

Minutes of the Red Deer River Municipal User Group Regular Meeting held on February 19, 2015 at 1:00 PM, Badlands Community Facility, Drumheller, Alberta

1.0 Call to Order – Co-Chair Jean Bota called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Attendance: Co-Chair Patt Churchill – Town of Innisfail, Co-Chair Jean Bota – Red Deer County, Jerry Wittstock – Kneehill County, Gordon Christensen - Village of Alix, Ray Reckseidler – Village of Delburne, Les Stulberg – County of Stettler, Richard Poole – Town of Blackfalds, Susan Grudecki – M.D. of Acadia, , Mark Garneau – Town of Trochu, Murray Marshall – Starland County, Anne Marie Philipsen – County of Newell, Myron Thompson – Town of Sundre, Gerald Campion, Town of Hanna, Thomas Tracy – Town of Oyen, Harvey Walsh – Town of Olds, Dianne Wyntjes – City of Red Deer, John Vandermeer – Clearwater County, Bill Shaw, City of Red Deer, Rocky Dahmer, County of Paintearth, Keith Ryder – RDRMUG, Recording Secretary – Linda Handy.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

Presentation moved to later in the meeting.

MOTION Campion moved that the agenda for the February 19, 2015 Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting be adopted as amended. Carried unanimously.

3.0 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Confirmation of minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 4, 2014

Omission – Bill Shaw attended

MOTION Stulberg moved that the Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting minutes of December 4, 2104 be adopted as amended. Carried unanimously.

3.2 Business arising from minutes of December 4, 2014

4.0 Financial Reports to October 31, 2014

4.1 Balance Statement

4.2 Revenue and Expense

4.3 Accounting Notes

4.4 2015 Budget Update (with 2014 actual)

K. Ryder, Executive Director provided an overview of the unaudited financial statements to December 31, 2014 as follows:

Balance Statement: Closing Surplus – \$144,013.60 (large surplus is to due to dollars not being expensed for special projects as of yet – Hart Management)

Statement of Revenue and Expenses – Revenue - \$65,394.95; Expenses - \$61,347.98; Surplus for 2014 - \$4,046.97.

As per a prior motion on the books, every 3rd year requires a professional audit.

RDRMUG will be using the Town of Drumheller's 2014 auditors.

K. Ryder provided an overview of the financial statements to January 31, 2015 as follows: Statement of Revenue and Expenses – Revenue - \$5,477.53; Expenses - \$393.86. Invoices have been mailed out at the 2015 budget approved per capita amount of \$0.25. **MOTION** Tracy moved to accept the Financial Report to January 31, 2015 as presented. Carried unanimously.

5.0 Review Action Plan

5.1 Lead Project Coordinator Position

P. Churchill advised that the employment opportunity was circulated to *several* universities, *watersheds*, and *Canadian Water Resources Association* and six applications received. She advised that the Executive has narrowed it down to two applicants who are familiar with the Red Deer River and who will be interviewed as soon as can be arranged. There are dollars within the budget for the wage commitment up to one year. She further advised that K. Ryder will act as a conduit from the between the contract position and MUG's. The Executive will meet to prepare the deliverables and will do periodic reviews to ensure the candidate is on track with the group's expectations. Office space has not been firmed up as of yet. The title of the project is RDRMUG Water Quality Protection Plan with the project goal to improve the quality of the water in the Red Deer River. The work will be carried out in collaboration with the Water Shed Alliance - looking at *municipal* gaps that need to be filled which will assist RDRWA and efforts will be synergized.

K. Ryder reviewed the draft deliverables as follows:

- support for future water storage opportunities and the consideration of a new dam site as recommended in the Stantec Report;
- gather information from the Alberta WaterSMART Report on what MUG's is trying to accomplish for water quality (maintaining water quality in the Red Deer River system is an integral part of the RDRMUG strategic goal to secure sufficient water to support sustainable communities. This strategic desire lines up with the Water for Life Strategy, the Alberta Water Council, Watershed Alliance and RDRMUG Water Assurance Study); and prepare data on water storage.

Discussion held on Stantec's Report which references "*Site S1C on the Red Deer River near Vam Creek - Stantec considered this site to be the most desirable*". This site is significantly being damaged and might not be the most desirable. M. Thompson stated "*This site is above Sundre. 250,000 downstream users would suffer in terms of quality if Sundre is lost to industry*".

It was agreed that the successful candidate will do an introductory outreach to all member municipalities via a visit with the CAOs / Administrators.

5.2 Update Hart Management Report

K. Ryder stated that the Water Assurance Study was prepared in 2008 and has not been updated since that time. He further stated that last year MUG hired Hart Management (co-author of the study) to do an update with a focus on the Stantec Report (flood mitigation with numerous recommendations). He further stated that Hart Management will provide updates to address Stantec's recommendations such as:

- dry ponds are commonly used for managing storm water runoff;
- off stream storage;
- operating rules of Dickson Dam, i.e. is winter minimal release of 16 m³/s sufficient to maintain favorable water quality conditions?

Most important to MUG's is Hart Management's meeting with Alberta Environment (Todd Aasen). The Red Deer River is the only river basin with allocations left – estimated 3000 licenses with allocation of 350,000 dam³. The total allocation of 600,000 dam³ is the total allotment for the river. Once a total allocation of 550,000 dam³ is reached, the remaining 50,000 dam³ allocation would be reviewed for priority. The RDRMUG is asking for the remaining allotment for future municipality use and growth which is allowed under the Water Act. This is the primary reason why MUG was formed because there are allocations remaining. MUG also agrees that inter-basin transfers of water is acceptable if for domestic use.

An action for follow up - there are discrepancies in licensing either due to misfiles / duplications that needs to be addressed in the amount of 41,280 dam³.

Concern that needs to be addressed from the Stantec Report – *“With respect to municipal water supply servicing, the report recommends emphasis on regional system. Michael speculated that a Crown Reservation is probably not off the table, but the Government may not act on the issue until the concept of regional systems and funding is further explored”*. The Red Deer River basin is leading the basins in cooperation efforts.

Hart will recommend follow up on Stantec's action items as follows:

1. *“Todd Aasen will ascertain what water demand values were considered in the modeling for the SSRB Plan.*
2. *The allocation database compiled by Hart from the License Viewer was provided to Aasen for verification and a final current total. Todd Aasen will advise Hart of allocations.*
3. *Clarification of the implementation for the WCO will be sought. Todd Aasen to inform Hart when a decision has been made.*
4. *The Water Act assignment provision requires interpretation as to whether or not it is the appropriate tool to use for water sharing. AESRD will follow up on this. Todd Aasen to keep Hart informed’*. As Bill Shaw has previously discussed with the MUG, there is some sort of formality regarding water sharing but we need to follow up on these plan? Where are they? As of May 1, 2005 licensees are subject to a water conservation objectives (WCO) – when does it become effective for a junior license – follow up with an answer.

In response to a question, K. Ryder advised that the priority list as developed by the group in September, 2014 will become part of the MUG's Action Plan for 2015. It will be prioritized and brought back to the group for approval.

6.0 Executive Committee Recommendations

7.0 Executive Director Report and Admin Items

K. Ryder advised that he has been working on the Project Lead Coordinator job description and deliverables. He highlighted upcoming conferences as follows: Watershed Conference in Trochu on March 26th and the Canadian Water Resources Association Conference in Red Deer from April 19th – 21st. He announced that World Water Day is March 22nd.

8.0 Agenda Additions

9.0 Municipal Project Review: *An opportunity for all representatives to share their current and future water/waste water projects.*

10.0 Correspondence:

1) *Handouts at the meeting*

11.0 PRESENTATION

“Our Water Our Future

Kim McLeod, Manager, Water Policy Branch, AERSD provided an overview of the Water Conservation Action Plan. She advised that water conversations were held with public stakeholders, First Nations and Metis organizations in 2013 for identifying priority water issues guided by Alberta's Water for Life strategy and its three main goals: safe, secure drinking water; healthy aquatic ecosystems; and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy. Main topics developed from the conversations include: water policy, water conservation and monitoring data. Two documents have been released based on the conversations: Our Water, Our Future - Summary of Discussions (concerns of Albertans as expressed verbally or written) and Our Water, Our Future – A Plan for Action with twenty (20) short term actions and five (5) long term actions.

She further advised that the Alberta Water Nexus identified the need for water for sustainable growth (people), agriculture energy (food); and energy development (oil and gas) based on increasing pressures, risk and water ethic. She provided an overview of the Integrated Resource Management System which attempts to achieve responsible resource stewardship (considering the social, economic and environment) impacts and how to balance each. For example – Are water priorities aligned with social responsibility? For each of us that answer is different – for First Nations it means being close to their natural land and for others it may be fishing.

She advised that the water conservation list includes the following actions:

CEP Conservation Efficiency Plan (completed)

Reporting (completed)

Water Allocation

Storage

Economic Tools

Wetlands (completed)

Etc.

With a Blueprint Plan that includes:

Healthy Lakes

Hydraulic Fracturing

Drinking Water and Wastewater – (MUG's request is that licenses should be based on returns – not just based on allocations)

Water Management

In conclusion, K. McLeod explained that managing our water for the future includes:

Direction → thinking for the next 50 years; and

How → doing for the next 50 years.

Because the Province is growing (anticipated that in 2050 65% of Canadians will live in the western Provinces), this places new and changing demands on water supplies.

Albertans need to prepare for this and consider enhancements that might be required to our water management system. She explained that Alberta Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Agency (AEMERA) is an arm's length organization responsible for collecting credible scientific data and other relevant information and providing public access to this data and information.

12.0 Next Scheduled Meeting Date: Thursday, March 19, 2015.

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION T. Tracy moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 PM. Carried unanimously.