	Abstain
4.23.25-01	Motion to thank Bill Tackman for service, and to open position number five to a new member.	7	0	0

- Meeting Called to order:** *David Asia called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.*
- Roll Call.** *Administrator Lane administered the roll call.*
- Guest Introductions.**
- Agenda:** *Councilmember Hover suggested changes to the order of the agenda to facilitate voting needs and moved to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Miles seconded the motion. Motion approved.*
- Minutes – Review and Approval of January 16, 2025, Minutes and Approval of March 19, 2025 Minutes:**
Councilmember Hover moved to approve the Minutes. Councilmember Taylor seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Item #	Agenda Item
4.23.25-01	<i>Public Comment-(3 minutes/comment): No public comments offered.</i>
4.23.25-02	<i>MWC Position 5: Councilmember Hover moved to send Councilmember Tackman a letter of thanks for his service, and to open position #5 for a new member. Councilmember Smith seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.</i>

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4.23.25-03	<p>Grant Project Updates: Commerce and LDPP Update (Notice to Towns): Project Coordinator Striebby discussed the current work of the LDPP project. The project will include six sub-areas covering Upper and Lower Methow, Upper and Lower Okanogan, the Colville Reservation and Columbia River/Brewster/Pateros area. This is a two-year planning project focused on assessing drought risk and vulnerabilities and will generate a drought mitigation project list.</p> <p>In addition to the OCD and the MWC, LDPP project partners include Washington State University’s Water Research Center, the Washington Water Trust, and Trout Unlimited. The OCD also plans to engage local stakeholders with interests in water supply. Those stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigators—both farmers and ranchers who use water, and companies and districts that provide water • Public water systems—municipal systems and small “Group B” systems that serve communities like Edelweiss and Pine Forest \ • Recreational users—for instance, fishing guides, rafting companies, and ski area/trail system operators • Land management agencies • Environmental organizations • Industries such as logging and mining <p>Currently, the project partners are identifying stakeholders and user groups. A working group is drafting the project survey, which will help identify the past, present, and future water supply and water security risks faced by communities in Okanogan County. All team members are working to identify water users/stakeholders with whom to share the survey. The survey will be available online, probably beginning in June.</p> <p>Planning meetings are set for the second Monday from 1:00-3:00 p.m. The first meeting focused on risk. The next meeting will cover risk and project development.</p> <p>On April 28, the OCD will lead a larger meeting to introduce County water users, purveyors, and stakeholders to the project. Striebby will send the invitation to this meeting to MWC members. Further outreach to the community is planned for later in the summer.</p> <p>Administrator Lane gave an update on the Commerce Capacity Project. The project was initiated by an invitation only grant to improve organizational capacity to develop future fundable projects. Four topics for research/white papers were chosen: 1) Community Connections: Interviewing other organizations about their perspective on water issues; 2) Water retention strategies; 3) Municipal water needs; and 4) Fire water connections – for fire water supply needs.</p> <p>Katie Stege Neal of Reach Studio is working on projects One and Four; Striebby is working on projects Two and Three. Contracting is complete and work is underway.</p> <p>Councilmember Asia passed around a sample of questions being asked of community organizations. Councilmembers discussed potential people/organizations to talk to for project One. Striebby asked for advice on introducing projects to the Towns for efficiency. Councilmembers Smith and Miles gave some information on staff timing and projects. Members discussed the potential needs of municipal areas that project Three could address.</p>
4.23.25-04	<p><i>Irrigators Forum</i> <i>Notes: Sandra Striebby</i> <i>Irrigators attending: Kraig Mott, Foghorn Ditch Company; Chris Pasley, Wolf Creek Reclamation District.</i></p> <p>The Methow Watershed Council invited local irrigators to attend the council’s April meeting to share concerns and needs related to irrigation systems and water supply. The watershed council is working with the Okanogan Conservation District on a plan to address risks associated with drought, including</p>

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	<p>impacts on irrigators, and will be developing a list of projects to be considered for development and funding in the future.</p> <p>Mr. Mott and Mr. Pasley introduced themselves and, with MWC members, discussed the challenges their systems are facing related to aging infrastructure, firefighter access, potential for piping the systems, ways of conserving water, and funding sources. Councilmember Hover raised the question: what can all of us do to improve the situation for irrigators?</p> <p>Some challenges include public acceptance of tree removal required for piping, changing a point of diversion as part of using water more efficiently, effects of pressure changes on old pipes, and funder requirements—e.g., Ecology would not fund piping of the Fulton unless the entire ditch were piped; landowners may be reluctant to work with public agencies when their water is at stake. Better understanding of the systems and the effects of piping or lining ditches would be valuable. Council Chair David Asia asked what the irrigators would like the MWC to do. Mr. Mott and Mr. Pasley would like to be included in future meetings and will bring questions to board. Councilmember Hover encouraged the irrigators to list any needs or proposed projects, starting with piping feasibility.</p> <p>Project Coordinator Strieby explained that the LDPP project list will identify projects for which funding can be sought, or opportunities taken advantage of. The OCD's Jordana Ellis encouraged the irrigators to list anything that will improve resiliency, including storage, infrastructure improvements, and education. Projects can be immediate or long-term. Councilmember Hover noted that projects do not only need to improve delivery of water to shareholders but can also focus on keeping water in the river or minimizing loss.</p>

6. Report from the Council Chair. *No report*
7. MWF Report, Chair—Mike Bastian. *MWF Chair Bastian was absent. Administrator Sarah Lane reported that Commerce Capacity contractors have completed contracts and updated reporting with Commerce's project manager, Ury Warren. MWF reviewed and approved a revised budget, first quarter budget to actual, and is in the process of hiring an Outreach Coordinator. Councilmember Soperanez confirmed attendance at the next MWF meeting as the rotating attendee.*
8. Committee Reports:
 - Outreach and Education Committee, Chair – Turner. *Councilmember Turner reported that the Outreach committee met April 10. A fall event was discussed. The purpose is to inform donors and interested parties about MWC's current work through a social setting. Outreach members learned about Councilmember Soperanez' recent water on the landscape workshop. Another session is planned for fall.*
 - Policy Committee, Chair- Super. *No report.*
 - Technical Committee, Bastian, Acting Chair – TBC. *Councilmember Asia said the Technical committee would be summarizing the results of White Paper One.*
 - Ad Hoc Committee: Fire Water Connections, Chair - TBC. *Councilmember Asia agreed to be the acting chair of this committee. He reported several potential water sites were identified up Twisp River, which is an area of preference for Fire District Six.*
9. Local Governments Reports:
 - Town of Winthrop: *Councilmember Miles reported that damage to a water tower on Studhorse was being assessed by x ray. The Winthrop water main is being replaced this week. The annexation of Roses' hill for the Housing Trust project is about one year out. A new sewer system is 4-8 years out, with funds for design received. The full project will cost about \$30M, funded through grants and low interest loans from Ecology; the result will be a very high tech, expandable system. Capacity will serve one thousand households.*
 - Town of Twisp: *No report*
 - Okanogan County: *Councilmember Hover reported that OCD completed the wildfire Protection Plan. Information coming from MWC's Fire Water committee can be added to the plan.*
10. Members' Report—news from the Community and Upcoming Events:
 - a. *OCD is hosting their annual event on May 7. RSVP's need to be in by April 25.*

- b. *Loony Creek near Mazama is running along the road and causing damage. Forest Service is the agency responsible, and DOT is aware of the problem.*

11. Next Steps:

- a. *Asia Councilmembers will invite Tom Doran to speak next month.*

12. Adjournment: *The meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.*

David Asia, Chair

May 28, 2025