

Methow Watershed Council
Special Meeting Minutes
April 29, 2009
Riverbank Building

Council Members present were:, Chair Katharine Bill, Greg Knott, Ray Campbell, Vicky Welch, Perry Huston, Okanogan County, Tom Gehring, Council Member Town of Twisp, Coordinator Lee Hatcher and Secretary Jackie Moriarty.

Council Members Absent: Vice-Chair Mike Fort, Marty Williams and Tim Johnson, MVID

Guests present: Tim Flynn and Bill Sullivan, Aspect Consulting and Lee Bernheisel.

Chairman Bill called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 19, 2009

MOTION:

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

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Rusty Post discussed the base line budget for watershed being cut at the legislative level. Mr. Post reminded the MWC that with in our region we are receiving a large amount of the total money allocated. Post stated it was unlikely that watersheds would be receiving any additional money.

Hatcher reported that Clerk/Treasurer Colleen Storms was currently reviewing a draft of the Town of Twisp letter regarding a request for transfer of water to the Town.

Timeline – Hatcher reviewed the timeline for April and May. Bill Sullivan reported that they needed more details in order to provide a draft Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) and that July would be a more realistic date for that draft to be complete.

Mr. Hatcher reported that he was currently working on an Annual Water Use Report.

TWIN LAKES AUQUIFER COALITION LETTER REVIEW – AGENDA ITEM #152

Chairperson Bill asked Council if they had any revisions to the draft Twin Lakes Aquifer Coalition support letter. Mr. Flynn discussed language regarding negotiations; it was felt by the Council not to be an issue.

Mr. Flynn, being affiliated with the Twin Lakes project gave the Council an update regarding the status. Flynn shared that their funding may be in danger of being cut.

MOTION:

Council Member Knott moved to approve the Lakes Aquifer Coalition support letter as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Campbell and passed unanimously.

WATER STUDY PLAN UPDATE - REVIEW AND COMMENT ON PROPOSED METHODOLOGY - DISCUSS PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATE AGENDA ITEM #148

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the discussion held by the Council in February regarding the Water Study Plan and provided update materials. Sullivan reported that Tim Flynn, Chairperson Bill, Lee Hatcher, Rusty Post and representative from the DOE met to discuss using an analogous method for the plan. Sullivan reported that the DOE has preliminarily approved the use of this method for both inside and outside data gathering.

The Council discussed the following:

- Determining full-time versus part-time residency; more defensible to assume full-time residency – better to be more conservative.
- Obtaining an assessment of those served by irrigation ditches – Mr. Post questioned regarding irrigation being taken away in the future – Mr. Post shared to assume it will be there in the future. Confirmed irrigation will not and should not be counted against supply.
- Confirmed that no closed basins will be counted – Mr. Sullivan confirmed.

Mr. Sullivan proposed the following change to the Water Study Plan Task Order:

1. Conduct Literature Review
2. Characterize Basin
3. Compile, review and screen data from Group A and B water systems
4. Coordinate with MWC and DOE to develop and refine and agreed Scope of Work
5. Determine average and peak total (indoor and outdoor) water use by exempt well parcels
6. Verify results using alternative methods.
7. Reporting
8. *Optional – Outline an Adaptive Management Program.

In regards to conducting a literature review both Chairperson Bill and Council Member Knott suggested that the bibliography should be very good, to cast a wider review possibly bring in information from Omak and a quick repackage of literature with a purpose, basically showing the information in terms of what the MWC is trying to accomplish what the information means to us.

Mr. Sullivan asked if the Council is comfortable with the determination of 600 gpd. As history Sullivan shared that Golder looked at data from Twisp for the year 2000 showing the average daily demand and maximum daily demand. Council Member Knott stated that if the Council was comfortable with that number Aspect would not be being asked to do the study.

Mr. Sullivan shared that are 215 public water systems in WRIA 48; 51 Group A and 164 Group B. Currently the Town's of Twisp and Winthrop are the only Group A systems reporting the Department of Health. Sullivan pointed out the need to get the meter records from the other Group A systems along with number of units served and unused lots. A suggestion was made to do a ground survey of irrigation users. Kurt Danison's (Highland Associates) report shows 395 irrigation users (approximately 11%). Mr. Huston reported that Okanogan County Planning is currently compiling information on irrigation use boundaries.

Council Member Knott wants to be careful to consider all variables using good common sense relating to whether or not those variables may make a difference in the gallons per day number and are worth the Council's time and money to explore.

Mr. Flynn shared how Aspect would collect, comment, distribute and report information to MWC and the DOE.

Mr. Flynn discussed the development of a comprehensive monitoring system, which would actively monitor the health of the watershed and identify future needs. Possible metering program, determine whether to meter future building or a respective number of existing wells, may take up to 5 years to gather enough data.

After discussion Mr. Flynn shared he thought the Adaptive Management Plan may need to be placed in the Instream Flow Rule.

At approximately 8:00 pm Council Member Knott suggested the meeting be extended due to the fact that Aspect representatives were present and discussion could be continued and not require more travel. Chairperson Bill called for a short recess.

WATER TRANSFER PROCESS UPDATE – AGENDA ITEM #154 SENATE BILL 5583 – RELATING TO IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WATER BANK AUTHORIZATION AND EXCHANGE PROVISIONS STATEWIDE

Mr. Flynn discussed the consumptive value of the 2 cfs or value of transfer. Flynn stated it would be a cleaner process to bank water then to transfer, still only being able to bank down stream.

Mr. Flynn briefly discussed Senate Bill #5583 relating to improving the effectiveness of water bank authorization and exchange provisions statewide and the possible affects it may have on WRIA's regarding water banking and transfers, including out of basin transfers.

Mr. Bernheisel shared that you can currently bank water through the DOE. Mr. Flynn shared that this Senate Bill outlines a way for the MWC to set up water banking and funding, staff etc. that would be a part of a state water bank system.

Chairperson Bill questioned how water rights are taken out of the water bank; Flynn replied that a request to remove from the trust is submitted.

Mr. Flynn shared a few options the MWC may have based on this Senate Bill and the Council had a brief discussion.

DIP DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – DRAFT PROJECT DESCRIPTION – MODIFY WAC 173-548 – AGENDA ITEM #155

Mr. Sullivan discussed the draft DIP project sharing with Council, two of the major issues regarding the objective to revising WAC 173-548.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the Implementation Action Project Plan:

1.0 Summary of issue identified in the Management Plan and

1.1 Examination of water needs

1.2 The use of the Town of Twisp's average daily water use being used as the starting point of 600 gpd

1.3 Does sufficient water exist within the 2 cfs reservation?

2.0 Implementation objective

2.1 Modify WAC

- Allow for a broader range of uses
- Accommodate for future growth
- Permit unused portions of the 2 cfs reservation

2.2 Track use of the remaining 2 cfs reservation

Chairperson Bill questioned, under section 2.1 Accommodate Future Growth whether the plan allowed water for existing Group A and B systems or all group users as written.

Chairperson Bill also shared the importance in her opinion that more emphasis should be placed on tracking system data versus adaptive management data in the DIP.

Council Member Knott asked if modifying WAC 173.548 is enough or should a new rule be written. Flynn shared that a rule revision should accomplish what is needed.

Mr. Flynn asked the Council to review the Implementation Action Project Plan and give them feedback. Chairperson Bill requested that the specific questions that they had for the Council be sent via email so that it is clear what information is needed. The Council will then report back to the next meeting with their feedback.

Chairperson Bill suggested spending at least 1 hour discussing the water transfer mechanism at the May meeting. DIP draft by July and approved final by November.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

A motion was made by Council Member Welch to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 pm. The motion was seconded by Council Member Knott and passed unanimously.

Katharine Bill, Chairman

ATTEST:

Jackie Moriarty, CMC
Secretary