



Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2018

5-7 p.m. – River Bank Building, Twisp, WA

Council Members Present: Dick Ewing, Mike Fort, Andy Hover, Soo Ing-Moody, Greg Knott, Bill McAdow, Bill Tackman, Travis Thornton, and Ashley Thrasher.

Others in Attendance: Brian Colin, Steven Exe, Michele Hinatsu, Logan Johnson, Natalie Kuehler, Mary Lockman, Mary McCrea, Chris Riggio, and Jacquelyn Wallace. Vanessa Brinkhuis and Michael Devany attended via conference call.

Minutes recorded by: Sali Kilmer, Administrative Assistant

Non-Procedural Motions

Motion #	Short Title	Yeas	Nays	Abstain
M-5-18-01	Readdress 710 gpd consumptive use provided by Aspect 2005 report (Postpone to 6/21/18 agenda)	9	0	0
M-5-18-02	Authorize MWF grant application to fund seed money for a water banking program	9	0	0
M-5-18-03	Adopt Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Methow Watershed Council	9	0	0

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Greg Knott at 5:03 p.m.

2. Introductions

3. Approval of Agenda

Dick Ewing moved to adopt the Agenda of May 17, 2018, as presented. Soo Ing-Moody seconded, and the motion carried.

4. Minutes – Review and Approval

Andy Hover moved to approve the Minutes of April 19, 2018, as presented. Soo Ing-Moody seconded, and the motion carried.

5. Report from the Chair: Greg Knott

Greg had nothing new to report but did share that he, Andy, and Natalie Kuehler recently had a productive information sharing session with a group of local realtors on water related issues.

6. Grant Administrator Report: No report. George Schneider absent.

7. Methow Watershed Foundation Report: Mary McCrea

Discussion deferred to the agenda item below.

8. Initiating Government Reports

Town of Twisp: Mayor Soo Ing-Moody related that a section of the new trail near the park has been lost into the river due to high water. The Town of Twisp has received input from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Army Corp of Engineers for short and long term solutions to the problem. More damage might be expected if precipitation continues as forecasted.

Soo recently attended a Department of Ecology workshop on Net Ecological Benefits. Once she receives the minutes from the meeting, she will forward to Sali for distribution to Council members, as the topics discussed may be of interest to the MWC.

Town of Winthrop: Council Member Bill McAdow reported that Rick Karro has officially retired from the Town of Winthrop. The Town is actively seeking qualified candidates to replace him. Once the new Public Works Director is hired, Bill will arrange to meet with Greg Knott regarding improving water efficiencies in Winthrop. In the interim, he may meet with Greg informally to discuss ideas for water improvements.

Okanogan County: Commissioner Andy Hover reported on a recent discussion he had with Sage Park of Department of Ecology involving scheduling a face-to-face meeting with Ecology representatives as well as major stakeholders with the purpose of drilling down a definition of “single domestic”. He invited MWC representation at the meeting. Andy has researched extensively and cannot find a definition anywhere; “group domestic” was defined only for Department of Health regulation reasons, though Ecology really has no definition of “group domestic.” It is extremely important for the County to figure out how “single domestic” should be applied, as it relates to the Methow Rule. For example, if the County is issuing permits on the 2 cfs and they call in Ecology to back them up, they need to know what Ecology’s interpretation is of “single domestic.” Right now, Okanogan County Health is governing Group B systems. He wondered aloud whether it would be prudent for the County to place a moratorium on Group B systems until we have a solid definition for single domestic.

Soo Ing-Moody asked how the County’s meeting with Ecology connects with the work of the Instream Rule Clarification Task Force, since the first priority of the task force is a definition of “single domestic.” Travis concurred that the task force is asking the same questions as the County and is attempting to come up with a preferred answer based on the consensus of the group, although, based on prior discussions, consensus may not be achieved. Natalie Kuehler interjected that the task force had decided at their initial meeting that they would seek broader input from the community, which necessarily takes time and planning. Travis stated that he has provided an email address to receive comments and input regarding rule clarification (instreamrulecomments@gmail.com). This was included in the draft 4/19/18 MWC minutes, which was sent to the general mailing list, including about 95 community members. To date, only one comment has been received. Ashley Thrasher expressed the viewpoint that the Instream Rule Clarification Task Force was formed as a short-term way to give the Council’s opinion on issues related to the Methow Rule, whereas Water 2066 will focus on long-term answers and will involve broad community and stakeholder input. Andy stated that he

will delay the meeting with Ecology until after the June MWC meeting, where a final report is expected from the Instream Rule Clarification Task Force. Travis will schedule a follow-up meeting to hash out the details of the report.

Andy also requested that the MWC provide the County with a recommendation on gallons per day use in the Methow Valley. Aspect Consulting's 2005 report recommends 710 gpd consumptive use, but that number assumes mid-July conditions, stock watering, irrigating, and year-round residency. Travis Thornton cautioned that this number is a matter for science, not a matter of the opinion of the Council. He wondered what the push is to get the gallons per day number, since the County will not be up against the 2 cfs reserve any time soon. Andy answered that everything is dependent upon this number; the database is complete and simply needs a gpd figure to calculate how much of the 2 cfs remains. The County cannot have people buy property thinking that they can get water and then change it later. And the gpd number used makes a huge difference: using 400 gpd, there are 3,230 connections available; using 710 gpd, there are 1,821 connections available. In six of the seven reaches, the current number of parcels will never reach the maximum number of connections. However, in the Lower Methow reach, this may be an issue. Travis stated that for now, the County could put in a high number to be safe (710 or even 1,000) and adjust it down later, if the scientific data warrants it. Andy stated that for now, the County will use the 710 gpd number, with the understanding that this could be adjusted at a later date. Greg Knott reminded the Council that the Methow Watershed Plan states that the gallons per day figure should be periodically revisited by the MWC.

Andy Hover made a motion to postpone consideration of readdressing the 710 gallon per day consumptive use number provided by the Aspect Consulting 2005 report to the June 21, 2018, agenda. Mike Fort seconded, and the motion carried.

9. Ecology Report: Vanessa Brinkhuis

Vanessa had nothing new to report, but stated that she will relay to her group the on-going discussion the MWC is having regarding single domestic and group systems, and how they relate to the instream flow rule.

Greg asked Vanessa to provide any policy guidelines and technical discussions regarding what triggers Ecology to make the call that minimum instream flows have been exceeded. She agreed to send the information to Sali for distribution to Council members.

Ashley asked about Water 2066 funding. Vanessa stated that the upper management decision making group at Ecology is extremely busy with the implementation of ESSB 6091, but as soon as she receives clarification on Water 2066 funding, she will give Ashley a call.

10. Sub-Committee Reports

Instream Flow Rule Revision & Technical Review Committees: Mike Fort deferred the discussion to the agenda item below.

Political Action Committee: Bill Tackman had nothing new to report.

Outreach and Education Committee: Bill Tackman reported that plans are in the works for another round of community outreach meetings in Methow, Twisp, and Mazama.

Andy Hover and Mary McCrea will be the key presenters. Andy will speak about the County's metering approach and Mary will talk about recent activity related to outside entities offering to buy water rights and how this relates to the Trust Water Rights program and water banking.

Bylaws Amendment Committee: Ashley Thrasher deferred the discussion to the agenda item below.

Water 2066 Committee: Ashley Thrasher deferred the discussion to the agenda item below.

11. Agenda Items

05-18-01 – Decision: MWF Application for Water Banking Grant: Mary McCrea informed the Council that several Methow Valley property owners have been approached by outside entities with offers to buy water rights which would be sold downstream. Commercial users, industries, wineries, and agricultural organizations in need of water have discovered that they can legally purchase water rights in the Methow Valley to be used anywhere downstream of the Valley. The Methow Watershed Foundation would like to apply for a grant for seed money to establish a water bank to compete with these offers, perhaps through the Hewlett Foundation. Andy Hover asked about the structure of the water banks. Who would be purchasing the water? And who would have a say on how the water is used? Mary answered that the MWF envisions partnering with Okanogan County, the Conservation District, and perhaps others on administering the water bank. At this time, it is in the very early stages of development, and the first step is to seek grant funding to get the water bank started.

Ashley Thrasher made a motion to authorize the Methow Watershed Foundation to pursue grant funding for seed money to start a water banking program, with the goal of keeping water in the Methow Valley. Andy Hover seconded, and the motion carried.

05-18-02 – Information: 2018 MWF Budget: Mary encouraged Council members to look for fatal flaws and/or omissions in the 2018 MWF budget draft, which is more of a "wish list" of projects the MWF would like to seek funding for. With no glaring flaws or omissions noted, the Council recommended that the Methow Watershed Foundation use the budget draft as a planning tool for the current year.

05-18-03 – Action: Revised Bylaws: Ashley Thrasher presented to Council members the previous bylaws, a red-line version, and the proposed revised bylaws. Dick Ewing asked what the intent was for revising the bylaws. Ashley answered that it was mainly for general housekeeping purposes and to clean up some of the wording. Dick noted that the revision also reflects the fact that the Methow Watershed Foundation now handles the funding for the MWC, whereas the initiating governments handled it in the past.

Soo Ing-Moody proposed some minor amendments to the revised bylaws:

- Section 1.1, last paragraph – Change to “This selection process shall be reviewed annually, or as necessary. The citizen members shall be selected by the current MWC members and approved by the IGs.”
- Section 2.2 – Change to “A quorum is defined as five members. No business shall be conducted without a quorum. Ties will be tabled until the next meeting.”
- Section 4.5 – Change to “If a councilmember cannot attend a regular or special meeting, the use of a proxy in their stead is prohibited, unless it is an official alternate of the IG.”

Dick Ewing made a motion to adopt the Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Methow Watershed Council, as amended above. Soo Ing-Moody seconded, and the motion carried.

05-18-04 – Information: Water 2066 Report: Ashley Thrasher briefly reminded the Council of the objective of the Water 2066 project, to produce a written report that very clearly defines long-term water use planning for the Methow Valley. The report, which will be the responsibility of the project facilitator, will include specific project proposals as well a discussion about dissenting positions. The group which will comprise the committee will meet for one year and will be made up of a broad range of community stakeholders, including government agencies, NGO’s, tribes, businesses, etc.

05-18-05 – Action: Disbanding the IFRR Committee: Mike Fort stated that there is no longer a need for the Instream Flow Rule Revision Committee at this time, since the MWC has decided to seek rule clarification from Ecology rather than opening up the rule for revision. Greg Knott stated that since the IFRR Committee was formed as an executive decision by the Chair, there is no need for formal action by the Council to disband the committee. Council members agreed, and the IFRR Committee was declared disbanded.

Public Comments: Natalie Kuehler noted that the revised bylaws include no restrictions on quorums. Mary McCrea agreed that the MWC is not bound by the Open Public Meetings Act, which forbids a quorum of Council members meeting unless it is a regular or special meeting of the Council. Greg Knott stated that this was a self-imposed restriction, in the interests of transparency. The Council agreed to wave this restriction, especially in light of the fact that most of the Council members expressed interest in participating in the Instream Rule Clarification Task Force follow up meeting. Travis stated that he will invite all participants from the previous meeting as well as of the other Council members.

Mary Lockman asked for clarification on Class B systems and the involvement of the Health Department.

Discussion: Agenda Items – Next Meeting: The next meeting agenda may include a discussion on readdressing the 710 gallons per day consumptive use number and a report by the Instream Rule Clarification Task Force.

12. Meeting Adjournment

At 6:59 p.m. the meeting was adjourned by Chair Greg Knott.

Mike Fort, Council Vice Chairman

Approved at the June 21, 2018 Council Meeting.