



## Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2021      5 -7 p.m. – Via Zoom

**Council Members Present:** Dick Ewing, Mike Fort, Greg Knott, Commissioner Andy Hover, Alyssa Jumars, Mayor Soo Ing-Moody, Mayor Sally Ranzau (left early), Jeff Sarvis, Ashley Thrasher

**Others in Attendance:** Chris Allen (AESI), Jean Bodeau, Lee Bernheisel, Jay Chenault (AESI), Kristen-Marie Kirby, Curtis Koger (AESI), Jasmine Minbashian (MVCC), Jason Paulsen (MC), Melanie Rowland (MVCC), George Schneider, Jacquelyn Wallace, Jan Young

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Lane, Administrative Assistant

### Non-Procedural Motions

Motion #	Short Title	Yeas	Nays	Abstain
3.18-01	Motion for the MWF to pursue grants related to MWC goals and to report back to the MWC.	7	0	0
3.18-02	Motion to elect Mayor Ing-Moody as Chair, and Ashley Thrasher as Vice Chair of the MWC	6	0	1
3.18-03	Motion to authorize Chair to draft and send a letter of support regarding the budget proviso for WRIA 48	7	0	0

#### 1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ashley Thrasher at 5:02 PM

#### 2. Agenda – Review and Approval

Council Member Ewing moved to approve the agenda, and Commissioner Hover seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

#### 3. Minutes – Review and Approval

Jacquelyn Wallace of Trout Unlimited offered a statement in regard to the water banking legislation (below) to rebut a statement in the February 18, 2021 minutes. Council Member Ewing moved to approve the minute as amended with rebuttal. Council Member Fort seconded the motion. In discussion, Commissioner Hover said that it would not be proper to amend minutes, but rather let the March minute reflect Jacquelyn’s statement. The question was called, and received zero votes.

Commissioner Hover moved to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Fort seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Jacquelyn Wallace statement: “Last month’s notes state that the out-of-basin legislative proposal supported by Rep. Goehner failed due to Trout Unlimited and the Yakama Nation, and suggested TU was opposed to the bill because out of basin transfers leave water instream. This is not why TU had challenges with this bill, so I want to clarify our position. TU recognizes that the potential for water rights to be permanently

transferred off important agricultural lands in the Methow is a real problem, and a problem we need to solve.

However, TU had 3 primary challenges with the way this bill was proposing to solve the problem. First, we do not support the upstream transfer provision that was added to the bill. Second, we do not think that opening the water code is the way to solve the out of basin transfer problem, especially in this legislative session. If the water code needs to be changed, we need a lot more upfront discussion to fend off potential unintended consequences that could harm local water users. Third, we do not think a policy restriction on private property rights is the best way to solve the out of basin transfer problem.

TU thinks a local water bank with a public interest mission at its core is a strong solution to the out of basin transfer problem. We are working in partnership with WSAC, WPUA, and others to aggressively move forward a capital budget proviso in Olympia to provide financial resources to create local water banks in places like the Methow. We are eager to work with the Watershed Council and all interested parties to create and maintain a sustainable water future for the Methow Valley.”

#### **4. Report from the Chair**

Council Member Thrasher created a subcommittee to follow up with the strategic planning outcomes and to develop a work plan. Lane will send the outcome document from George to the whole Council and Foundation. Mayor Ing-Moody, Council Member Fort, Council Member Jumars, Council Member Thrasher and Lane will participate on the subcommittee and Council Member Thrasher will set up the first meeting.

Council Member Thrasher would like the Council to add short, relevant presentations from outside experts to the MWC agenda. Mayor Ing-Moody said the who, what and why would be important to know. Commissioner Hover thinks it's important to hear from outside experts and to know what others are working on. Mayor Ing-Moody would like presentations to not be positional but informational and Commissioner Hover agreed. Commissioner Hover suggested a running list of interested presenters be collected, and presenters can be chosen for relevance to Council agendas and timely topics.

#### **5. Ecology Report**

No Report

#### **6. MWF Report**

Council Member Knott reported that Craig McDonald will be the new Chair of the MWF.

Lane reported on the financial position and work on the 2021 budget. She also reported on work on current grants, looking for approval of the current direction of a grant application to the Moccasin Lake Foundation for MWC work on the Climate Action Plan through a climate subcommittee.

Council Member Fort made a motion that the MWC approve the MWF to pursue grant applications and report back monthly. Commissioner Hover seconded the motion. Commissioner Hover asked if the MWF is applying for grants and if it requires concurrence of the IG's, how will that work? Council Member Fort said that before a grant is submitted, it will be presented to the Council. Mayor Ing-Moody asked what the grants are for. Council Member Fort said the grants are not pre-determined, but grants will be reviewed by the Council. Lane clarified that grants would be guided by the parameters of Council mission and priorities. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **7. Initiating Government Reports**

**Town of Twisp-** Mayor Ing-Moody reported that the Twisp Town Council responded to the request from Ecology for consultation on the Crown Columbia application, as opposed to the application.

Mayor Ing-Moody also reported that she attended the Okanogan Council of Governments meeting, where Lorah Super presented on the Crown Columbia issues, and as a result, additional towns will be sending in letters to Ecology opposing the application.

Mayor Ing-Moody also reported that she had been in touch with Rep Chapman regarding Rep Goehner's bill 1358, and there's a potential for an "emergency pause" for water transfers. During the hearing on the bill, Rep Chapman strongly encouraged commenters to work together to get a bill that everyone can agree on.

Commissioner Hover commented that regarding sustainable agriculture, some constituents are using the sale of water rights as a source of funds to keep operations going.

#### **Town of Winthrop-**

Council Member Sarvis reported that the Winthrop Town Council passed a resolution supporting local water control, and sent a letter to Ecology opposing the Crown Columbia application.

Council Member Knott asked if the IGs have approved the MWC positions elected. Winthrop and Twisp have approved positions 1,2, and 4. Commissioner Hover said he'd check on the Commissioners' approval.

#### **Okanogan County-**

Commissioner Hover reported that the Board of Commissioners had also sent a letter to Ecology opposing the Crown Columbia application.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the revised comprehensive plan, and now will send it to the Commissioners. The county Commissioners will hold a public hearing as well, and will give two weeks' notice for that meeting.

### **8. Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Technical Review Committee, Chair – Fort**

Council Member Fort reported that meters are going in on budget and on time. Bill is working on a letter for additional funding support directed to Senator Hawkins.

Council Member Fort reviewed the addendum to the WRIA 49 watershed plan, and noted that it set consumed water use for SFD at 314 gpd, through a study by Aspect. Council Member Fort noted this was less than half of the number set for WRIA 48 by the same organization, and asked Commissioner Hover why the number was so much less. Commissioner Hover said he thought more properties were on irrigation in WRIA 49. Council Member Fort would like the tech committee to meet and discuss the number discrepancy. Commissioner Hover has asked Aspect for its assumptions for the numbers for WRIA 48, and will share this information with the Council.

Council Member Fort asked Commissioner Hover where the meters for new residential building request is at in process. Commissioner Hover said it has taken backburner to current issues.

#### **Outreach and Education Committee, Chair – Knott**

Lane reported on current newsletter outreach. Council Member Knott reported on the Community Foundation nonprofit conference coming up. Lane will attend sessions and members are encouraged to do so as well.

## 9. Resilient Methow – Lane

Lane reported that the Draft CAP is expected to be shared sometime around March 24. A three-week comment period will follow. Lane is continuing to stay involved with the implementation team. She will prepare a chart comparing MWC priorities to like actions addressed in the climate plan as part of a proposal for a Climate Actions subcommittee of the MWC.

## 10. Agenda Item 3.18-01: MWC Officer Elections

Mayor Ing-Moody was nominated for Chair by current Chair Thrasher. Thrasher was nominated for Chair by Council Member Fort; Thrasher declined. Mayor Ing-Moody said that her condition of accepting a nomination for Chair is Council Member Thrasher accepting a nomination for Vice Chair. Council Member Thrasher agreed and both accepted nominations for each position, respectively.

Commissioner Hover moved to elect Mayor Ing-Moody as Chair and Ashley Thrasher as Vice Chair of the MWC. Council Member Sarvis seconded the motion.

Council Member Ewing asked if there was any conflict for an IG to be the Chair. Council Member Thrasher said there is nothing in the bylaws. Council Member Ewing said he didn't have any concern about it. Mayor Ing-Moody said her objective will be to move the work of the Council forward with some energy.

Members voted and motion was approved unanimously with Mayor Ing-Moody abstaining.

## 11. Agenda Item 3.18-02: CRM Discussion

Council Member Jumars wanted to know about the background for why there would be a CRM process. Who has been asking for what, in terms of water needs, to drive this process? Council Member Ewing asked for an itemization of current barriers needing to be addressed; why is the Council considering participating in this process?

Council Member Knott defined CRM as a tool developed by the NRCS to bring together diverse stakeholders in a process to deal with any natural resource issue. CRM was adopted by Ecology as a preferred tool for water issues. The Council decided a year ago to be involve with a CRM process, however the work to get it stated has been in hiatus due to Covid, and the need for groups to start to define issues, as well as funding. Questions to start the process: What is the scope? Who is at the table?

Council Member Ewing asked if the process would help figure out issues with the 14 cfs reserve. Council Member Knott asked what outcomes the Council would want to see- would it be policy recommendations? Rule change? Council Member Ewing said he'd like to see the water conflict defined. Council Member Knott said he didn't think the was Council's role.

Council Member Jumars said that defining the problem that MWC would like to discuss, recognizing that that won't be the only view in the community.

Council Member Fort asked who needs to participate, noting that participation of Tribes is desired. Commissioner Hover noted the list he shared from the WRIA 49 process, and that the Colville Confederated Tribes, while they declined a role on the committee, did participate in technical aspects and provided feedback.

Members discussed the budget proviso sponsored by Rep. Goehner, which is still moving forward. Council Member Knott asked if the Council should send a letter of support. Mayor Ing-Moody said that would be helpful to send in a week or two. Commissioner Hover noted that if approved, the funds would go to Ecology who would contact with the County or which ever entity manages the CRM. Mayor Ing-Moody noted funds could come through the MWF. Commissioner Hover said the funds could come through the County, and the County could start with developing scope, but he is not opposed to the MWC leading scoping either.

Council Member Knott said the Council should motion to have a letter of support come from the Council, and reminded members that individuals can send letters as well. A sample letter was sent out a couple of weeks ago.

Mayor Ing-Moody said that the MWC providing oversight of a CRM process should not affect the outcome. Commissioner Hover said he sees it as an agnostic process. The County has issues with land use decisions because of water. Towns are dealing with not having enough water event though people want growth in towns, and current UGA's are defined and also require water. Commissioner Hover asked if densities in rural areas will need to change? Is instream flow sufficient? Do protections need to be put in place? Commissioner Hover is not attached to County leading the process, and just wants it to be effective.

Council Member Knott said that optics of the County running the process might create limitations. He also noted the MWC has more combined expertise on water issues than any other group in the valley. Commissioner Hover said that the Conservation District was contracted for WRIA 49 and is a possible convener. Council Member Jumars would like the MWC to provide direction. Commissioner Hover said leadership should be a stakeholder decision. Council Member Sarvis asked which County department would lead, should the County take the lead. Commissioner Hover said it would be the planning department. Council Member Fort said the focus should be on obtaining the funds first.

Council Member Knott made a motion that the Council give Mayor Ing-Moody permission to send a letter supporting the budget proviso on behalf of the MWC.

## **12. Agenda items for next meeting**

Items discussed during the meeting were continuing discussion on the CRM and the problems it would address.

## **13. Public Comment**

No comments were made.

## **14. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 P.M.

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Mayor Ing-Moody, Council Chair

Approved at the April 15, 2021 Council meeting.