

Minutes of:
Lesser Slave Watershed Council

April 18, 2013
Kinuso Seniors Center, Kinuso, AB

Present at meeting:

Name:

Meghan Payne
Lindsie Fairfield
Guy L'Heureux
Sherrie Hay
Monica Dahl
Bonnie Raho
Wilfred Willier
Todd Bailey
Gary Couch
Lynn Sandquist
Brian Rosche

Stakeholder Group Represented:

Executive Director
Watershed coordinator
MD of Big Lakes - Chairman
Tourism
ESRD
ENGO - REAC
Town of High Prairie
Forestry Alternate
Member at large
Agriculture
MD of Lesser Slave River

Regrets:

Brian and Nona Elliot
Tammy Kalita
Murray DeAlexandra
Jeff Cummins
Mary Okonum
Rob Irwin
Gordon Sanders
Myles Brown
Carl Chykerda

Cottage owners
Fishing Tournaments and Recreation
Chairman
MD of Lesser Slave River
MSGC
Town of Slave Lake
Forestry
ESRD
Oil and Gas

Board Vacancies:

First Nations
Federal Government

Meeting called to order by Guy L'Heureux 6:05

1. Adoption of February 21, 2013 Minutes

WC12-23 - Couch/Hay - Motion to adopt February 21, 2013 Minutes as presented

CARRIED

2. Adoption of April 18, 2013 Agenda

WC12-24 - Willier/Couch - Motion to accept the April 18, 2013 agenda

CARRIED

3. Approval of Strategic Plan 2013-15

- Strategic and Operational plan approval was tabled at the February 21, 2013 meeting for approval at the next board meeting.
- Copies of this document were emailed to the LSWC board prior to the meeting
- Meghan rewrote the LSWC strategic plan to better fit the work and goals of the LSWC. The original document was not well organized and was in need of updating. This document will be updated on an annual basis before our year end.

Discussion:

- The strategic plan was reviewed as a group section by section. In review of Goal 1, L'Heureux questioned whether the strategy outlined in 1.6, the alignment of IWMP recommendations with GOA regional planning initiatives such as the Land Use Framework was a realistic or optimistic objective. Determined that as a planning group, association with such government policy may be difficult but is important.
- In discussion of the second strategic goal, the introduction of an interactive GIS platform for IWMP (similar to SEAWA) was specifically identified. However, technical and data fulfillment are limited at this point and need to be improved upon to reach this objective.
- In discussion of Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan, members raised concerns over limited support of ESRD for watershed groups to participate in school activities using GoA funding, which has been an issue with other WPAC involvements. The LSWC plans on continuing to partner with other groups like the LSFES and use grant funds for education associated ventures to avoid these issues.

WC12-25 - L'Heureux/Hay - Motion to adopt the 2013-25 LSWC Strategic plan document.

CARRIED

4. Approval of LSWC 2013-14 business plan & budget

- The format of this year's operational business plan has changed to follow the new strategic plan.
- 2013-14 Operational plan approval was tabled at the February 21, 2013 meeting for approval at the next board meeting. Copies were provided in February and prior to the April 18th meeting.

Discussion:

- The format of the document priority scheme was verified as ranking from highest, 1, to lowest priority for current year, 3. Dahl suggested additional prioritization not only in terms of feasibility but out of necessity or need for the objective. This would likely require a technical planning meeting including risk analysis to determine the priorities. However, it was deemed that the time required for such a meeting and the availability of members for participation made hosting such a meeting unfeasible. Hay also brought to attention that an outline of the criteria for classifying the rankings would reduce confusion or uncertainty in rankings between members.

- Goal 1 Discussion:

To improve collaborative watershed planning it has been identified that greater First Nation representation and participation is necessary. LSWC will be attending First Nations Council meetings asking for participation on Watershed Management Planning, and see if they have an individual representative available/willing to participate. Hay brought up example of 70 First Nations groups on the Yukon river working together, and that with fewer groups in the Lesser Slave watershed, cooperation between groups should be feasible. Payne requested support from board members and to potentially attend First Nation Council meetings.

- Goal 2 Discussion:

Discussion arose in regards to creation of a section 2.1.7; Rosche advocated for addition of waste water treatment facilities to improve water quality in watershed communities, as opposed to the lagoon. He encouraged that the LSWC advocate to ESRD to finance and support waste water facilities, not the local governments such as the MDs. Couch disputed that costs/benefit analysis and data supporting the superiority of waste water treatment plants in the area as opposed to the lagoon is needed prior to inclusion in the LSWC operational plans. Dahl supported that more documentation such as results obtained from the Lesser Slave nutrient budget is needed prior to adopting this suggestion. In addition, with the current GoA restricted budget, more documentation and identification of problems prior to communicating problem would be needed before advocating to the provincial government. In reference to section 2.3.3 of the Operational Plan, the creation of a wetland inventory for the watershed requires ACA support to help with associated costs of the technology.

- Goal 4 Discussion:

Section 4.2.3, an annual board retreat which is common with other WPAC groups was deemed unnecessary by members present due to time constraints of members. Section removed from list as not a priority for the council.

- Outreach budget - Rosche suggested the LSWC take part in River Boat days in SL in July as advertised in the Lakeside Leader.
- Watershed signage as an Alberta-wide WPAC collaborative project and government approved initiative to raise awareness of watersheds in the province.

WC12-26 - L'Heureux/Couch - Motion to adopt the 2013-14 Operational plan and budget

CARRIED

5. Discussion items

a) LSWC IWMP Project

- Waiting to hear from ESRD on how much of the \$150,000 request will be approved. Once we know we will meet with technical team members to discuss what work we can accomplish this year (May to March 2014)

IWMP stakeholder workshop

- cost estimate 10,000
 - ESRD may fund, applied for AB Ecotrust grant of \$7500

- IWMP terms of reference
 - handout Visioning project to those who wanted, electronically sent, and available for review

b) CWRA/WPAC conference update

- Meghan, Wilfred, Mary, Monica and Lindsay were in attendance from the LSWC.
- Conference was well attended and both the WPAC's and the CWRA were happy with the event and will consider working together in the future.
- Conference presentations are available for download at <http://www.cwra-ab-events.org/conference/program>

c) Slave Lake Water Conversations & LSWC letter

- Letter was sent out in March but before sending to ESRD the board needs to go over and approve. Copies of the letter were emailed in March and prior to the April 18 meeting.

Discussion:

- Strong interest in Stakeholder discussions on fracking and the general public unawareness of its impacts. Sandquist wants improved understanding of fracking, company dishonesty about the processes, i.e. drill 2000 m total, but deceive by drilling down and horizontally. In reference to last board meetings discussion at the water

conversations included why effluent water as opposed to fresh water is not used in the process. Company representatives stated that too high concentrations of TDS in waste water made it unusable in the fracking. Hay added that the high cost of trucking water to gas well is greater than using nearby fresh water sources, and that higher grades of water are required for fracking.

Couch addressed that local fracking in Swan Hills is using drinking water and that the company is researching if it can use lagoon water in the process.

Todd's feedback from the Stakeholder Water Conversations was that the Alberta water allocation user graphs was surprising, with the biggest user irrigation users in southern Alberta. All in attendance found the meetings to be engaging and well facilitated, with good input. However, concerns exist with problems associated with implementation of the feedback

General disappointment over lack of public advertising. Dahl stated that the Athabasca radio promoted the event, but advertising was lacking in other watershed communities.

General consensus from emails that the conflicts arising from the letter was not in disagreement with the letter, but with comments made in regards to the emails about the letter from different board members.

WC12-27 - Hay/Willier - Motion to approve the Water Conversation letter

CARRIED

d) Canada Water Week

- Facebook contest was a success and we had a lot of participation. Marilyn Delorme won the mini iPad.
- Poster contest only had 5 participants. 2 first place Bikes were given out, 2 second place iPods and a 3rd place iTunes card.
- Next year we will involve local schools farther ahead of time and get youth engaged through school.
- Spent \$1100 total and it was all covered by sponsor money.

e) High Prairie Gun Show- April 19-21 & Slave Lake Trade Show - May 3-4.

- Meghan passed out the signup sheet for the LSWC board to schedule a time to come help out at each event.

f) Summer schedule of events

- Lake days - start at Jousard June, help from L'Heureux. June 15 Lake day at Faust by the dock, help from Raho. July - potential locations include SPP, SL for River Boat days
- ATCO day in May 15

- May 22 - Gardening night with presented Christie Pollack, funds from PennWest grant, partnered with MD of Big Lakes, Native plant species vs invasive, hands on alternative to community meetings
- RBC Blue Water Day - June 14, BBQ
- Canoe Trip - August 17
- LSFES Trips - May and June, committed to field trip days
- ESRD WPAC Forum - Week of June 17
- LSWC AGM - June 20 hosted in High Prairie, Jay White from Aquality to speak about Riparian Matrix modeling, which has been a defensible model in court. Used by County of LLB. Dahl/Hay supports Jay as presenter. All LSWC members invited to attend.
- Review of monthly calendar and email calendar of events to board members monthly

6. Treasurers Report

a) 2013 Funding requests

- Operational grant amendment was signed for \$50,000 in February after the meeting with the minister but as of April 18, 2013 we have not received that check.
- Project requests were sent in February 4, 2013 and we have not heard anything on what will be funded or not.
- TDFEF - apply for funds in July to cover costs of shoreline restoration project
- AB Ecotrust - Apply for \$7500 by April 22, 2013 for a community grant to cover costs of IWMP workshop.
- General board concern over Town of HP consistency and timing of invoicing.

b) Financial review for 2012

- Meghan has talked to David Bliss about doing our financial review. Doyle and Co. out of Edmonton have been giving us a really good price and David doesn't think he can give us a better deal but is available if we would like.
- Meghan recommends we stick with Doyle and Co. for this year.
- Hay recommends checking with Bobby's Service Accountant in SL, which maintains the direction of employing a local for financial review.

c) Request for commitment of support to local government

- Meghan has sent letters to the 2 towns and 2 MD's in our watershed requesting a 5 year commitment of \$5000 a year from each of them, total \$20,000.
 - Copies of letter are available via email.

L'Heureux recommends extending letter requesting funding from First Nations as local governments in the watershed. Statement supported by Willier, Hay, and Rosche as means of being inclusive to all groups within the watershed. Number of letters increases to 11 administered in total, with a total request of \$55,000 with adjustment. Dahl advocated that the use of funding be clearly described in the letter and that adjustments made in addressing aboriginal groups be made to include sustainable water usage for all peoples within the watershed.

WC12-28 - Willier/Sandquist - Motion to forward fund request letter to all local government groups inclusively including First Nations and settlement groups

CARRIED

WC12-29 - L'Heureux/Raho - Motion to accept the Jan 15 - March 15 treasurers report.

CARRIED

7. Round Table & Meeting Adjournment

Discussion

- Board members encouraged to assist in activities listed in Calendar and discussed in the meeting

Next Meeting Date: **May 16, 2013**