

W2ASACT MEETING NOTES
 Meeting on May 14, 2019, 9:30 am to 12 pm
 Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, 1539 11th Ave, 1st floor conf. room

Members and participants present:

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Alex Huffield | KLJ Eng | Lisa Moisey | Bear Paw Dev. |
| Anna Miller | DNRC - CARDD | Maria Jackson | Great West Eng |
| Brent Moore | Interstate Eng | Mike Abrahamson | DEQ - Eng |
| Craig Erickson | Great West Eng | Rick Duncan | DNRC - CARDD |
| David Larson | DNRC - CARDD | Rika Lashley | Morrison-Maierle |
| Denise Cook | DNRC - CARDD | Sarah Robbin | RATES |
| Donna Andreass | USDA RD | Shelby Atchison | USDA RD |
| John Camden | MRWS | Sonja Hoeglund | DNRC - CARDD |
| Kevin Smith | DEQ - Eng | Steve Troendle | USDA RD |
| Laura Sattler | USDA RD | | |

Via Conf. Phone:

Erinn Zindt – MAP

Kirk Keysor – US Dept. of Commerce

DEQ - SRF – Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program

DEQ – Montana Department of Environmental Quality

DEQ - WRF – Wastewater State Revolving Loan program

DNRC - SRF - Wastewater State Revolving Loan program

DNRC – WRF - Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program

FDB – Financial Development Bureau

MAP – Midwest Assistance Program

MBOI – Montana Board of Investments

MRWS – Montana Rural Water Systems

RATES – Rural and Tribal Environmental Solutions

RDB – Resource Development Bureau

TSEP – Treasure State Endowment Program

USDA RD – United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development

Call to Order, Sign-in Sheet, Agenda Changes

Chair Anna Miller called the scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W2ASACT) to order at 9:35am, on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

The sign-in sheet and the meeting agenda were routed. Draft minutes from the January 8th meeting were distributed. Those present in person and via telephone briefly

introduced themselves. There were no revisions to the January 8th minutes. Steven Troendle made a motion and Sarah Robbins, a second, to accept the January 8th minutes as presented.

Presentation

Anna Miller, DNRC Financial Advisor - Discussion of House Bills 6, 7, 8, 11, and 652

Anna mentioned House Bill 14 was the Governor's bonding bill.

Some bills took on traditional processes like House Bill 6. Anna illustrated the funding process using the Allocation of Funds chart on HB 6 and 7. She added that HB 14 did not make it out of committee. HB 652 took the place of HB 14.

Anna pointed out from the RRGL spreadsheet of funded projects, which had been passed around. The spreadsheet was completed by Lindsay Volpe. Anna said for Renewable Resource projects, we will fund some of those with HB 652. On the list, projects 1 through 35 need to be funded with cash, all projects will be funded, but on projects after # 35, we will sell bonds.

We cannot enter into contracts until we have cash on hand from HB 6. As a result, some projects can get caught in the middle. Anna was referencing the TSEP list that was handed out. On the first page are those new projects. On the second page are the reconsideration projects. Anna advised all not to bid projects until you get the approval from TSEP. It is up to all of us to coordinate in order to fund projects. In past Legislative sessions there was not as much done on infrastructure projects. There was no bonding bill.

Anna reminded us that bonds have spend-down rules. Part of our projects will have constraints. Be aware of your timeline so funding will cover costs. Hopefully we don't come to a point where we only have one bid for a project. In response to Sonja's question, Anna said the Montana Department of Administration will issue bonds.

If there are questions Anna suggested to refer inquiries to the Public Information Officer (PIO). At DNRC, it is John Grassy.

HB 652 and HB 8 are not effective until July 1, 2019. Realistically, it could be August 1 before all processes are in place. HB 652 has \$80 million in bonding funds. HB 8 is the Coal Tax Bill. If projects need help, we can rely on Coal Tax money, but that industry is declining. HB 553 was contingent upon HB 652. HB 553 is a process bill.

In HB 553, the state cannot issue debt for longer than 10 years. Typically, bonds are issued for 20 years. The Montana History Museum has allocation of bonds of \$7 million and will now receive 1% of the bed tax revenue, which we hope will be enough over time to fund that project. HB 652 has \$10.75 million for schools. The rules still need to be written, but this will be nice. Steve Troendle added that that money should go to help with lead in drinking water. Anna suggested to watch the Montana Department of Commerce website for updates. In HB 6 and 11, there is money for planning grants. In May of 2020 applications will be accepted for grants of \$125,000 in the RRGL Program.

Craig Erickson asked when RRGL grants will be out and Anna suggested getting with Lindsay Volpe on that. We just got funds for the Revolving Loan Fund program. Kari Smith said that will help with getting lead out of our schools and bringing water systems into compliance. The public water supply bureau will handle applications for the grant at DEQ to help with lead in pipes.

Anna reported that HB 411 is the Aquatic Invasive Species bill. HB 7 is the reclamation grant bill which funds Heidi's program. Sonja said because we got AIS money in HB 411, the private grant program could get \$75,000 which would benefit towns like Seeley Lake or Thompson Falls from curb to house. Rika asked if that helps communities or homeowners to which Sonja replied homeowners. Craig asked how much and Sonja said up to \$5,000. The application is online. The county sanitarian could contact Sonja for help completing the application for homeowners. The Food and Consumer Safety contact at DPHHS is Ed Evanson. Steve said if you have questions, ask one of us and we can help get the ball rolling. Steve says "ask early and often" because projects can be phased.

Break 10:24 to 10:38

Program Updates

Sarah Robbins – RATES – Sarah said her office has been busy and she is traveling a lot. They are at the end of a 7-year contract and she will be talking with DEQ. Laura asked if there is funding for income survey and Sarah said she would refer that questions to John or Matt.

John Camden with MRW – John reported that National Rural Water is on a 5-year contract and they want a competitive bid. He mentioned the Circuit Writer Contract. John said they hired Bill Barr. The Rural Water Board of Directors is looking at buying or building a facility in Helena.

John said the 40th Annual Montana Rural Water conference in Great Falls in February was excellent. 2020's conference is slated for March 25 through the 27th in Helena. Anna added that HB 2 funding starts July 1st. The 66th Legislature funded Rural Water.

Mike Abrahamson, DEQ, Wastewater – Mike said they heard back from EPA on Cap Grant funding. Projects should be on IUP and that list will be out by mid-June. 50% up to \$1 million can be forgiveness on water projects. There was also a percentage give for wastewater loan forgiveness. Mike reported that the Engineering bureau is still down an FTE so please be patient with them.

Kevin Smith, DEQ-Engineering Bureau Chief – Kevin said they hope to have an IUP implemented in July. Anna added that the form is simple so get it in with an estimate of cost for the project, scope of work, etc. Mike noted to contact DEQ to get on the list.

Kevin reported that the water and wastewater programs each have one vacancy left to be filled.

Lisa Moisey with Bear Paw Development – Lisa said her office is grateful for the Legislature. They will receive \$2.5M to help communities.

Alex Huffield, KLJ Engineering – Alex is new in his role. He is taking down information for Becky. Alex was thanked for being here and encouraged to return for future WASACT meetings.

Sonja Hoeglund, DNRC – Sonja reported having \$75,000, which is up from the \$50,000 from the previous Legislative session for the private grant program that she administers. The typical projects funded range from a private residence or dam inspection or hookup to a community sewer system. 25% of project costs up to \$5,000 are funded as applications are received.

David Larson, DNRC Engineer – David came to CARDD from DNRC's Water Resources Division and has much valuable experience and knowledge. He works in the Resource Development Bureau, where the bureau chief position is currently vacant, so he is learning from other RDB staff, including Anna Miller. David is working on projects funded by HB 8. He has big shoes to fill since taking over Bob Fischer's position.

Rika Lashley, Morrison Maierle – Rika said she is reporting back to her office and has nothing to report to the group.

Donna Andreass, USDA Rural Development – Donna is new at RD in Bozeman.

Shelby Atchison, USDA Rural Development – Shelby announced that she recently graduated from college and received applause from the group.

Brent Moore, Interstate Engineering – Brent reported that he works out of Red Lodge and is filling in since Tom Erskine retired.

Laura Sattler, USDA Rural Development – Laura said AWWRA was awarded a grant for states to do workshops to help communities. She said there were 25 to 30 people at the workshop. Facilitators figured out the strengths and weaknesses of the group and who might better assist them with projects. It helps to clarify who to seek out for assistance. This workshop was good for smaller communities. Laura said the facilitators saw how we in Montana work together with Rural Development, Rural Water, etc. She encourages all to attend the workshops. The next workshop will be in Billings in October.

Steve Troendle, USDA Rural Development – Steve reported a lot going on at his office. The pooling did not go well. August 9th is the end of the year pooling. There was a discovery of lead or copper in schools. We could assist with schools. There is grant money – about half left. For instance, if an elderly homeowner needs to hook up to a public sewer system, there is help due to the removal of a health hazard. Handicapped or low-income homeowners are eligible will see how DLA money pans out.

Steve wished that the folks from Commerce were here to answer questions. He is looking forward to the Region Water conference being later in the year. Steve also reported that Ray Abbott is now in Dan Johnson's position in Missoula.

Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering – Craig announced that Maria Jackson, formerly from Commerce is now working at Great West. Maria is doing grant administration and writing. Craig added that the Legislature was generous with Great West's clients.

Maria Jackson, Great West Engineering – Maria is learning a lot and doing new things with Great West.

Erin Zindt – MAP – Erin reported the new MAP staff members are reaching out to folks and technical assistance writers and doing some training. Erin also said she is happy to hear about Bill Barr.

Kirk Keysor, US Dept. of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for MT & WY – (It was difficult to hear Kirk via the phone)
Kirk said that projects need to be in an eligible area. He added that there is planning funding available.

Pam Nelson, Commerce, BOI – Pam has nothing new to report.

Lindsay Volpe, DNRC – Lindsay began by handing out a chart showing what is funded by cash vs. bonding in the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program. She added that Planning Grant cycle is open and will close the end of February and hopefully be funded by March. People are looking for other funding sources. Sonja added that DNRC's private grant program is out of funds. She said there should be funding by July 1st.

Lindsay reported that the Engineer position with DNRC's Resource Development Bureau closes January 15th.

Dept. of Commerce BOI – Pam Nelson mentioned that BOI is dealing with retirements. Jerri Burton left in December.

Rick Duncan DNRC Regional Water –

Rick spoke of Fort Peck Dry Prairie's "wish list" and some water treatment plant retrofits that were completed. The third and last segment on the interconnection of the tribal and Dry Prairie portions project is being completed and should be finished in August 2019. No ceremony has been scheduled at this time.

Dry Prairie - The project was bid. The Flaxville – Scobey project segment was bid and awarded, and work has been going on for several months. Dry Prairie is working on details of design of the segment to hook up Westby. Anna mentioned that this is a huge achievement. They said it wouldn't happen 15-20 years ago. The group of 7 regional water systems is asking for a large amount of \$125 million. If Congress allows, FPDP will get a large share. The entire system could be completed by 2023.

Rocky Boys North Central - Has \$45 million for construction on 1st phase of the water treatment plant. The Shelby North Central segment could be complete this fall on portions.

Anna said our interim projects are helping a lot of communities. Once we have success, people change their opinion of what is possible.

John Camden added: who will be served by the new WTP. 11 million gal/day – capacity of 1st stage of the water treatment plant.

Central MT MS Judith Basin – This project had some legislative grants. Wellfield designed for Ubet is underway. They want to get water from wellfield to Harlowton in the first construction phase. Approximate cost is \$10-11 million. Anna added that this summer, we are working on another well.

Dry Redwater – This is geographically a larger system. The feasibility study has not been approved by the Bureau of Reclamation yet. Inset on the map shows the south Sidney area – water main (& sewer) extensions. Additional engineering studies will be needed in the near future.

Committee Updates

Workshops – AWWA workshop Committee – no head present. Mike Abrahamson spoke with Karen Sanchez. Is the 00900 the standard form?

Congressional Update – No representatives in attendance. Anna called our Congressional contact and there was nothing new to report.

Uniform Application – Anna asked Denise to add David Larson to the email group. Since he is doing what Bob Fischer did, he will update on the Uniform Application and Standard Documents. We should have the latest version of the 00900 on the website.

Website – Lindsay said to let her know if you have an item for the website.

End of Updates

Steve Troendle asked about the meeting schedule and whether we should meet every other month or more often.

For changes regarding BOI, contact Louise Welsh.

Rika mentioned that her office plans of getting info out on Planning Grants. Steve added that there is \$110,000 available in Planning Grants to FYE.

John Camden announced that MRW office has moved to 525 Central Ave, #6 in Great Falls. He added that he is working on Outlook emails and the website. He invited all to the MRW Open House June 21 from 1:30 to 3:30.

Next meeting date will be set later. Details will be emailed to the group. We will book the Montana Room at DNRC so we have more room. Denise added that DNRC is going to going to GovDelivery email system.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45.

Minutes taken by Denise Cook