



Monthly Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

5 -7 p.m. – Via Zoom

Council Members Present: Dick Ewing, Mike Fort, Andy Hover, Soo Ing-Moody, Jeff Sarvis, Bill Tackman

Others in Attendance: Lee Bernheisel (OWL), Jean Bodeau, Jay Chenault (AESI), David Clement, Susan Crampton (OWL), Heidi Dunn, Candis Graff (Ecology), L. Hasselbach, Jenny and Todd, Curtis Koger (AESI), Craig McDonald (MWF), Jasmine Minbashian (MVCC), Craig Nelson (OCD), Virginia O’Kelly, Marcy Stamper (MVN), Sandra Streiby, Lorah Super (MVCC), Travis Thornton, Jacquelyn Wallace (TU), Jeanne White (MC),

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Lane, Administrator

Non-Procedural Motions

Motion #	Short Title	Yeas	Nays	Abstain
10.21-01	Motion to end metering project and use 710 gpd for SFD use.	5	0	1

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Mayor Ing-Moody at 5:02 PM

2. Roll Call of Council Members.

3. Agenda – Additions or Changes

The agenda was approved as written.

4. Minutes – Review and Approval

Councilmember Hover moved to approve the June 17, 2021 minutes, and Councilmember Ewing seconded the motion. The minutes was approved unanimously with Councilmember Ewing abstaining.

5. Report from the Council Chair

Mayor Ing-Moody reported multiple meetings regarding the contract with the County for administrative funds. Added to the agenda was the discussion regarding the potential for managed aquifer recharge. (MAR)

6. MWF Report: Chair- Craig McDonald

MWF Chair Craig McDonald reviewed the October Finance report. Of note, Admin hours have been restricted due to funding, but a couple of donations have been received. Give Methow is currently active. Chair McDonald asked those present to consider a donation. Regarding the contract with the County, final steps include changing the agreement to a contract for services. The amount available is \$1650 per month, with billing due on the 5th. Chair McDonald asked the Council for a motion to approve the contract pending any major changes.

Chair Ing-Moody clarified that the contract includes subscriptions and materials as well, and this motion would be for pre-authorization of the contract. The final version should be very similar to the version presented, and the final version will be reviewed. Councilmember Ewing moved to preauthorize the contract. Councilmember Sarvis seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Commissioner Hover abstaining.

Chair McDonald noted the net MWF meeting is December 7.

7. Subcommittee Reports:

Technical Review Committee, Chair – Fort

Agenda Item 10.21-01: Discussion/Action: Consider End Metering Program and Confirm 710 GPD

Councilmember Fort said that the Tech committee is looking for some direction from the Council regarding the options for moving forward with the metering project. In summary, best available science puts SFD for the Methow at 710 gpd, and in the west generally, use is defined 300-600gpd consumed, a conservative number. Fort believes 710 gpd is a conservative and adequate number for WRIA 48, and is in line with new guidance from **Ecology**. The database should be updated to reflect this guidance and should also be cleaned up in regard to properties around Pateros that are within the Columbia influence.

Councilmember Ewing asked if this action requested will accept 710, and if **6091 guidance** may lower the number. Ewing made a motion to give authorization for the Technical Committee to move forward with using 710 gpd. Commissioner Hover seconded the motion.

Commissioner Hover asked, if the numbers change through the work plan, would the MWC then make a recommendation to the County to change the numbers. Fort affirmed. Mayor Ing-Moody clarified that this action at this time will end the metering program and define SFD use at 710 gpd. The motion passed with none opposed and Mayor Ing-Moody abstaining.

Outreach and Education Committee, Chair- Knott

No Report

8. Ad Hoc Reports

CRM Subcommittee – Mayor Ing-Moody reported that the committee has met two or three times to date, and so far, the discussion has centered on agriculture: what we have, what we want, and how to get it. These discussions have been an exercise for the Council, not definitive for the community, but to inform a broader community conversation. The next discussion for the CRM committee will be water for people: who needs to be at the table, and what data is needed.

Councilmember Ewing asked if this process will help resolve the issues regarding the current moratorium. Councilmember Tackman said he hopes this will result in an opportunity to mitigate and evaluate what the resources are and how they can be used by the County. Councilmember Ewing said his understanding is that subdivision results in group domestic use with no access to water.

Resilient Methow Report – Councilmember Ewing reported on his and Lane’s meeting with CAP member Joshua Porter on water issues. Discussed was that many efficiencies have already been realized through ditches and pivot systems for irrigators, not leaving much more efficiency to be gained in the ag sector. 140 cfs has already been added to instream flow. Water for development was discussed, including the need for legal changes and the CRM being a starting point. For instream flow, forest management was discussed as a way to improve infiltration: thinning providing both fire suppression and infiltration opportunities. Councilmember Ewing believes an increase in infiltration up to 20% is possible. Lane noted that any future projects that involve volunteers, such as CRM, could be listed on the Resilient Methow website.

9. Initiating Government Reports

Town of Winthrop- No Report

Town of Twisp- Mayor Ing-Moody reported that the Town of Twisp is possibly going to look into the MAR project potential with AESI. Also, the Town continues to work on system improvements.

Okanogan County- Commissioner Hover reported on the RFQ process for the administrative services for the MWC and the MWF was the only respondent. The contract is for \$19,800 per year.

The public hearing was held regarding building permit moratorium. The moratorium is still in place as the court has not yet responded to a request for clarification.

Commissioner Hover reported that the Commissioners requested the Environmental health manager to draft a cistern ordinance. Discussion has been happening to try to find resolution for the 235 lots in limbo, without action to date. Commissioner Hover hopes the CRM process helps with that issue.

Councilmember Ewing asked if any changes have made to the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Hover said the planning commission is due to vote on the final draft before it comes to commissioners for review.

Councilmember Tackman asked about the intent of the cistern ordinance and where the water would come from. Commissioner Hover said the water would have to come from out of the basin. Councilmember Tackman asked if this effort was directed toward a solution for the 235 lots, and not meant as a tool for subdivision. Commissioner Hover agreed and added that it could be used for anyone else without potable water. Councilmember Tackman asked if this would apply to lots too small to accommodate a well and septic. Commissioner Hover said that point had not been addressed, but would do so. Councilmember Fort asked why water for cisterns could not be taken from the 2CFS. Commissioner Hover said the intent was not to skirt the ruling, and that a well would still need to be drilled to provide water. Councilmember Fort thought a permit could be obtained to withdraw from the river. Mayor Ing-Moody asked if the process for permitting would be through the County department of health. That answer is yes. Mayor Ing-Moody asked about water quality testing. Commissioner Hover said that the only test required for single family home is quantity. Councilmember Ewing said that a minimum storage size would need to be determined.

10. Ecology Report: Candis Graff reported that water banking grants are open, with a \$200,00 limit. Website: <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2111023.html>

11. Presentation: No Presentation

12. Agenda Item 10.21-02: Discussion: Status of Water Bank

COMMISSIONER Hover reported that the County has been meeting with the Conservation District as the place for the water bank for the County. Craig Nelson (CD) gave an update on status: has had discussions with Washington State Conservation Commission to create the water bank for Okanogan County. Nelson stated water from the Methow would be for use only in the Methow, and same for WRIA 49. One potential seller of water is currently in contact.

COMMISSIONER Hover requested the MWC to help develop guidelines and policy for the water bank. He feels that with the 33% required to go to instream flow, the ecological component is addressed, and policy should address uses. He thinks that primarily ag water will be coming from the Methow. Mayor Ing-Moody asked if that requirement was for the \$2 million for the Methow only. Nelson confirmed it applied to the full funding for water banking under this legislation.

Nelson said he thought the water bank could be active in the next 60-90 days, with 12-18 months to work through development. COMMISSIONER Hover said policy didn't need to be fully developed within that time.

Mayor Ing-Moody asked if other types of water rights could be deposited, or would there be different banks for different types. COMMISSIONER Hover said this water bank would be developed for multiple types of water rights. Nelson said the initial focus would be ag, but other needs are recognized for single family, municipal, etc. Healthy instream flow and ag are CD priorities. The CD can partner with the County on other uses.

COMMISSIONER Hover said that direct conversion of ag rights is not allowed in the Methow without storage to mitigate for low flows. Infrastructure projects would be needed to support those uses. Ag to ag uses should be easier. For example, municipal use in summer for outside watering should be possible.

Mayor Ing-Moody said before withdrawals happen, policy needs to be in place and go through Ecology. Mayor Ing-Moody thinks potential depositors would want to know that policy before making a deposit. COMMISSIONER Hover said community has shown ag is important. He suggested water might be able to be put into storage and converted to group use within UGA, could increase density and address affordable housing.

Mayor Ing-Moody asked for clarification on what the County is needing from the MWC. Commissioner Hover said the County is looking for advice on numbers: percentages for use allocations, who might get priority if there are multiple parties bidding for water.

Nelson believes watershed groups can provide input on goals and priorities for the water bank in regard to uses. Mayor Ing-Moody thinks that having Ecology be part of this conversation would be helpful. Commissioner Hover said that tracing the type of water and its potential use would be tracked by the water bank and would have to go through Ecology process. Domestic and municipal uses are the top priorities to provide input on, Commissioner Hover believes.

13. Agenda Item 10.21-03: Discussion with AESI re: Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR)

COUNCILMEMBER Fort introduced this discussion. One of the only ways to get new water rights is through storage. Studies have been done in the Methow for potential MAR sites. There is a streamflow grant opening Nov 1-Feb 1, and Associate Earth Sciences Inc. (AESI) is interested in exploring a grant. Mayor Ing Moody asked, what are the benefits of doing a feasibility study, and what investments would be required?

Commissioner Hover said the County has looked at natural places for micro-storage in the aquifer and would like to broaden options such as backing up water on forest or DNR land.

Curtis Koger said that if AESI applies for a grant, they would be looking at the basin for potential infiltration via the high flow of the hydrograph. In the Methow, a project like this would pump water to an infiltration gallery and retimed water then would return during low flow conditions. In projects like this, year-round increases in streamflow are typically the result.

Koger said the application if accepted, would allow for feasibility studies to see if MAR would work for the Methow. The feasibility study is required, and if reasonable sites are identified, additional funding would be available from Ecology. Successful application needs community support. WRIA 48 is not a priority basin, so points would be lost on the application because of that, but Koger believes the rest of the application would be strong as the need for increased flows is clear. Jay Chennault said that 300 points are possible for scoring the grant. 40 would be lost due to not being a priority basin, but 6 non-priority basins were funded in 2020.

Commissioner Hover asked if the goal is 100% to streamflow. Chennault said that on their Lynden project, 70% went to streamflow, and 30% was available for the City of Lynden to mitigate for new uses.

Regarding costs, operation and maintenance (O&M) funding would need to be committed to by the partner entity. Partner entities are usually a city or county. Costs for a recent project were about \$80 K per year. Costs for preparing the application are gratis to the partner. Assistance would be needed obtaining letters of support and other basic information.

Mayor Ing-Moody thinks this might be something for the Town of Twisp to consider. Commissioner Hover said the County would need to form a PUD in order to be a partner. A partner would not be obligated to O&M at this point; a phased approach would be taken if any feasible sites were identified. The cost of the two-year feasibility study could be around \$8-900 K.

14. Agenda Item 10.21-04: Next Steps

- Further work and reporting on CRM
- Further input on MAR grants
- Update on Water Bank/ Policy discussion
- Public Comment Conversation

15. Agenda Item 10.21-05 Public Comment

- Lee Bernheisel commented that there was not enough time to engage meaningfully during public comment.
- Virginia O’Kelly wondered if people using untagged wells is considered in the database. Councilmember Fort said that that is an enforcement issue for Ecology, but the database does not consider tagged or untagged, and assumes a well is on a developed parcel regardless. Virginia asked if shared wells are noted in the database, and Fort answered they are not.
- Jasmine Minbashian reported that the final Climate Action Plan was complete and available on the Resilient Methow website, and thanked the MWC for their participation.

16. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:12 P.M.

Mayor Ing-Moody, Council Chair

Approved at the November 18, 2021 Council meeting.