

**Haskill Basin Watershed Council**  
**Draft Meeting Minutes**  
**January 15, 2020**  
**Riverside Plaza Conference Room**

**Attendees:** Paul McKenzie, Bill Cabbage, John Phelps, Joe Krezowski, Michael Reichenberg, Cynthia Ingelfinger

John P. called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. The agenda was revised to include addressing council terms and appointments and approved.

**New Business:**

1.) Winter Sports Inc Water Rights Amendment

- John P gave a brief overview of his examination of the WSI Water Rights Amendment request. John had received a copy of the preliminary decision from DNRC and went through it thoroughly. Basic elements of the amendment are as follow:
  - i. Correction of errors in legal description of Point of Diversion and of some of the locations of the various storage ponds.
  - ii. Add Fisheries as a beneficial use of the water right
  - iii. Changing the diversion period for snow making from Nov 1 – April 15<sup>th</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> annually.
  - iv. Flow rates and total diverted volume have not changed or maybe slightly decreased based on better data and info.
- John's primary concern was the earlier diversion date of Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> and the potential to impact flows in Haskill creek at what can often be a critically low flow time, especially in dry – droughty years.
- Bill C provided some additional background information but basically corroborated what John had presented.
- WSI goal is to leave the ponds full at the end of the snow making season (March). Over the summer evaporation lowers pond level.
- The ponds are also used in wildfire suppression when needed and the USFS has requested WSI maintain full pond levels throughout summer fire season to be available for emergency use.
- WSI needs to be ready to start snow making on Nov 1<sup>st</sup> each year. To make that possible, the ponds must be full before then. Traditionally, they start filling ponds around Oct 1<sup>st</sup>, but in dry years where there is more evaporation or there have been firefighting withdrawals there is the potential need to start diversion earlier.
- Discussion on potentially revising diversion dates until later in October. Bill stated WSI really needs the option of earlier diversion under certain circumstances, albeit rare. Bill offered to communicate on behalf of WSI with this group when circumstances indicated September diversion was going to be necessary so potential impacts could be understood and mitigated if possible.

- After continued discussion the group decided to draft a letter to WSI outlining our concerns with the amended diversion date and asking for confirmation on the commitment to coordinate with the HBWC prior to diverting water in September. John will draft letter and circulate for review prior to sending.

2.) Council Appointments

- Paul M. reviewed past meeting minutes and provided the following schedule of term expiry for the various council members

<b>Council Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
John Phelps	Chair	December 31, 2019
Glenda Gehri	Vice Chair	December 31, 2020
Paul McKenzie	Secretary – Stoltze Rep	December 31, 2019
Joe Krezowski	At Large	December 31, 2020
Bill Cabbage	WSI Rep	December 31, 2019

- Since three of five council member terms have technically expired, it is impossible to have a quorum to re-elect council members and officers.
- Our bylaws contain provisions to allow Flathead Conservation District to appoint members in this situation. John P. will draft a letter to FCD requesting reappointment of Phelps, McKenzie and Cabbage for additional 3-year terms
- Paul M indicated a willingness to continue on the council, but did request he step down from Secretary and transition out of that role in 2020.

Old Business

3.) Whitefish Municipal Watershed Project USFS

- Michael gave an update on implementation of WMW Stewi.
  - i. Logging is nearly complete, only one or two units left to do.
  - ii. Post logging slash treatment will be completed summer 2020. Road obliteration to follow. Discussion of road obliteration process and follow up weed treatments.
  - iii. Broadcast burning will take place when conditions allowed.
  - iv. Plans to plant trees both in logging units and post burn openings to augment species diversity and especially augment Whitebark Pine regeneration.

4.) Reservoir Dam Management Plan

- John P. provided an update on the preliminary feasibility study undertaken by the City to explore development of deep water wells to supplement the municipal water supply. John distributed a draft of the report to the council members.
- City has decided not to pursue extending the water intake in the lake as the anticipated water quality improvements did not pan out upon further study.
- Remote telemetry for the intakes is included in the engineering work to be done on the water treatment plan upgrade. Installation of Telemetry would likely not occur until summer 2020 or 2021.

- The city did indicate that the desire to moderate the impact to Haskill Creek of municipal water withdrawals was one of the goals of exploring use of wells to supplement municipal water needs.
- 5.) Forest Plan Revision Update:
- 2 lawsuits have been filed on the new forest plan. Focus on grizzly bear, T&E and process claims. An additional lawsuit on the “albedo effect” has been filed, but likely not substantial.
  - One project decision (Taylor Hellroaring) has been signed under the new plan.
  - Michael reminded the group he has accepted a new position at the Forest level and will no longer be representing the Tally Lake District on the council. They have not identified who will fill that role yet.
  - There is a new Forest Supervisor that will be starting in a month or so. Chip Weber retired at the first of the year.
- 6.) Replacement of Culverts on Haskill Basin County Road:
- No progress. John will continue dialogue with landowners.
- 7.) Public Comment:
- No public comment
- 8.) Motion to adjourn at 6:59 pm

**Next Meeting April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Riverside Plaza Conference Room 6pm**

- Draft Agenda Items:
  - i. Review of draft minutes
  - ii. Council Appointments and officer election.
  - iii. WSI Water Rights Amendment
  - iv. City Reservoir Management Plan - Whitefish Area Water Resource Report
  - v. Whitefish Municipal Watershed Project update
  - vi. Forest Plan Revision
  - vii. Haskill Creek County Road Bridge Replacement.
  - viii. New Business
  - ix. Public Comment