

ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #17

September 18, 2007

Edmonton, Alberta

Executive Summary

Council approved in principle the Stakeholder Support Policy, with minor revisions that reflect the general direction provided at this meeting. The policy will be in place to coincide with the transition to the not-for-profit organization. Members also agreed that the next Review Report on Implementation Progress of the *Water for Life* Strategy will be targeted for spring 2009. This will give the Reporting Team time to revise the process for compiling the report, and will also ensure sufficient time for the results and new direction of the Renewal to be put in place.

Activities associated with the transition to a not-for-profit organization are on track and the inaugural meeting will occur as planned in November.

Council approved in principle the draft Annotated Table of Contents for Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning, and also approved the use of the draft table of contents to pilot the development of sector plans by the irrigation and municipal sectors. The project team was asked to consider having the two sector pilot projects pay particular attention to the South Saskatchewan River Basin and, more specifically, the Bow River Basin.

The Water Strategy Renewal Team presented a draft report on the input received during the consultations. A total of 245 submissions were received, including seven position papers. Information in the "What We Heard" report has not been filtered and reflects the views and opinions of those who responded. Council members authorized the Steering Committee to approve the report and post it on the Council website, noting that participants in the process should be informed that the report is available. The team will further refine its preliminary recommendations and develop strategic actions to support the recommendations. This material will be the focus of discussion at the October Council workshop.

Council approved the visual identity as presented by the Communications Committee; this will be incorporated into the materials now being developed for the new organization. Approval of the final report from the Water Policy Issues and Gaps team was deferred to the November meeting.

Members heard a detailed multi-stakeholder presentation on water issues related to development in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area, and engaged in a brief discussion with the panel of presenters.

The Council received the resignation of David Hill, who is taking up a new position in October. David was acknowledged for his commitment and many contributions to the Council. Industry stakeholders named Mike Kelly as their new representative on the Council executive.

Summary of Discussion

Bill Berzins convened the meeting at 9:15 am. Bev Yee conveyed regrets from Peter Watson. On behalf of Council, the chair congratulated Kim Sturgess who was named a Calgary Woman of Vision in August, in part for her work on water.

1 Administration

1.1 Review of Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus, as circulated.

1.2 Approval of Summary Report from June 14, 2007 Meeting

The summary report was adopted by consensus and will be posted on the Council website.

1.3 Action Items from June 14, 2007 Meeting

Terry Sly reviewed the action items from the last meeting, as distributed in the briefing package. All items have been completed or are in progress. For item 16.2, the executive received no further questions regarding the transition. Terry advised Council that the workshop on renewal will be held in the morning of October 17 at the Royal Executive Inn in Leduc. The format is being drafted and will take into account the discussions at today's meeting.

1.4 Executive Committee Report

Council members were directed to the minutes from the July 19, 2007 Executive Committee meeting. Two items from that meeting are being recommended for Council approval: a draft stakeholder support policy and timelines for the third review report.

1.4.1 Stakeholder Support Policy

A draft stakeholder support policy was developed to reflect the unique nature of the Council and to ensure that all stakeholders can participate. The draft is based on CASA's policy, which has been in place for a number of years. Twice a year the executive director's report to the board will include a list of individuals and groups that have received stakeholder support in the form of an honorarium and/or expenses in the previous six months. The aim is to have the Council's policy in place when the transition occurs, with the executive director authorized to oversee its implementation.

Members made the following comments in discussing the draft policy:

- Council needs a policy like this and should adopt it.
- There should not be a limit to the number of members of a team that will receive stakeholder support.
- Rather than expecting the executive director to decide who gets support, the Council could simply say everybody is eligible, but it will be clear to the board who is getting support when the names are published. The process is more self-regulating in this way.

Council members agreed with the overall intent of the policy and asked the Secretariat to revise and bring it forward at the next meeting.

Action 17.1: The secretariat will make adjustments to the draft stakeholder support policy based on Council's discussion and ensure it is on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

1.4.2 Timeline for Next Review Report

Council would normally prepare another review report on implementation progress of the *Water for Life* strategy for release in spring 2008. However, given the work underway to renew the strategy and the time required for the Government to respond to Council's recommendations, it is proposed that the next review be published in the fall of 2008. The Reporting Team had also identified the need for a revised process for doing the review report, and this timeline will give the Reporting Team time to propose a process that better meets Council's needs.

The renewal work and the review report are separate activities. However, what comes out of the renewal work could affect the new process for doing the review report, and the Reporting Team will take this into account. It was suggested by Government members that Council wait until spring 2009 to release the next review report to ensure enough time for the results and new direction of the renewal to be put in place. Although the renewal will help maintain Council's profile, a challenge will be to keep the Council in the public eye through 2008 in the absence of a review report. The Reporting Team will begin discussion of a revised process for the review report after the results of the renewal are known.

Decision 17.1: Council agreed to direct the Reporting Project Team to:

- 1. Develop a timeline for producing the third review report, with the intent of releasing it in spring 2009, and*
- 2. Propose a revised process for preparing the next review report, taking into account the outcomes of the strategy renewal.*

2 Review and Update on Transition Activities

Terry Sly presented a brief update on the status of transition activities. Work is progressing in every area and the Council is on track for its inaugural meeting in November. In response to a question about the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Alberta, Terry advised that the MOU is going forward as discussed and approved by Council; the final step is for ministers or deputy ministers to sign it but the decision by Government as to who signs has not yet been finalized.

3 Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plan Project Team

David Hill reviewed the work of the Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (CEP) Sector Plan Project Team. He presented the draft annotated table of contents (TOC) for sector plans for the Council's consideration, along with the plan for two pilots of the draft TOC. He noted that the team has had extensive discussion about a range of issues related to the sector plans, one of which is whether voluntary plans will be enough and what policy tools may be needed to motivate sectors to do CEP planning. The team believes it can address the remaining challenges and would like to get the pilot projects underway while it continues to work on the outstanding concerns. The team has some funds available to support these sectors in developing their pilots.

The environmental sector had previously indicated specific concerns, and shared these with the Council. Although much good work has gone into this project, the environmental sector is of the view that some fundamental questions have not been resolved. The key question is whether a

regulatory and policy framework will be developed to back up the outcomes, actions and overall strategy. Conservation is one of the few areas where *Water for Life* has a measurable outcome, and all sectors are expected to prepare plans that demonstrate the use of Best Management Practices to improve efficiency and productivity. The environmental sector indicated some sectors will take this responsibility seriously and will adopt good plans, but this is unlikely to happen across the board. There is concern that a collaborative model will not work in all situations and it will be up to the provincial government to show leadership to ensure that conservation targets are met and that plans are developed. There is also a need to link conservation to the health of aquatic ecosystems.

Members made the following comments during discussion of this item:

- A key concern for some sectors is the lack of an incentive to do the best possible job to improve conservation, efficiency and productivity. Assurance is needed that if a sector does a good plan, the water it conserves will not be taken away. The pilots may help to identify possible incentives and broader economic mechanisms.
- This kind of planning is easier for some sectors than others. The team may want to consider how to compel individual licensees to do better planning with the diversions they have – indicate how much water they have, how they use it and how they will improve this use. It is also important to look at potential barriers to sector engagement.
- The pilots are a good start. They will improve understanding and lead to a more informed discussion.
- The connection between watershed plans and sector plans is very important, since watersheds vary across the province. Watershed plans drive sectors to work together and identify best management practices. Some sectors have very diverse operations and doing a plan for an entire sector may not be practical.
 - The team has discussed this, but watershed plans are not part of its terms of reference.
- Could the team look at integrating watershed planning into the pilot, particularly for the irrigation sector since it is based largely in southern Alberta? Perhaps the pilots could include an outcome that addresses watershed health and planning as part of the sector plan.
- Sector plans and watershed plans have to inform each other. For example, if there is a watershed goal that cannot be reached through cooperation by all sectors, the goal might be unrealistic. Effective sector plans will document tradeoffs and identify best management practices, which can then be applied to a watershed plan. Both must fit together to make either one work.
- Industry is driven by security of supply, and the Government of Alberta needs to decide who will get the benefits of conservation.
- An underlying principle is that licensees do not own the water. A licence is not a property right, it is a right to use the water for a specific purpose. If that is being done wisely, there is also a regulatory role about what to do with the water that is conserved. We need incentives to conserve, but we also need to determine what to do with what is saved.
- A management framework that sets thresholds for withdrawals will meet the needs of both sector and watershed plans.
- The team may want to look at other models and approaches. The voluntary approach doesn't always work and we should see what has been done elsewhere to achieve the desired outcomes.
 - The Shared Governance team is looking at this as part of its work on watershed management plans. Many members of the CEP team are familiar with the literature, and could consider some work in this area.

- The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association agreed to do a pilot on condition that the Government of Alberta work to ensure there is policy support and consistency across the province for municipalities; e.g., it would be more efficient and effective to have things like the use of low-flush toilets addressed through the building code rather than expect each municipality to pass a bylaw.
- The chemical and forestry sectors should be strongly encouraged to join this project team as soon as possible.

Decision 17.2: The Council:

1. *Approved in principle the draft Annotated Table of Contents for CEP Sector Planning, and*
2. *Approved the use of the draft table of contents to pilot the development of sector plans by the irrigation and municipal sectors.*

The team noted that, in line with its terms of reference, it is continuing work to outline and evaluate tools to address issues of sector participation and accountability; this will include examining voluntary, policy and regulatory tools.

Council asked the CEP Sector Plan Project Team to consider having the two sectors doing the pilots pay particular attention to the South Saskatchewan River Basin (SSRB) and, more specifically, the Bow River Basin. The team agreed to discuss this request. It was acknowledged that while the irrigation sector was likely in a good position to focus on the SSRB, the municipal sector may wish to focus at the provincial level and should have the flexibility to do so if they choose.

Action 17.2: The CEP Sector Plan Project Team will discuss asking the sector plan pilot projects to pay particular attention to the South Saskatchewan River Basin and, more specifically, the Bow River Basin, and report back to Council on the outcome.

4 Water Strategy Renewal Project Team

Scott Millar and Jamie Wuite presented the draft “What We Heard” report on the renewal consultations. A total of 245 submissions were received, including seven position papers. They also shared very preliminary draft recommendations, which will be further refined and discussed at the Council workshop on October 17. The team is confident that the report accurately reflects the responses it received, noting that some responses may not be factually correct. The way the consultation was designed makes it a little more difficult to do detailed quantitative analysis.

Council members provided the following comments and feedback on the “What We Heard” report:

- The report needs to make clear who is responding – it was the public, not the Council.
- The context section should stress that the information in the report has not been filtered and is the views and opinions of respondents. It should also contain a caveat that it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council and that a final report and recommendations from the Council is being prepared.
- It was suggested that the term “key findings” be replaced with something like “themes” so as not to imply definitive resolution of the issues.

Council members agreed that the “What We Heard” report should be released in a timely manner before the final report and recommendations have been developed. Releasing the “What We Heard” report could result in additional feedback from the public; such comments along

with any further sector feedback can be considered at the October workshop. Respondents should be advised that the report is available, which will close the loop with those who participated.

Decision 17.3: The Council authorized the Renewal Steering Committee to:

- 1. Approve the “Renewal: What We Heard” report, and*
- 2. Post the report on the Council website following its approval.*

Scott and Jamie also presented the preliminary draft recommendations, noting that the team will meet to refine the recommendations before the workshop and develop some strategic actions to support the recommendations. They also want to find a way to re-energize the strategy as part of the renewal process.

Council members provided the following comments on the preliminary draft recommendations:

- Many of the directions proposed by Council in its last review report have been supported in this process.
- We need to ensure that the recommendations are inspired, focus on the key issues, and instill a desire to work together to achieve a stronger and clearer vision.

Council was advised that the October 17 workshop will be open to new directors and alternates to ensure that they are fully informed before the report and recommendations are discussed at the November Council meeting.

Action 17.3: Terry Sly will invite to the October 17th workshop all new directors and alternates who have been identified through the membership process. For planning purposes, the cut-off date for identifying new directors and alternates will be October 3rd.

5 Oil Sands Development Presentation and Panel Discussion

In response to a need for greater Council awareness of oil sands developments and their impact on water, a multi-stakeholder panel presentation was arranged. Judy Smith, Pat Marriott, and Mary Griffiths presented a broad overview on water issues related to development in the Athabasca oil sands. In addition to their presentation, they also developed and made available to Council a background package. Council members engaged in a brief discussion with the presenters and with each other. The committee that developed the presentation acknowledged the importance of Aboriginal engagement and perspective, but was unable to arrange for an Aboriginal panel member.

Action 17.4: The secretariat will circulate an electronic copy of the oil sands presentation to Council members.

Members agreed that for now, there is no specific action required by the Council on this issue. The Wetlands Policy will address issues related to wetlands in the oil sands area, and it is expected that a WPAC will be in place for the Athabasca River by 2009. The Council's mandate is to undertake foundational work on provincial water issues, and it does not normally become engaged in issues that are specific to a resource, sector or region. Members expect that such specific issues will be considered, as appropriate, by project teams.

6 Water Policy Issues and Gaps Project Team

Susanne Forbrich provided a brief overview of the report from the Water Policy Issues and Gaps team. The team presented its results at the June meeting, and Council provided additional guidance that has been incorporated into the final report. The team asked that the final report be approved and the team disbanded.

The final report was circulated less than a week prior to the Council meeting so many members had not had time to adequately review it. This item will be on the agenda for the November Council meeting. The report has been provided to the Business Planning team and will assist them in developing the 2008 operational plan.

Action 17.5: All Council members will read the final report of the Policy Issues and Gaps Project Team and be prepared to discuss and approve it at the November 2007 meeting.

7 Communications Committee

Jay White, Val Mellesmoen, and Wei Yew presented the context for the visual identity and communications materials and explained the symbolism of the proposed visual identity. With Council approval, the visual identity will be applied to the new materials being developed, including the website. Council members provided positive feedback on the proposed visual identity and commended the Communications Committee for its work.

Decision 17.4: Council approved the visual identify as presented.

8 Status Reports

Members were directed to the status reports provided in the briefing book. Jonathan Thompson provided a brief oral update, noting that all input from the Wetland Policy consultations will be rolled up by the consultant, who will generally take a qualitative approach to the analysis.

Jay White noted that the group felt that to deliver a useful product to the Council, they need full participation from members to undertake a baseline assessment of water resource information in the province. The group would like direction from the Council on moving forward on this initiative. It was suggested that the working group discuss this matter with the Alberta Water Research Institute and those working on the water portal (WaterSmart) and come back to Council with suggestions on possible future direction for the working group.

Action 17.6: The working group will liaise with the Alberta Water Research Institute and staff at WaterSmart on behalf of the Water Portal Team and will present a revised proposal for completing a baseline assessment of water resource information in the province to the Council at a future meeting.

9 New or Other Business

The chair advised that David Hill today submitted his resignation from Council, as he is taking up the position of Director of Programs for the Alberta Water Research Institute, effective October 1. Members acknowledged David for his enthusiasm, insights and many contributions to the Council. Mike Kelly will be the new industry representative on the Council executive.

10 Next Meetings

The Renewal Workshop will be held October 17 in Leduc at the Royal Executive Inn. The next Council business meeting will be November 29 in Calgary, with an event on the evening of November 28.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Attachment 1: Meeting #17 Attendees

Council Members and Alternates:

Barry Anderson, Government (Large Urban)
Richard Bennett, NGO (WPACs)
Bill Berzins, NGO (WPACs)
Rachel Bocoock, Government (Small Urban)
Cheryl Bradley, NGO (Environmental)
Danielle Cobbaert, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)
Susanne Forbrich, Government (Environment Canada)
Tim Goos, Government (Environment Canada)
Brian Hammond, Government (Rural)
David Hill, Industry (Irrigation)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
Alex MacKenzie, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Health and Wellness)
Joe Miller, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)
Keith Murray, Industry (Forestry)
Ron Pearson, NGO (Fishery Habitat Conservation)

Steve Price, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Rob Pritchard, Government (Large Urban)
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Sharla Rauschnig, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)
Dave Rushford, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Kim Sturgess, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Economic Development Authority)
Jonathan Thompson, NGO (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Jay White, NGO (Lake Environment Conservation)
Jamie Wuite, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Food)
Beverly Yee, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment)

Presenters:

Terry Sly, Alberta Water Council (Item 2)
David Hill, Co-chair, Water CEP Sector Plan Project Team (Item 3)
Scott Millar and Jamie Wuite, Members, *Water for Life* Renewal Project Team (Item 4)
Mary Griffiths, Pembina Institute; Judy Smith, Shell Canada; Pat Marriott, Alberta Environment (Item 5)
Jay White, Communications Committee; Val Mellesmoen, Communications Consultant;
Wei Yew, Wei Yew & Company (Item 7)

Guests:

John Englert, Alberta Environment
Shannon Flint, Alberta Environment
George Murphy, Alberta Environment
Ted Nason, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Carrie Selin, Intensive Livestock Working Group
Carol Thurston, Alberta Environment

Secretariat:

Giselle Beaudry, Cam Lane, Kim Sanderson, Terry Sly and Lorie Wagner

Absent with Regrets:

Gerald Cunningham, Government (Métis Settlements General Council)
John Donner, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture and Food)
Danielle Droitsch, NGO (Environmental)
Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Brad Pickering, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Linda Van Gastel, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Peter Watson, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment)

Attachment 2: Meeting #17 Action Item Log

Action	Who	By when
Action 17.1: The secretariat will make adjustments to the draft stakeholder support policy based on Council's discussion and ensure it is on the agenda for the next Council meeting.	Secretariat	Nov. 9
Action 17.2: The CEP Sector Plan Project Team will discuss asking the sector plan pilot projects to pay particular attention to the South Saskatchewan River Basin and, more specifically, the Bow River Basin, and report back to Council on the outcome.	CEP Sector Plan Project Team	Nov. 29
Action 17.3: Terry Sly will invite to the October 17 th workshop all new directors and alternates who have been identified through the membership process. For planning purposes, the cut-off date for identifying new directors and alternates will be October 3 rd .	Terry Sly	Oct. 5
Action 17.4: The secretariat will circulate an electronic copy of the oil sands presentation to Council members.	Secretariat	Oct. 5
Action 17.5: All Council members will read the final report of the Policy Issues and Gaps Project Team and be prepared to discuss and approve it at the November 2007 meeting.	All Council members	Nov. 29
Action 17.6: The working group will liaise with the Alberta Water Research Institute and staff at WaterSmart on behalf of the Water Portal Team and will present a revised proposal for completing a baseline assessment of water resource information in the province to the Council at a future meeting.	Water Resource Information working group	Mar. 2008

Attachment 3: Meeting #17 Decision Log

Decision 17.1: Council agreed to direct the Reporting Project Team to:

1. *Develop a timeline for producing the third review report, with the intent of releasing it in spring 2009, and*
2. *Propose a revised process for preparing the next review report, taking into account the outcomes of the strategy renewal.*

Decision 17.2: The Council:

1. *Approved in principle the draft Annotated Table of Contents for CEP Sector Planning, and*
2. *Approved the use of the draft table of contents to pilot the development of sector plans by the irrigation and municipal sectors.*

Decision 17.3: The Council authorized the Renewal Steering Committee to:

1. *Approve the "Renewal: What We Heard" report, and*
2. *Post the report on the Council website following its approval.*

Decision 17.4: Council approved the visual identify as presented.

ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL
AGENDA, MEETING #17

September 18, 2007
Government House, Edmonton, Alberta

GENERAL BUSINESS OF COUNCIL

9:15 1.0 Administration – *Interim Chair* 30 min

1.1 Welcome, introductions and approve agenda

1.2 Approve Summary Report from June 14, 2007 meeting

1.3 Review of actions from last meeting

1.4 Executive Committee Report

1.4.1 Stakeholder Support Policy

Approve the draft Stakeholder Support Policy for use by the Council upon transition to a not-for-profit association.

1.4.2 Timeline for next Review Report

Approve the directing of the Reporting Team to:

1. Develop a timeline for producing the third review report, with the aim of releasing it in fall 2008, and

2. Propose a process for the next review report that is more manageable, taking into account the outcomes of the renewal of the *Water for Life* strategy.

9:45 2.0 Review and Update on Transition Activities 30 min

Provide an update on transition activities and review the highlights for each area.

10:15 Break 15 min

10:30 3.0 Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity SECTOR PLAN Project Team 45 min

Approve the draft Annotated Table of Content (TOC) for water conservation, efficiency and productivity sector planning and the use of this TOC to pilot the development of sector plans by the irrigation and municipal sectors

11:15 4.0 Water Strategy Renewal Project Team 45 min

Approve the posting of the “Renewal What We Heard Report” on the Council’s website.

12:00 Lunch (provided in the room) 45 min

12:45 5.0 Oil Sand Development Presentation and Panel Discussion 120 min

Hear information on water-related issues associated with oil sands development and participate in a panel discussion on key topic areas.

2:45 Break 15 min

3:00 6.0 Water Policy Issues and Gaps Project Team 15 min

Approve the team’s final report and disband the team.

3:15 7.0 Communication Committee 30 min

Approve the Council’s visual identity as presented.

3:45 8.0 Status Reports 15 min

Provide opportunity for questions or clarification on Council initiatives not on the agenda.

4:00 9.0 New or Other Business 15 min

New items of business or other items of information for Council

4:15 Adjournment

NOTE: Broad Category caucusing will occur from 8:00 to 9:00 am.