



Monthly Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2023 – Winthrop Library Community Room/ Zoom

Council Members Present: Greg Knott, Mike Fort, George Schneider, Lorah Super, Bill Tackman, Jean Bodeau

Council Members Absent Soo Ing-Moody. Jeff Sarvis, Andy Hover

Others in Attendance: Jordana Ellis (OCD),

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Lane, Administrator

Recording not available

Non-Procedural Motions

Motion #	Short Title	Yeas	Nays	Abstain
10.26-01	Policy Committee “Policies to review” List approved as a working document	6	0	0

- 1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Jean Bodeau at 5:01 PM. Administrator Lane confirmed attendance.
- 2. Agenda:** Councilmember Super amended the agenda to include review and discussion of policies for the Policy Committee to work on. Councilmember Knott moved to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Fort seconded the motion. Motion approved.
- 3. Minutes:** Councilmember Super moved to approve the June 15, 2023, Minutes. Councilmember Knott seconded the motion. Motion was approved.
- 4. Attendance:** Absences noted
- 5. Report from the Chair:** Council Chair Bodeau had no report.
- 6. MWF Report: Chair- Craig McDonald**
MWF Chair McDonald was absent. Councilmember Fort reported that finances were in good condition with about \$10,000 available. Currently the organization is not spending a lot of money. The contract with the County was renewed at \$19,800 per year for 2024-2025. Administrator Lane noted that application dates for several grants are coming up soon.
- 7. Committee Reports:**
Outreach and Education Committee, Chair: Knott
Councilmember Knott reported on the following events executed by the Outreach Committee.

About thirty people visited the MWC farmer’s market booth Sept 30. Several people used the QR to link to Give Methow. Jordana Ellis of Okanogan Conservation District (OCD) was present as well.

The Water Law 101 presentation by Natalie Kuehler on Sept 19, 2023, was well attended with about fifty people attending the Zoom. The Water Economics presentation October 16th had about 12 people attending in person, and about 25 via Zoom. The videos are available on the MWC public information drive.

The next presentation is a partnership with OCD, on November 17 at the Twisp Grange. The topic is water banking, and the meeting format is informational followed by an interactive feedback-gathering activity.

Councilmember Knott also reported that four meetings with representatives of Methow irrigation companies have occurred. Councilmember Super commented that the events have been great for sharing information, as well as that the [recordings of the other events are still available on the MWC website](#).

Policy Committee, Chair: Super

Councilmember Super reported that Policy meetings have been sparse since June. The committee charter, criteria, and reporting documents were approved in June. The “policies to review” list has not been approved.

Councilmember Super reported that vacancies on the committee need to be filled, and that the committee needs to connect with the towns. Current members are Councilmembers Super, Bodeau, Fort, Sarvis, and Ing-Moody. Councilmembers Sarvis and Ing-Moody will no longer be representing the two towns by the end of the year.

Technical Committee, Chair: Schneider

Councilmember Schneider reported that the Technical Committee is focused on the drought project. The committee plans to provide a report to the Council in March. The following sectors likely to be impacted by drought were identified as probably vulnerable: river-based recreation, irrigators, junior water right holders, and higher elevation residential wells. Surveys to business have not yielded much. Another user group to consider are groups representing instream resources/fish.

The committee plans to contact junior water rights holders who were curtailed this summer to learn about what hardship was experienced and what can be done to help them. Currently no additional staff are needed for this project; help may be required for additional phases of work. Councilmember Super asked if funding opportunities had been identified, such as upcoming drought planning funding from Ecology which opens in January. .

Chair Bodeau said she would like to see pre-identified mitigations pursued for the project. Councilmember Super recommended looking at other past drought projects as a guide.

Councilmember Schneider said he wants to see if other councilmembers are interested in the Technical Committee when Councilmember Knott retires.

Water Banking, Chair: Tackman

Councilmember Tackman reported meeting with Jordana Ellis (OCD) and Councilmember Super for an update on water banking. An opportunity passed for comment on OCD-Okanogan County agreement. The committee has not heard updates from Commissioner Hover in some time.

Ellis gave an update: The OCD received a second grant on Oct 2. The first purchase is still in negotiation over the valuation of the water right. OCD has not heard back from the County regarding the agreement. The County is applying for a grant under the headwaters program for a Pine Creek water right in WRIA 49. This right has seasonal and year-round components and totals six hundred acre/ft.

8. Local Government Reports

Town of Winthrop- Absent

Town of Twisp- Absent

Okanogan County- Absent

9. News From the Community:

Councilmember Fort reported about a 2011 decision on 90.44.050 regarding the exempt statute and water use. MWC Task #4 Report provides a number for daily water usage for single family domestic for planning purposes and does not relate to the exempt statute. Peer review has been requested of Ecology for Task #4 report. If a person wants to use exempt water to build, they need to contact the County. Fort said he will follow up with Ecology. The Technical committee could also help move this work forward.

Councilmember Super reported the MVCC-County public records case and Comprehensive Plan case were heard today. A decision should be given soon on the records case. It may take longer on the Comp Plan case, in which MVCC references over-allocation of water.

An emergency notification was issued today for Town of Twisp after too much chlorine was used in annual system flush.

Councilmember Tackman reported that according to Rocklyn Culp, all subdivisions for the Town of Winthrop are on hold due to insufficient water availability.

Councilmember Knott said that, in reference to no commercial water being available under the Methow Rule, two people have asked him how business, the Mazama pub, and nightly rentals are operating. Councilmember Super agreed that water is not legally available for these uses. The County had asked MVCC to weigh in on the topic of ADU's; MVCC referred the County to Ecology. Chair Bodeau said this issue is beginning to be on peoples' radar. Councilmember Tackman said he thinks mitigation will have to play a role in making parcels legal.

10. Ecology Report:

11. Presentation: None

12. Agenda Item 10.26.23-01: Public Comment:

No written Comment received.

No public comment

13. Agenda Item 10.26.23-02: Task #4 Report Follow Up

Councilmember Fort's information on Task #4 was provided previously. Councilmember Schneider asked if the County asks MWC for advice on dwellings.

14. Agenda Item 10.26.23-Addition to Agenda: Review of Policy Committee Policy List

Councilmember Super presented the Policy Committee's list of policies to review. She noted that: the list is not in order of priority; the items have not been run through the criteria process; and this list represents the work the committee feels comfortable taking on.

Councilmember Knott moved that the Council endorse the approach to policy review represented in the draft, recognizing that the committee will use adaptive management and bring the list back to Council for updates.

Councilmember Fort seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

15. Agenda Item 10.26-04: Discussion -Next Steps for Irrigator Outreach

Councilmember Knott reported that after four meetings with the Irrigators group, the question has arisen: What is the future direction of the group, being that irrigators represent the biggest water users in the valley, and they are not represented on the Council.

Councilmember Knott provided some ideas regarding irrigators: One can apply for open seat; irrigators could be a subcommittee of the tech committee; they do not seem to be interested in forming their own nonprofit; they could attend council meetings to stay informed.

Discussion points:

- Councilmember Tackman: irrigator history as formerly being on the Council but having decided to vacate the seat now held by Winthrop.
- Chair Bodeau: two questions: What kind of representation should irrigators have; and how should they stay involved going forward.
- Councilmember Tackman: prefers subcommittee approach
- Councilmember Knott: Avoid overcommitment but remain productive
- Councilmember Fort: Irrigators have an opportunity already to participate by attending Council meetings but have not attended in some time. He would support adding an irrigator Council seat.
- Councilmember Tackman does not support creating a position.

- Councilmember Super: in favor of a subcommittee to continue the collaboration and education that remains an important goal.
- Councilmember Knott : volunteered to keep working with the group after he leaves the Council. Asked who will be Council contact point.
- Councilmember Schnieder believes some resources should be committed to working with irrigators.
- Councilmember Knott: Drought is an important topic to irrigators. Asked point of contact to be the Technical Committee. A grant application with irrigator support would be helpful. Drought mitigation falls under Technical Committee, and irrigators provide information about drought effects.
- Councilmember Super would like to see MWC and OCD work together on a drought grant application.
- Jordana Ellis (ODC) said with consideration of boundaries and roles, the OCD would like to partner on the drought grant.
- Chair Bodeau: Would like follow up on the drought grant; does not see Council writing grants for the irrigation companies, but some partnership is possible.
- Councilmembers Knott, Super, and George in favor of this direction of subcommittee/partnership.
- Chair Bodeau in favor of providing administrative support for another year working with irrigators and encouraging irrigator applications for open Council seats.

16. Agenda Item 10.26-05: Upcoming Open Council Seats

Chair Bodeau reported that Positions 1 and 2 are up for renewal/ election in January. Councilmember Knott will be retiring from Position 1 after the January meeting.

17. Agenda Item 10.26-06: Proposed Upcoming Meeting Schedule Changes

Chair Bodeau proposed no meeting in November and an earlier December date. Administrator Lane will work on scheduling the December meeting.

18. Agenda Item 10.26.23-03: Next Steps

- Discussion regarding funding on MWF agenda
- Follow up on grants/ OCD partnership
- Send out Policy docs to all

19. Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 6:53 PM

Councilmember Jean Bodeau, Council Chair

December 14, 2023