



Monthly Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2017

5-7 p.m. – RiverBank Building, Twisp, WA

Council Members Present: Dick Ewing, Mike Fort, Andy Hover, Rick Karro, Greg Knott, Bill Tackman, and Ashley Thrasher. John Fleming was unable to attend.

Others in Attendance: Natalie Kuehler, Phil Millam, Mary McCrea, George Schneider, Kent Hitch, Jacquelyn Wallace, Travis Thornton, and Perry Huston

Minutes recorded by: Sali Kilmer, Administrative Assistant

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 July 20, 2017. Mike Fort seconded, and the motion carried.

4. Minutes – Review and Approval

March 16, 2017: The following amendments to the Minutes of the March 16, 2017 MWC meeting were proposed:

- Correct “Executive Session” paragraph on page 2 to reflect that the motion to recommend Thrasher to the county and initiating governments took place when the Council had reconvened to open session after a fifteen minute executive session.

Mike Fort moved to approve the Minutes of March 16, 2017, as amended. Bill Tackman seconded, and the motion carried.

June 15, 2017: *Andy Hover moved to approve the Minutes of June 15, 2017, as presented. Dick Ewing seconded, and the motion carried.*

5. Report from the Chair Report: Greg Knott

Greg reminded Council members that Conflict of Interest statements should be signed and returned to Sali Kilmer as soon as possible.

Greg informed the Council about the work done by the Methow Restoration Council (MRC), an ad hoc group formed to improve coordination of individual efforts to protect and restore native fish species and habitats in the Methow watershed. Since the

concept for the Water 2066 plan lines up with the group's efforts, coordination with the MRC will likely be beneficial.

Review materials for this month's meeting included the WRIA 48 Closed Basins map from Department of Ecology (DOE). The map was produced in the early 1990's and differs from the Aspect map, particularly with regard to the location of the closed basin boundaries near the confluence of the closed basin tributaries and the mainstem Methow. The reason seems to be based on Ecology's opinion of where the subsurface flow of the Methow River predominates over the groundwater from the closed basin. WAC 173-548 is not accompanied by a map of any kind.

A conference call meeting has been scheduled for July 27 to discuss the feasibility of partnering the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and the US Geological Survey (USGS) with a grad student from the University of Washington on a project to study quantifying the hydrologic effects on small streams from beaver pond storage. If the group decides that the effort is worth pursuing, the project will be forwarded to the Technical Review Committee for evaluation.

6. Grant Administrator Report: George Schneider

George reviewed Aspect's conclusions during Phase I of the WCRD/TLAC Project. Potentially three sources of water were found that could be made available to provide a limited amount of water for the Twin Lakes aquifer:

- Option #1 - Making operational changes at Patterson Lake and the automation of water controls
- Option #2 - Expensive infrastructure upgrades including closed piping
- Option #3 – Tap into neighboring properties that use a lot of water

Subsequent discussions with the neighboring property owners (the Haubs and the Hovers) revealed that the complexity of the water rights inhibits option three from being viable.

Tim Flynn of Aspect has been tasked with reporting back next week whether Aspect can say with certainty that making operational changes at Patterson Lake and the automation of water controls would result in enough water to make it worth proceeding with the project.

George stated that he has asked DOE if the grant money could hypothetically be used for other projects approved by MWC, and the response seemed positive.

Dick Ewing questioned whether the potential use of Thompson Creek as a source of water had been re-visited, since the point of diversion is not in a closed basin. George stated that he will check into the answer to that question, especially since we are now at the point of "every drop counts" when it comes to water.

7. Methow Watershed Foundation: Mary McCrea

Mary stated that the Methow Watershed Foundation met on Thursday, July 13. The bulk of the meeting involved talks with Tim Flynn of Aspect regarding the WCRD/TLAC project.

The Foundation could use more board members, especially those with fund-raising experience. She asked Council members and interested parties to consider joining the MWF board and to generate interest in the community in what the board does.

Mary informed the Council about the “Give Methow” online crowd-funding campaign during the month of October, organized by the Community Foundation of North Central Washington. The campaign is open to non-profit organizations in the Methow Valley who are seeking funding to support their cause. Mary participated in the July 20th training. She will be working with Sali to craft and post a funding request on behalf of the MWF which will (hopefully) inspire members of the community to want to donate in support of the work of the Foundation.

Council members were reminded to sign the letters of appreciation to Penelope Varn and Brian Fisher so they can be mailed out this week.

8. Initiating Government Reports

Town of Twisp: No report. John Fleming absent.

Town of Winthrop: Rick Karro provided meeting attendees with a memo he had written regarding the Town of Winthrop water need assessment from the 2011 Water System Plan. The Plan identified a need for an additional 468 gpm, Qi and 345 af/yr Qa by the year 2028. Greg Knott asked whether the Winthrop Town Council had reviewed the numbers, to which Rick replied that while they had seen the numbers, it was not in this form. Therefore, he will be forwarding the memo to them.

Okanogan County: Andy Hover reported that the Yakima Nation had appealed the approval by the County on two separate parcels in closed basins. The County had approved the applications in part because the land owners had existing wells which had not been in use, but for which they had documentation from DOE purporting to approve the wells. Andy and Perry Huston are attempting to schedule an appointment with members of the Yakima Nation to promote mitigation as possibly the only way to move forward regarding 2cfs.

Andy stated that the meeting he has been trying to schedule with DOE for clarification on the roles and interaction between the County and DOE on permit approvals was cancelled by DOE. He will attempt to reschedule the meeting.

A question was raised by Bill Tackman regarding the County’s roll in informing land owners and well drillers that there is a potential issue on parcels in closed basins. A discussion ensued regarding closed basins which will be continued as an agenda item at next month’s meeting.

9. Sub-Committee Reports

Instream Flow Rule Revision Committee: Mike Fort stated that the recommendation from Aspect is the sooner the rule revision is submitted to DOE, the better. As agreed to by the initiating governments, the instream flow revision will be recommending the following:

- Moving the 2cfs from Early Winters downstream

- Opening closed basins for diversion of spring freshet flows for storage
- Housekeeping revisions to the rule

Rick Karro on behalf of the Town of Winthrop and Andy Hover on behalf of Okanogan County gave the Instream Flow Rule Revision Committee the go-ahead to begin red-lining WAC 173-548 in preparation for presentation to DOE. John Fleming of the Town of Twisp was absent.

Political Action Committee: Bill Tackman provided the text of four separate bills being considered by the legislature, HB 1885, HB 2195, HB 2239, and SB 5239. The group generally agreed that there is not much benefit to any of the bills as presented, since none of them really address the underlying water issues.

Technical Review Committee: See the Grant Administrator's report regarding the WCRD/TLAC Project and the Report from the Chair regarding the potential Beaver Pond Study Project.

Outreach and Education Committee: Bill Tackman reported that work has begun on updating the MWC website. Maintenance of the site will be handled by Administrative Assistant Sali Kilmer. Sali will purchase a thank-you card for Curtis Edwards for all of the time and expertise he volunteered in setting up the new website. Bill and Greg will meet to begin planning dates for the fall public outreach meetings.

Bylaws Amendment Committee: Ashley Thrasher stated that this brand new Committee includes Mike Fort, Mary McCrea, and herself. They will be working to amend the MWC bylaws and will provide an update on their progress at the next meeting.

10. Agenda Items

Discussion: Considering a framework for Water 2066 continued: Ashley Thrasher noted that the Water 2066 discussion has been on the last several agendas without gaining much traction. She suggested that it would be more efficient to get a group working on the project who can report their progress back to the Council. Perry Huston, George Schneider, Andy Hover, Dick Ewing, Greg Knott and Ashley Thrasher all volunteered to comprise the Water 2066 work group.

Presentations: Council Position #4 Candidate Presentations: The two candidates for the #4 Position, Kent Hitch and Travis Thornton, gave short presentations on their background, qualifications, and interest in serving on the MWC.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Discussion: Agenda Items – Next Meeting: The next meeting agenda will include a continuing discussion on closed basins and an update on Water 2066 progress.

Executive Session: Discussion of Position #4 Candidates: *At 6:54 p.m., Andy Hover moved to adjourn to Executive Session. Dick Ewing seconded, and the motion carried. The motion was amended to invite Mary McCrea to the Executive Session. The Executive Session was expected to take fifteen minutes.*

The Council returned to open session at 7:08 p.m. *Dick Ewing moved to recommend the nomination of Travis Thornton as Methow Watershed Council Position #4 to the Town of Twisp, Town of Winthrop and Okanogan County. Bill Tackman seconded, and the motion carried. Rick Karro and Andy Hover abstained.*

Mike Fort made a motion to allow the Chair to sign the appointment of Travis Thornton prior to the next MWC meeting once approval is obtained from the three initiating governments. Ashley Thrasher seconded, and the motion carried.

11. Meeting Adjournment

At 7:12 p.m. Mike Fort moved to adjourn the meeting. Andy Hover seconded, and the motion carried.

Greg Knott, Council Chairman

Approved at the August 17, 2017 Council Meeting.