

METHOW WATERSHED COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for June 15, 2017

Meeting called to order by Greg Knott at 5:10 PM.

Board members present: Greg Knott, Mike Fort, Perry Huston, John Fleming, Rick Karro, Dick Ewing, Bill Tackman (excused at 6:05 pm), and Andy Hover (joined at 5:30 pm)

Grant Consultant: George Schneider

Guests: Brian de Place, Jacquelyn Wallace, Natalie Kuehler, Mary McCrea, Rowan Post, Lee Bernheisel, Kent Hitch, Dick Evans

Notes taken by: Sali Kilmer, Administrative Assistant

Approval of Agenda

Dick Ewing moved to adopt the agenda of June 15, 2017. Perry Huston seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2017

The following amendments to the Minutes of the May 18, 2017 MWC meeting were proposed:

- Correct the spelling of Perry Huston's name
- Under the Okanogan County report, change bullet point number 6 from "Comp plan has been reopened..." to Comp plan will be reopened..."

Perry Huston moved to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2017, as amended. Mike Fort seconded and the motion carried.

Chair Report: Greg Knott

Greg thanked the Okanogan County commissioners for the approval of Ashley Thrasher to the #6 position on the MWC Board.

Conflict of Interest statements have been distributed to all board members. Please sign and return to Sali as soon as possible.

Sali will initiate solicitation procedures for the open At Large position on the Council. Committee members were encouraged to spread the word to generate as much interest as possible in serving on the board.

Grant Administrator: George Schneider

George reported that the WCRD/TLAC Project has now entered Phase II. Aspect has delivered a memo which describes the history and investigation into the Hover/Haub

water rights. A more formal report will be requested. The bottom line is that the assumptions Aspect made in the first phase of the project have been borne out to date in the second phase.

George then outlined the next steps for this project:

- Greg and Mike will meet with the Hovers to get their approval to speak with their attorney regarding the project.
- Arrange meetings with involved stakeholders.
- Present to the Department of Ecology for feedback.

About \$62,000 of the \$111,500 budget has been spent to date. The project is a little behind schedule and may be delayed further due to DOE's scheduling difficulties. It will most likely be August before a meeting can be arranged with them. If the project goes beyond November, an extension will have to be requested.

George was asked whether Twin Lakes funding from the prior Twin Lakes project could be used for the new project. Dick Ewing commented that the Twin Lakes funds were granted expressly to secure a deliverable water source (i.e., a well) so it may be difficult to combine the two funding sources.

Methow Watershed Foundation: Mary McCrea

Mary informed the Council that the Foundation received a letter from DOE stating that if there is no budget approval by June 30, grant payments will be discontinued beginning July 1, 2017. Tim and George have graciously agreed that in the event of no budget approval by the deadline, they will continue their work with the projects, understanding that payment will be forthcoming once a budget passes.

The Moccasin Lake Foundation has generously awarded the MWF a grant in the amount of \$4000 to be used for education and outreach.

Mary offered to draft a thank you letter to Penelope Varn for her hard work with the Foundation and Council. The Board agreed by general consensus.

Mary will meet with Sali Monday morning to clarify roles and assign tasks. As Sali's direct supervisor, she asked that Board members run things by Mary instead of sending assignments directly to Sali.

Sarah Brooks of the Methow Conservancy has agreed to give the Foundation pointers and advice on fundraising strategies.

Payments to George and Aspect are up to date. The fourth payment will be due in a couple of weeks.

Initiating Government Reports:

- 1) **Town of Twisp:** John Fleming

Since John has only been on the Town of Twisp Council for four months, he felt he lacked the history and expertise to answer to the question posed at the May MWC meeting regarding how much water the Town of Twisp is needing. He will request to have this added as an agenda item on the next Town of Twisp Council meeting. John stated that he met with the mayor and suggested that Greg attend a Town of Twisp Council meeting to speak about water-related issues.

2) Town of Winthrop: Rick Karro

Nothing to report. Rick is still working on getting information on the amount of water Winthrop is requesting.

3) Okanogan County: Andy Hover, Perry Huston

Andy reported that the County recently accessed a “Closed Basin” map from Department of Ecology which does not match the description of Closed Basins in the Methow Rule that the County had previously been using. The Commissioners are attempting to arrange a meeting with DOE to ask for clarification of roles on interaction between the County and DOE on permit approvals as well as information on handling impairment issues.

Perry confirmed that the Planning Department is now weighing permit applications against the newly accessed DOE Closed Basin maps, since in some cases there is conflict between the DOE map and the maps previously used.

Greg requested a copy of the .shp file of Ecology’s version of the Closed Basins that Perry agreed to provide.

The Planning Department website contains a link to a searchable spreadsheet listing pertinent information about the status of all permit applications. All decisions packets are also being posted to the website.

Perry reported that the House dropped a bill to reconcile differences with the Senate on the Whatcom/Hirst decision. Unfortunately, the two are miles apart. Legislative focus is currently on the budget, not on Whatcom/Hirst.

Mike outlined reviewed the three items for rule revision that the initiating governments had previously agreed to and reiterated that the work of the Council needs to be driven by these:

- Moving the 2cfs from Early Winters downstream
- Opening closed basins for diverging of spring freshet flows
- Housekeeping revisions to the rule

Sub Committee Reports:

1) Instream Flow: Mike Fort

Mike asked for clarification on Perry's recommendation on WAC 173-548. (Per Andy, Perry's letter and recommendation has the full backing of the Okanogan County Commissioners.) Perry clarified that in his opinion, DOE will not take the Instream Flow Rule Revision seriously unless it is presented in a neat package with broad consensus. He recommends continuing with the rule revision as a first step, to be followed by the strategic plan, since the plan is much broader and will encompass the rule revision. The rule revision will produce tools that will be further defined by the strategic plan.

A discussion ensued regarding the timing of stakeholder meetings and public input. Several members of the Council felt that the earlier the public is involved, the better. Others wondered if it would be better to wait until the proposal is presented to DOE, since that will initiate a public comment period. The group agreed that the discussion would continue on next month's agenda.

2) Political action committee: Bill Tackman

Nothing to report.

3) Technical Review Committee: Mike Fort

Mike noted that there was considerable overlap between the Grant Administrator's report on the WCRD/TLAC project and his report as the Tech Committee Chair. He suggested that the Grant Administrator be responsible for WCRD/TLAC reporting in the future.

4) Outreach and education: Greg Knott

Greg noted that the members of the public had excellent comments and ideas at the two recent community outreach events in Twisp and Mazama.

Agenda items:

1) Discussion: Considering a framework for Water 2066. Postponed to next month due to lack of time.

2) Public Comments:

Lee Bernheisel: Asked whether the Town of Twisp had given up their water rights from MVID? He has not heard about this issue since the rights were approved some time ago.

Lee wondered whether the Council should revisit the “Comment” section of the agenda to allow citizens to pose questions to those who are reporting before the Council. Greg replied that it is necessary to strike a balance so the meetings stay within the allotted timeline and move along in an organized way, while at the same time welcoming public debate and discussion.

Kent Hitch: Suggested that it would be beneficial if the public had something to comment on (like a red line rule revision) before comments were sought from the public.

3) Discussion: Agenda Items – Next Meeting

The following items will be added to the July 20, 2017 agenda:

- Filling the open board position
- A continuing discussion about next steps in rule revision and Water 2066.
- A discussion regarding stakeholder involvement.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 PM by general consensus.

Greg Knott, Board Chairman

Approved at the July 20, 2017 Board Meeting.