



Special Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2020

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom (Recording available on request)

Council Members Present: Mark Easton, Dick Ewing, Mike Fort, Andy Hover, Greg Knott, Jeff Sarvis, Travis Thornton, Ashley Thrasher

Foundation Members Present: Dick Evans, Alyssa Jumars, Craig McDonald, Steve Ralph, Wyatt Southworth.

Others in Attendance: Jean Bodeau, Curtis Koger, Natalie Kuehler, Jasmine Minbashian (MVCC), Melanie Rowland (MVCC), Lorah Super (MVCC)

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Lane, Administrative Assistant

1. Confirm Agenda

The Agenda was confirmed with the addition of Alyssa's proposed Ground Rules

2. Ground Rules

Everyone has an opportunity to speak

Pause for questions

Be brief and to the point

3. Introductions MWF/MWC

All MWC and MWF members present introduced themselves and shared their history with the organization(s).

4. Overview of History

In 1998 House Bill 25.14 was passed to create RCW 90.82. The Methow Basin Planning Unit (MBPU) was formed at this time with MVID, Okanogan County and Town of Twisp taking the initiating government roles. MVID was replaced with Town of Winthrop later.

The MWC formed in 2007 after the Methow Watershed Plan was adopted. Mike noted that the DIP, while approved by the Council, was not approved by the County.

Ashley read the mission statements:

The Methow Watershed Council actively assists in managing water supplies for a sustainable balance between human and ecological needs. The Council endorses the development of voluntary strategies for optimizing water use and provides ongoing community outreach and education on valley-specific water issues.

The Methow Watershed Foundation generates and provides funds and resources for community awareness and education, and implementation of the Methow Basin Watershed Plan and Detailed Implementation Plan as directed by the Methow Watershed Council.



The MWF was formed to be the monetary arm of the Council. Initially, the initiating governments (IGs) received grant funds for the Council. Twisp charged an admin fee, and the County declined to manage funds for the MWC, so the Council formed the MWF in order to be able to apply for and manage their own grant funds.

Ashley asked why the MWC didn't become a 501 c3 at this point. Dick said the Council wanted to retain its relationship with the IGs that wouldn't be possible if the it became a nonprofit.

Andy noted that funding might be available to the group with IGs participating in the group, that might not be available to a 501c3. Also, as the group was set up under the RCW, watershed planning needed to be a collaborative process, and this format supported that goal.

Greg said the MWC tried to have the County recognize it as a citizen's group, but Twisp and the former commissioners were not willing to work with the group (at that time) if that was to happen.

Alyssa said it seemed strange to sit on a Foundation and manage funds for which Foundation members did not make the decisions on use. Greg said this model of partnership is not unique; the Nisqually have an arrangement like this.

5. **Discussion** followed on why the MWC hasn't chosen to be a 501 c3 to date, and about potential for new formats. Thoughts shared included:

- Without IGs, MWC would be less effective
- Andy: Government serves everyone. If IGs sit on Council as 501c3, there could be conflict between gov't policy and the nonprofits goals. This form has made it easier for the MWC to have an advisory role.
- Travis: Under law we used to be recognized at MBPU, but now are an unaffiliated, unorganized citizen's group operating by our own set of rules. Travis said the nonprofit status of the MWF is a legal status with no implied bias. As such, he thinks there is not a need for two groups. IG's to participate
- Dick: The legislature did not provide a mechanism to implement the DIP.
- Andy: The DIP projects by their nature require County participation, as the government has the liability.
- Greg, Dick, and Mike agree there is a structural issue for the organizations, and that if the DIP was not approved by the County, the MWC mission is unsupported.
- Travis: DIP approval is water under the bridge. He sees the Foundation wanting to do more, and wants the IGs to feel empowered to participate.
- Andy: What is the over-arching function: Informing? Implementing projects?
- Dick: Purpose is that of 90.82- to balance human and fish needs and monitor the reservation.
- Greg sees function is to Inform the public, educate public and governments, and to advise.
- Andy said he didn't know why IGs were voting members.



- Travis said nonprofit status require non-political activity. Operating under current bylaws, the MWC could reorganize as a non-membership organization with governments on the Council or not, with a MOA with participating governments that the mission would not change.
- Steve: It will be more satisfactory to the MWF to get to speak to mission and priorities
- Andy: what would a resolution look like: Ask the County to disband the MWC under 90.82 and create a MOA that the Council will continue as (tbd).
- Andy: Look at Forest Health Collaborative as an example.
- Travis: Hybridized organization will be more effective participating in CRM.

6. Structural Issues were identified:

- **Standing**- legal position of the MWC
Ideas: Merge MWC/MWF (with IGs non-voting)
Or, MWC= Advisory Committee to the Foundation? (With non-voting IGs on advisory committee)
- **Authority/ Relationships with key Gov't's**
-Governments will need to approve this direction of the MWC/MWF
-Resolution by gov'ts
-Gov't appointment of members -revise this bylaw – add more at large positions.
- **Protections**
- **Funding**

7. Next Steps

- Andy will look into protocol for a MOA between the org and the County/issues with gov't on 501 c3
- Mark will take this conversation to the Twisp Council.
- The MWF and MWC will each discuss this idea at their next meetings in August, form working groups to continue the work, and then come together again to present proposals.

8. Next Session

Proposals
Review Priorities

9. Public Comment

Public comments included that MWC/MWF are on the right track. Lorah seconded Jean B's comment regarding looking at Forest Health Collaborative, and Melanie asked the groups to look at Water 2066 results in the priorities discussion.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Ashley Thrasher, Council Chair

Approved at the August 20, 2020 Council meeting.