

METHOW WATERSHED COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for May 18, 2017

Meeting Called to order by Greg Knott at 5:08 PM.

Board members present: Greg Knott, Mike Fort, Perry Huston, John Fleming, Rick Karro, Bill Tackman, Ashley Thrasher, Dick Ewing

Grant Consultant: George Schneider

Guests: Natalie Kuehler, Kent Hitch, Phil Millan, MVCC

Chair Report:

3 Things discussed:

- 1) Grange presentation for public outreach brought 20- 30 people. Next presentation is in Mazama on the 22nd.
- 2) Conflict of interest statement needs to be signed by all and handed to Greg.
- 3) Penelope Vern resigned for personal reasons leaving a vacancy for her at large position and her position on the Methow Watershed Foundation. Mike Fort will take her place on the MWF, Greg will advertise for her replacement on the MWC.

Grant Administrator:

George reported that the WCRD/TLAC project phase II has been approved. He now has the final tech memo from Aspect.

Next up for Aspect is the Examination of the Hover/Haub water rights on pivot.

A meeting with Ecology needs to be arranged sometime between now and July 15th. Critical to the meeting is the information on the Hover/Haub water rights as well as those from Rader Creek. Greg and Mike will attend the meeting to be arranged by George.

About 50% of Aspect's budget has been spent: \$46,000.

WCRD district asked: "what if the project is too risky, can the opt out?" The answer is this is not a forced or mandated project.

Methow Watershed Foundation:

The status of the Pigott administrative grant is undetermined. Bill T. to follow up to determine status.

George and Penelope interviewed 3 candidates for the administrative assistant position. Decision on this will occur when grant is received.

Town of Winthrop:

Nothing to report. Ashley's nomination accepted

Town of Twisp:

Nothing to report. Ashley's nomination accepted

Okanogan County:

Perry had no info on commissioners' approval of Ashley.

Motion was made by Mike Fort to receive Ashley's nomination to the board based on the two initiating governments and information from Dick Ewing who thought the commissioners had approved her last month. Motion seconded by Dick Ewing

All present except Perry who abstained voted yea.

Perry then went on to review several topics:

- County is reviewing title 20 and refining it.
- Application for building permits are being reviewed individually, with Perry making the final sign off.
- The County is looking at critical water availability areas for purpose of studying availability of water
- There are 2 subdivision applications, no short plate applications. Dan Beardsley reviews these.
- Skeptical about existing state bills addressing Hirst will pass this session
- Comp Plan will be reopened due to need to evaluate considerations for water in plan
- Cooperating with Colville tribes on building applications, the tribes are make the decisions on tribal lands.
- Reviewing Critical areas ordinance
- Identifying two key study areas: 1) Water banking, 2) transfer of development rights
- Ecology's procedures for water appropriation followed in closed basins. County is discovering unused wells and wells that may be taking surface water.

Sub Committee Reports:

1) Instream Flow: Mike Fort, Greg Knott, Bill Tackman

Main issue discussed was the need for addressing and defining what will constitute the integrated plan proposed by the Tribes and agency stakeholder committee. The stakeholders agree to the three proposed revisions:

- Moving the 1.48 cfs from Early Winters Creek
- Water accounting against the 2cfs

- Storage in closed basins.

The problem in closed basins is how will storage projects benefit fish over that of the water users in the basins.

In discussing the importance of stake holder support several things were observed:

- The stake holder group needs to be enlarged and included in so there are no surprises when rule change is initiated
- The integrated plan must be defined before initiating the rule change
- Need to establish a June meeting to resolve these points

The rule revision needs to be completed in a 10-year window to best meet water need of towns

2) Political action committee: Bill Tackman
No activity

3) Technical Review Committee: Mike Fort, Greg Knott, Bill Tackman
USGS has a proposal focusing on detailed study of critical growth areas. This study could be extended into the Okanogan River area.

In order to use the expertise in the Valley it was suggested creating a technical advisory committee from this resource.

4) Outreach and education: Bill Tackman and John Fleming

In addition to presentations updating the Valley on the MWC it is thought that other topics and presenters should be expanded

Agenda items:

- 1) Ashley Thrasher Confirmed as MWC board member
- 2) Committee membership revised as noted in subcommittee reports
- 3) Aspect authorized to complete phase 2
- 4) By Laws:

Mary McCrea, Mike Fort and Ashley Thrasher are to address:

- MWF/MWC relationship
- Nomination of new MWC board members
- Funding authorization
- Citizen advisory committees

- 5) Presentation on 2066:

The goal of this effort is planning for water use 50 years out to get ahead of the curve on potential water use conflicts. To launch the effort the following framework is envisioned:

- Develop and propose goals and objectives
- Develop alternatives for group structure
- Work with MWF to create schedule, budgets and strategy
- Report monthly to MWC on progress and decision points.

Greg asked if he could be given the go ahead to pursue this, however it was noted: isn't this really the requested integrated plan to make the instream rule change. Maybe this shouldn't be viewed as a separated effort. The question of how to integrate this idea with everything else needs to be addressed.

Mike Fort motioned that Greg proceed with this idea based on discussion. Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Public Comments:

Phil Millan, MVCC:

Asked Perry about the omnibus hearing. Perry replied that this was a scoping meeting to collect as much water related information that is available in the County. This is now being used to activate Title 20 and make decisions on permit evaluations. This will be available on the County website. The planning department will have its own decision framework, as will the Hearing Examiner.

Keith Hitch:

Town growth is cyclical, a good plan baseline is needed to determine future water needs.

Haub water rights on Rader Creek may affect joint project.

John Fleming:

The Twisp town council meets with the press present. The MWC has no press coverage. It would be wise to update the press and use them to keep people aware of MWC purpose and activities.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:47

Greg Knott, Board Chairman

Approved at the June 15, 2017 Board Meeting.