



Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2024

Location: Zoom

Council Members Present: George Schneider, Lorah Super, Bill Tackman, David Asia, Hans Smith, Seth Miles, Andy Hover

Council Members Absent:

Others in Attendance: Caleb Canby, (Chewuch Canal Company, presenting guest speaker)
Chris Allen (AESI), Susan Crampton, Mark Edson, Sandra Streiby (MWC Contractor)

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Lane, Administrator

[Recording available here.](#)

Common Abbreviations:

DIP: Detailed Implementation Plan

ECY: Ecology

IG: Initiating Government

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
9.19.24-01	Approve a letter of support for the Chewuch Canal Company piping project, pending approval from Town of Twisp and Okanogan County.	6	0	0

- 1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Andy Hover at 5:08 PM. Administrator Lane confirmed attendance.
- 2. Agenda:** Mayor Smith moved to approve the agenda. Councilmember Super seconded the motion. Motion approved.
- 3. Minutes:** Councilmember Super moved to approve the June 26, 2024 Minutes. Mayor Smith seconded the motion. Motion was approved.
- 4. Report from the Chair:** Commissioner Hover reported farming was decent around the valley despite dry summer. Hover welcomes a new chair to take his place.
- 5. MWF Report: Chair- Craig McDonald:** McDonald was absent. Administrator Lane reported that staff has been strategizing on grant applications. McDonald has been meeting with staff in his supervisory role as

contract signatory. In-depth planning is going well, including meeting financial needs of the organization. The strategic work planning session will inform current grant efforts. The contract with the OCD is moving forward slowly.

Regarding community knowledge of MWC, the MWF is planning for more visibility and will invite Council members to attend these events.

6. Committee Reports:

Outreach and Education Committee, Chair: Lane

Administrator Lane reported on upcoming outreach activities including a Give Methow kickoff event October 3. Give Methow runs Oct 1-31 and raises about \$7000 unrestricted funds each year. MWC will be at the Farmers Market on October 5. The outreach committee will be interfacing with the LDPP project for outreach needs. Lane continues to work on the water education in the schools project. There may be an opportunity to have assistance from WWU's Pathways program. Commissioner Hover suggested an idea related to efficacy of water amounts. Councilmember Asia offered to help with the school project.

Policy Committee, Chair: Super

Councilmember Super reported no action over the summer. Sandra will assist this committee to develop a work plan.

Technical Committee, Chair: Schneider

Councilmember Schneider reported the committee is focusing on an effort to have an agreement with Winthrop and Twisp for bulk water sales for rural homeowners experiencing emergency dry well situations. Councilmember Asia suggested adding resources to the fact sheet that discuss how to purify water.

Water Banking, Chair: Tackman

Councilmember Tackman invited Jordana Ellis to give a report. Ellis reported:

- Business and guidance documents have been the recent focus of planning.
- The grant amendment is signed and active.
- Water right valuation agreement is next, and the sale agreement will take about a month once that is done.
- Barkley sale is farther along. Change application is done. Purchase and sale still to complete.
- No current outreach meetings planned.
- Website is under development and will be shared by OCD and the County.
- County is still working on its application.

7. Local Government Reports

Town of Winthrop- Councilmember Seth Miles reported for Winthrop. Water upgrade across the bridge is underway. Stormwater currently empties to dry wells. The town finalized an emergency drought amendment using the addendum created by MWC. Water can be sold to anyone. The price was increased to \$20/1000 gallons. 1000 gallons is the minimum charge, although less can be taken; minimum 250 gallons. A process has been defined for how a person can obtain water, by contacting Town of Winthrop and obtaining a key. There is a digital counter to report amounts. Water quality is only guaranteed to the point of dispensing. Containers are to be inspected. Miles confirmed that anyone can buy water, but the town has a right to refuse sales if supply for the town is of concern.

Councilmember Tackman asked if water was now available for platting. Miles confirmed the Department of Health has approved it.

Town of Twisp- Mayor Smith reported that Twisp does not have a policy in place regarding emergency drought conditions but does supply water for commercial or bulk purchases. Buyers just need to contact the

town during business hours. The town does not guarantee potability, past the point of the town hydrant, and recommends a potable water hauler. Twisp is not interested in further creating agreements for use, but water is available to those who ask. Councilmember Super confirmed that the fact sheet will be reviewed by towns and MWC.

Commissioner Hover asked and mayor Smith confirmed that towns will not enter any agreement with rural homeowners to build a home with town water as the only water supply. That is not allowed. Hover also asked if Town of Twisp has enough water for current growth. Mayor Smith said there is. Commissioner Hover said the towns and the County should discuss this, as eventually growth areas in the valley will be limited and primarily located in urban growth or infill areas. Mayor Smith said the town is updating water system plan projections, and believes there is enough water for 20 years of growth in the current jurisdiction.

The water system was reviewed this summer and certified with no lead pipes in the system. An assistant public works director was hired to complete hydraulic modeling. Update to water system plan should be completed next year. The question of whether discharge water is counted against use was discussed. Some of that water is transport water and is not counted. If discharge water was reprocessed for irrigation, it would be counted as consumptive. Though treated thoroughly, discharge water is not potable.

Twisp is also upgrading the treatment plant, as treatment is a limiting factor for growth. Mayor Smith offered MWC members a tour of the treatment plant.

Okanogan County- Commissioner Hover reported the county has been discussing hiring a water resources manager to manage the county side of the water bank. Cisterns and water purchases have come up. Shoreline plan update is coming up soon; it is due every six years. The critical areas ordinance also needs an update. Zone code final draft updates should be out for comment soon. Commissioners are hoping to adopt zone code in January. Public hearing will be at fairgrounds in the evening. No changes were made to the water section in this draft.

8. News From the Community:

Councilmember Super shared about the panel presentation that took place in August. It was well attended, and Mike Bastain, MWF and Outreach member, spoke about water from his perspective. She also reported that WA Department of Ecology published a new water resources strategic plan in July, and finally, shared an invitation to attend an event Sept 21 at the former Wagner Ranch, recently gifted by the Methow Conservancy to Colville Confederated Tribes and renamed Hummingbird (x̣ẉnáṃx̣ẉnam).

9. Ecology Report: None

10. Presentation: None

11. Agenda Item 9..19.24-01: Public Comment

Susan Crampton suggested a presentation on household lawn watering practices.

12. Agenda Item 9.19.24-02: Chewuch Piping Project Support Letter

Casey Canby, Chewuch Canal Company president, gave a presentation about the effort to pipe the upper section of the Chewuch canal, in order to reduce leakage and add to instream flows. Watch his full presentation [here](#), at 48:42. The purpose of the presentation was to request an MWC letter of support for the project. Important notes:

- The project will save 17cfs from diversion.
- At low flows, this is 35-40% of the total Chewuch cfs.
- Favorable to fish species of concern.

- Projected cost \$15M.
- Supported by Colville Confederated Tribes (also shareholder at Hummingbird property) for fish benefits, preservation of rural Methow, and for keeping growth in towns.

Mayor Smith made a motion to approve a letter of support from the Watershed Council pending Town of Twisp's and Okanogan County's acceptance of such a letter. Councilmember Asia seconded the motion. Councilmember Super commented on the complexity of the public process. Councilmember Asia asked if there was any information about the impact to wildlife with piping. There was some discussion about the effort to minimize impact to wildlife accustomed to using the habitat created by the open ditch. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Agenda Item 9.19.24-03: Discussion: Strategic Planning Session

Dates for a strategic planning session were discussed. Lane will follow up to ensure enough members can attend, likely to be scheduled in November. Publicity and public feedback will likely be requested after this meeting. A facilitator can be hired at a maximum of \$800.

14. Agenda Item 9.19.24-04: Open Council Position One

No candidates applied for position one. Outreach will continue.

15. Agenda Item 9.19.24-05: Election of Chair

No nominations were made for the position of Chair. Continued to next meeting.

16. Agenda Item 6.27.24-06: Next Steps

- Next Meeting scheduled for October 17, 2024
- Request for presentation from Ecology for October meeting.

17. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM.

Commissioner Andy Hover, Council Vice Chair

November 21, 2024