



## Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2017

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

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

Others in Attendance: Jacquelyn Wallace, Kent Hitch, Sandra Strieby, Brian de Place, Melanie Rowland, Steven Exe, Michele Hinatsu, Logan Johnson, Perry Huston, and Dick Evans

Minutes recorded by: Sali Kilmer, Administrative Assistant

### 1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Greg Knott at 5:01 p.m.

### 2. Introductions

### 3. Approval of Agenda

*It was noted that the Agenda includes the addition of "Discussion: Buildable Lands Analysis" to be presented by Perry Huston. Dick Ewing moved to adopt the Agenda of September 21, 2017. Andy Hover seconded, and the motion carried.*

### 4. Minutes – Review and Approval

*The following amendment was proposed to the Minutes of the August 17, 2017 MWC Meeting:*

- *Page 4, under "Discussion: Closed Basins", the third sentence of the second paragraph should read, "However, the land owner had a new well which had not been in use, but for which they had documentation from DOE that showed they were not in hydraulic continuity."*

*Bill Tackman moved to approve the Minutes of August 17, 2017, as amended. Dick Ewing seconded, and the motion carried. Mike Fort abstained, stating he was not in attendance for the meeting.*

### 5. Report from the Chair: Greg Knott

Greg heartily thanked Natalie Kuehler and Andy Hover for the excellent presentations they made at the recent community meetings. He noted that members of the public had a lot of good questions and that the feedback following the meetings was very positive. He encouraged interested parties to sign up for the MWC mailing list to be emailed news about upcoming meetings and events.

## **6. Grant Administrator Report:** Greg Knott

Grant Administrator George Schneider was unable to attend. Greg reported that Vanessa Brinkhuis of DOE is keeping in contact, as further decisions need to be made regarding project options for the remaining grant funds. Currently, the Methow Watershed Foundation is awaiting a proposal from Aspect including a dollar amount and a revision of the scope of work before asking for approval from the Council and from DOE.

## **7. Methow Watershed Foundation Report:** Greg Knott

In Mary McCrea's absence, Greg summarized the September MWF meeting. The primary focus was on fundraising efforts. The overall strategy is to apply for larger grants, based on the Water 2066 project. The Foundation is aiming to come to October's MWC meeting prepared with a proposal to pursue further grant funding. In addition, the Foundation is participating in the Give Methow crowdfunding campaign arranged by the Community Foundation of North Central Washington. Council members and interested parties were encouraged to visit [www.methowwatershed.com](http://www.methowwatershed.com) for information on the campaign and how to donate.

Dick Evans (MWF Treasurer) reported that the Foundation currently has about \$5,863 in the bank account for administrative functions (Sali's time) and public outreach efforts. All outstanding bills have been paid to date. Regarding the Moccasin Lake grant, of the original \$4,000, \$3,264 remains in the account. Of the \$3,600 from the Community Foundation of North Central Washington grant, \$2,552 remains. With regard to the Ecology grant, \$61,286 has been both received and expended, leaving \$37,488 remaining in the grant. A bill totaling a little over \$2,000 has been received but not paid yet, pending funding from DOE.

Dick will email the Treasurer's Report to Council members in the future.

## **8. Initiating Government Reports**

Town of Twisp: John Fleming stated that the Town of Twisp had nothing relevant to report.

Town of Winthrop: No report. Rick Karro was absent.

Okanogan County: Andy Hover reported on the August 28 open public meeting between the Okanogan County Commissioners and Department of Ecology. The purpose of the meeting was to define agency interaction between DOE and the County in light of the Hirst decision in matters involving permits, well drilling, etc. The Commissioners asked many questions, including a request for DOE interpretation and clarification of the Methow Rule, single domestic use, closed basin boundaries, and the 2 cfs reservation. Very few of the questions were answered; however, the Department of Ecology was very enthusiastic about working with the County to find pertinent answers. They praised the efforts of the County for doing their own research and attempting to get ahead of the issue. There have been several follow-up conversations with DOE personnel, culminating in DOE sending a list of questions to be sure that their research efforts are aimed at the questions the County needs to have answered. Andy will forward the list to Sali, who will forward it to Council members.

## 9. Sub-Committee Reports

Instream Flow Rule Revision Committee: Mike Fort reported that the work of the Committee is at a stand-still for now, as the group is trying to decide when would be the best time to approach Ecology about a rule revision. Perhaps Ecology will clarify some of the same questions the Committee has when they provide a response to Okanogan County, as noted above.

Political Action Committee: Bill Tackman reported that there is not much of anything going on in Olympia with regard to the Hirst decision. The legislators are not moving on any of the proposals, and there is still no capital budget.

Technical Review Committee: Greg Knot summarized a presentation he recently made at the Wolf Creek Reclamation District Board of Directors meeting regarding the direction of the WCRD/TLAC project. Agreement was reached on the following points:

- The remaining grant funds should be spent on drafting an agreement between WCRD and TLAC which pinpoints specific areas that need to be focused on and on installing an automated spill gate to regulate pipe flows below Patterson Lake.
- Any transfer of WCRD water to TLAC during the test period (3-5 years) would be entirely voluntary on the part of WCRD.
- If WCRD infrastructure is used for the transfer, compensation would be warranted (details to be determined).
- TLAC will fund the preliminary design studies for an infiltration gallery near Twin Lakes and studies of the Thompson Creek aquifer.

Further, Greg stated that the Bureau of Reclamation will be doing a cost estimate on automation of the gate, which is difficult to access, in order to conserve water. Other area irrigators will have a place at the table for discussions as the project unfolds. Once the proposal from Aspect to revise the scope of work is received and is approved by the Council, it will be forwarded to Vanessa Brinkhuis at DOE for funding approval.

Outreach and Education Committee: Bill Tackman reported on the successful community meetings that were held in Methow, Twisp, and Mazama. The events were well attended by a total of about 80 community members. Many good questions were asked and the public generally seemed appreciative of the information that was presented. The Committee is now working on scheduling the fall/winter subject matter expert presentations. The presentations include the following topics: hydraulic continuity, the effects of climate change on the hydrograph, the Trust Water Rights program, and water banking. In addition, Mary McCrea will be contacting Tom McDonald about giving a presentation on the legislative process regarding water issues. Further, Bill contacted Terry Hunt about the possibility of recording the presentations with the goal of adding them to the MWC website and making them accessible for future use. Terry estimates that for around \$400, he could record and edit the film and provide a digital copy which would be owned by the Council.

*Dick Ewing moved to authorize the Methow Watershed Foundation to pay up to \$400 to Terry Hunt for a digital recording of Chris Konrad's presentation on hydraulic continuity, contingent on receiving a detailed cost estimate. John Fleming seconded, and the motion carried.*

Bylaws Amendment Committee: Discussion deferred to the agenda item.

Water 2066 Committee: Ashley Thrasher reported that though the Committee has not met this month, she has been meeting with different agencies and groups including Trout Unlimited, MVCC, WDFW, and the Colville Tribe for input on what they see as current water issues. The meetings have produced two clear sentiments:

- The need for up-to-date science to produce a clear picture of current and future water requirements.
- The need to improve efficiencies in irrigation.

Ashley will continue meeting with various agencies, including the Yakama Nation and Okanogan County. The next Water 2066 Committee will be Wednesday, September 27 at 9 a.m. Ashley will send a reminder email to Committee members.

## **10. Agenda Items**

Discussion: Buildable Lands Analysis: Perry Huston reported on Okanogan County's progress on the Buildable Lands Analysis. The purpose of the study is to determine how many buildable lots are left in the county under current zoning. The County has now created searchable files of all seven of the Methow Basin reaches. Perry will be emailing the maps out to Council members to get feedback and input from those who are familiar with the reaches and as preliminary work on the environmental impact statement the County will be working on in connection with their revision of the Comprehensive Plan. The goal is to build a system in-house which can be tied to the Assessor's data layer and mapping. Greg Knot recommended that the County meet with Aspect Consulting, as much of the data collection they are looking for has already been done. Perry stated that the problem is software integration – Aspect's database is incompatible with the County program. Both Perry and Greg agreed to individually contact Aspect about making their database usable for the County.

Action: Amended Bylaws: Ashley Thrasher stated that the Committee is looking at amending the bylaws for several reasons:

- Basic cleanup and housekeeping
- To make the bylaws more current for an established Council
- To clear up indemnification and insurance issues

Ashley will reach out to the Yakama Nation and Colville Confederated Tribes to make sure that they are okay with being mentioned as Initiating Governments in the bylaws. In addition, she will check with Mary McCrea regarding some of the revisions Mary initiated, including striking the last line of section 4.1 and all of section 4.2 regarding meeting protocol. Travis Thornton voiced some concerns about the potential exposure of individual members of the Board. He will coordinate with Ashley directly regarding the potential issues. Once a draft is ready for general comments, Ashley will email Council members a link to a Google Drive document along with instructions for editing.

Action: Council Position #4 Appointment: The Town of Twisp, Town of Winthrop, and Okanogan County have all officially approved the appointment of Travis Thornton to the Methow Watershed Council. His appointment is effective immediately.

Public Comments: Three members of the public commented:

- Jacquelyn Wallace asked where she could get a copy of the Aspect report referred to earlier in the meeting. The report is available on [www.methowwatershed.com](http://www.methowwatershed.com). Contact Okanogan County for the source code.
- Kent Hitch made the point that the 2cfs reservation established under the Methow Rule might be doubtful, due to the changing environment and other factors.
- Brian de Place informed Council members and interested parties that the Washington chapter of the American Water Resources Association will be holding their annual conference in Seattle on October 3. The theme is: “The 100 Year Anniversary of the Washington Water Code: Where We Came From and Where We’re Going.” Brian can be contacted for more information or a link to the event.

Discussion: Agenda Items – Next Meeting: The next meeting agenda may include a decision on how to proceed with the WCRD/TLAC project, a MWF grant funding proposal, and the adoption of the amended MWC Bylaws. Greg will arrange for a presentation at the October MWC meeting regarding Board insurance.

## **11. Meeting Adjournment**

*At 7.02 p.m. the meeting was adjourned by Chair Greg Knott.*

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Dick Ewing, Council Vice Chairman

*Approved at the October 19, 2017 Council Meeting.*