
ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

MEETING #9

January 18-19, 2006
The Sutton Place Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta

Summary Report

Key Points:

1. Members continued the process of developing a three-year business plan, and will finalize the plan at their next meeting. Work on an operational plan will also be initiated.
2. Council approved a plan for moving forward on becoming an arms-length organization by the end of 2006. This will involve designing a structure, which incorporates approaches and policies that members feel have worked well in other organizations.
3. As part of the Council's efforts to move to an arms-length organization, Council heard a presentation from the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) to learn more about the model they use and whether it might be something the Council should consider.
4. Council formed a working group to create a terms of reference for a project team to define conservation, efficiency and productivity, which includes clarity of the description of these three terms, how to determine baseline, and how to measure future improvements.
5. Council formed a working group to create a terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function.
6. Members heard a presentation on the federal and provincial roles related to Alberta's transboundary water agreements and an overview of current transboundary issues.

Attachments to the Meeting Summary:

1. Attendees
2. Action Item Log
3. Decision Log
4. Meeting Agenda

Summary of Discussion

General Business Meeting

1.0 Presentation: Clean Air Strategic Alliance

Jan. 18th – Alberta Water Council (AWC) members attended a special two-hour informal evening session with several guests (Mike Kelly, Martha Kostuch, Michael Brown and Donna Tingley) from the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA). Through presentations and discussion, members learned about CASA's innovative approach to addressing strategic air quality issues. This approach has been recognized both provincially and nationally and has resulted in measurable improvements in the way air quality is managed and monitored in Alberta.

As the AWC starts to consider becoming an arm's length organization, it is valuable to learn more about the CASA model. Although the focus of the work is different – air versus water – there are some important similarities between CASA and the AWC, particularly with respect to their origins:

- Both were formed as a key outcome of extensive public consultations by the provincial government on issues that concerned many Albertans.
- Both have a multi-stakeholder board with major players represented at a senior level, including key government departments. This makes it easier for the Government of Alberta (GOA) to accept and act on the strategic advice it receives. This new approach of bringing all parties together in a consensus process means that different perspectives, knowledge and experience can be shared to solve problems with more creative and longer-lasting solutions that everyone can support.
- The Minister of Environment is committed to championing consensus-based advice from both CASA and the AWC to the rest of GOA.
- Both the AWC and CASA provide strategic direction to working groups and project teams.

Council Members also heard a number of pieces of advice from the CASA members including:

- Consensus is not easy. Must have balanced representation of all stakeholders. Members need to understand each other's needs to find the best solution and to find agreement.
- Project teams need the facts, need to focus on the right issue (not peripheral) and need strong direction from the board. A terms of reference should be developed.
- Airsheds are similar to WPACs and can share experiences.
- Self-selection – stakeholders need to choose their own member.
- Be as transparent as possible.
- Have an independent secretariat – for optics, stability, etc.
- Important to have and to support NGO members including support for them to meet, caucus, etc.
- Today's issues are becoming more complex and stakeholders want to be more involved. Together, they can also generate more innovative solutions. But must participate effectively – silence is taken as acceptance - members have an obligation to block, speak up, explain concerns.
- Recommendations must be clear and implementable.

Action 9.1: In response to an invite to members to attend the March 16, 2006 CASA meeting in Calgary, provide members with information on the time and location of meeting. For planning purpose, members need to confirm their attendance ahead of time, therefore provide members contact information for Donna Tingley.

Jan. 19th, the AWC's afternoon business meeting was preceded by a strategic planning session, which is not documented as part of this summary report.

2.0 Administration

Peter Watson convened the business meeting at 1:00 p.m.

2.1 Review of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as distributed.

2.2 Approval of Summary Report from November 17, 2005 Meeting

The summary report from the November 17, 2005 meeting was adopted by consensus and will be posted on the Council's website.

2.3 Action Items from November 17, 2005 Meeting

Terry Sly reviewed the action items from the last meeting, all of which have been completed.

2.4 Media, Communications and Outreach Activities

Peter spoke to the importance of outreach by Council members to their sectors, both to tell them about what Council is doing, and to advance and support work on the *Water for Life* strategy in their sector. He encouraged members to provide a short summary of communications and outreach in their sectors to Terry on a regular basis to help us track all the good work that is happening.

Terry Sly provided a short summary of recent communications activities since the November 17th meeting:

- Kevin Stashin made a presentation to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) Water Task Group on the work of the AWC on November 30th. He also made a presentation to the West Athabasca Watershed Bioregional Society on oil and gas activity.
- Terry Sly, Gerald Cunningham and Henry Arcand held an information session with the Métis Settlements General Council in Edmonton on December 14th to provide information on the work of the Council and to inform them of the upcoming consultation associated with the development of a Wetland Policy.

The Alberta Irrigation Projects Association and the GOA submitted updates on what they have been doing in their sectors. Terry briefly summarized the main initiatives and provided handouts with more details.

2.5 Report from Executive Committee

The minutes from the December 20th Executive meeting were distributed to members in their meeting package. Terry Sly provided an overview of two items approved by Executive presented to Council for information:

- 1) The roles, responsibilities and selection of Alternate members: At the last Council meeting, members supported the opportunity to have an alternate. The Executive approved the process for Alternate Selection, with the term of an Alternate to coincide with the term of the member for that sector. Terry briefly described the roles and responsibilities of Alternate members and the process for Alternate selection. Members were encouraged to work with their sectors to identify Alternates and get these names to Terry.
- 2) Executive approved the “Guidelines for Participating in Council Work”. The guidelines describe the behavior expected of all participants in Council meetings. All individuals participating in the business of Council are expected to support and promote these guidelines by leadership and example, and to hold each other accountable for similar behavior. When a working group, project team or any other committee is struck, the guidelines will be part of an information package provided to participating individuals. Terry walked Council through the guidelines.

Terry also reviewed several other items discussed at the last Executive meeting:

- The completed meeting evaluation forms from the last Council meeting indicated that, overall, members want to get into the meat of the discussions and spend less time on administrative items. However, the Executive noted that it is the working groups and project teams that are actually tackling the issues and general meetings are a chance to respond to issues that arise for the teams and to deal with general Council business.
- There was discussion on the importance of outreach by Council members to their sectors, both to tell them about what Council is doing, and to advance and support work on the *Water for Life* strategy in their sector. Members asked for clarification on what was meant by communications back to sector. Intent is to communicate what the council has decided and why.
- In regards to stakeholder support, Terry is still working with the lawyers to revise the wording in the Ministerial Order creating the Council to be able to provide honorariums for non-AWC members on working groups and project teams.
- Regarding support to First Nations and Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPAC) for outreach and capacity building, AENV staff are working with Lisa King and Bill Berzins on potential options. To improve aboriginal participation in environmental issues, AENV staff and Lisa are working to develop a three-treaty council to provide a conduit for First Nations communication on environmental issues. WPAC executives will be meeting in February to discuss approaches for addressing a number of key topics.

- Executive agreed to continue having at least one sector presentation at future Council meetings. The following is the schedule for presentations/field trips for 2006.
 - January 19 (Edmonton): Transboundary Water Management
 - March 23 (Calgary): Riparian Habitat – Lorne Fitch
 - May 17-18 (Kananaskis): Cows and Fish Program – Lorne Fitch
 - Field Trip: Hydroelectric Power Generation
 - September 13-14 (High Prairie): Forestry
 - Field Trip: First Nations/Metis Settlements Communities
 - November 16 (Edmonton): Municipal Water Use

Note: Where time permits, a presentation on Federal Role in Water Management
- Executive agreed that the Council should make a presentation at the upcoming AENV 2006 conference. An abstract for an AWC presentation was submitted and we are waiting to hear back from the Conference Presentation Selection Committee.

Action 9.2 Secretariat to distribute the approved “Use of Alternates” and “Guideline for Participating in Council Work” documents and website address for the “2006 Alberta’s Environment Conference”.

Action 9.3 Council members interested in nominating an alternate member to submit a letter/email to secretariat, providing contact information for the nominated alternate member, confirming that the sector supports the nomination of the individual and briefly describing why the individual is being nominated.

3.0 Water Use Efficiency and Productivity Working Group

David Hill led a discussion on the Water Use Efficiency and Productivity Working Group who are concerned that the current scope of their activities is too broad. The Group proposed that a Steering Committee be formed and given responsibility for several higher level tasks like identifying projects for government and industry to undertake and to act as a “sounding board” for all groups on areas such as research, best management practices, economic instruments, regulatory tools, and other topics as they feel appropriate. This approach would ensure that all activities ultimately support Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils and their stakeholders in improving water conservation, efficiency, and productivity as part of their watershed management plans.

Peter pointed out work on a conservation target was triggered by the inclusion of the 30% conservation target in *Water for Life*. He noted the complexity of the topic. Other members expressed some concern about adding another level of bureaucracy unless it is going to add value. After considerable discussion it was decided to strike a new working group to develop a terms of reference for a Project Team for the March 2006 meeting. Project Team will define conservation, efficiency and productivity, how to determine baseline and how to measure it in the future.

The Chair asked for volunteers for membership on the new working group which will develop a terms of reference. The following names were put forward:

John Donner	Richard Quail
Dave Hill – Co-chair	Margaret Reine (Danielle Droitsch)
Mike Kelly	Jonathan Thompson (Les Wetter)
Lisa King (Sherwin Shih)	Peter Watson – Co-chair

Action 9.4: A new working group to come back to the March AWC meeting with draft terms of reference for a Project Team to define conservation, efficiency and productivity, how to determine baseline and how to measure future improvements for Council to consider.

Decision 9.1: Council agreed to form a working group to develop a draft terms of reference for a project team to define conservation, efficiency and productivity, how to determine baseline and how to measure future improvements for Council to consider.

4.0 Transition to Arm’s Length Organization

Following up on Council’s November discussion of the transition to an arm’s length organization, Terry met with lawyers in Alberta Environment to get their advice and input. They recommended that Council discuss and make decisions about some key foundational issues before starting to develop a governance structure.

Terry presented the proposed transition plan, approved by the Executive that identifies the steps and timelines for moving the AWC to arms-length organization by the end 2006. The first step was the presentation by CASA last night to hear about their governance model and some of the things that have made that organization successful. All Council members need to provide guidance, but a subcommittee can do a lot of the legwork between meetings.

Members indicated that they would like more information that compares CASA and AWC (including GOA financial commitment to it and secretariat function). They may also need to take the foundational questions back to their sectors for discussion of how sectors would relate to this new organization.

Action 9.5: Secretariat, working with the executive will develop a ½ day workshop for Council to work through key foundational questions related to becoming an independent organization at the March meeting. In preparation for a workshop, members will be provided with the key questions and additional background information on CASA, operation of current secretariat, etc.

Decision 9.2: It was agreed by consensus to adopt the “Proposal for AWC Transition to an Arm’s Length Organization”.

5.0 Presentation: Transboundary Water Management

Alberta has a legal obligation to its neighbors to ensure water is shared and delivered in the streams that cross inter-provincial and international boundaries. Jim Vollmershausen and Robert Harrison made a presentation on the federal and provincial roles related to Alberta's transboundary water agreements and reviewed current issues with transboundary waters. There was a lot of general discussion throughout the presentation particularly about the Milk – St. Mary's rivers history and nuances. It was suggested that we have more detailed presentations on these agreements in the future, as this was just to provide a quick overview.

6.0 Other Business

Linda Van Gastel provided an overview of the research strategy – it is going to ASRA for final approval next week and then to the Innovation and Science Minister, who will approve it together with the Minister of Environment. A technical editor has looked at it and improved the language but content is generally the same. The research committee is likely going to dissolve once the research plan is handed over to Innovation and science. The “knowledge broker function” identified in the Alberta Water Research Strategy will not be fulfilled by ASRA. The Council decided to strike a working group to develop a terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function. The following members volunteered:

John Donner	Linda Van Gastel (chair)
Margaret Reine	Jay White
Kim Sturgess	Peter Watson (John Taggart)

If any one else has a member from your sector, please get their names to Terry.

Action 9.6: Council members with an interest to advise Terry Sly of additional representatives from their sector for the Water Management Knowledge Broker Function working group.

Action 9.7: The working group to come back to the March AWC meeting with draft terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function.

Decision 9.3: Council agreed to form a working group to develop a draft terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function.

7.0 Key Messages and Preparation for Next Meeting

To close out the ninth AWC meeting, the Secretariat was asked to summarize the key messages from this afternoon. Confirmation of the key messages was requested and received. Members were reminded to complete the meeting evaluation form; input will assist the Secretariat in planning for and running future meetings.

The next meeting will be on March 23 in Calgary. The location of the meeting is yet to be determined.

The Chair thanked members for their participation. The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Attachment 1: Meeting #9 Attendees

Council Members:

Bob Barss, Government (Rural)
Bill Berzins, Non-government Organization (Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils)
John Donner, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development)
David Hill, Industry (Irrigation)
Mike Kelly, Industry (Power Generation)
Lisa King, Government (First Nations)
Larry Nolan, Industry (Livestock)
Ron Pearson, Non-government Organization (Fishery Habitat Conservation)
Margaret Reine, Non-government Organization (Environmental)
Brad Pickering, Province (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development)
Richard Quail, Government (Small Urban)
Judy Smith, Industry (Mining)
Kevin Stashin, Industry (Oil and Gas)
Kim Sturgess, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Economic Development Authority)
Jonathan Thompson, Non-government Organization (Wetland Habitat Conservation)
Linda Van Gastel, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Science and Research Authority)
Jim Vollmershausen, Government (Environment Canada)
Peter Watson, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Environment)
Jay White, Non-government Organization (Lake Environment Conservation)
Joe Miller, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Energy)

Observers:

Kevin Wirtanen, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Support Staff:

Terry Sly
Petra Rowell

Presenters:

Robert Harrison, Alberta Environment
Donna Tingley - CASA
Martha Kostuch – CASA
Michael Brown –
Mike Kelly
Jim Vollmershausen

Absent with Regrets:

Nick Bayliss, GOA and Provincial Authorities (Alberta Health and Wellness)
Gerald Cunningham, Government (Metis Settlements General Council)
Rick Denton, Industry (Forestry)
Al Kennedy, Industry (Chemical and Petrochemical)
Al Maurer, Government (Large Urban)

Attachment 2: Meeting #9 Action Item Log

Action	Who	By when
9.1: In response to an invite to members to attend the March 16, 2006 CASA meeting in Calgary, provide members with information on the time and location of meeting. For planning purpose, member need to confirm their attendance ahead of time, therefore provide members contact information for Donna Tingley.	Secretariat	Jan. 31, 2006
9.2: Distribute the approved “Use of Alternates” and “Guideline for Participating in Council Work” documents and website address for the “2006 Alberta’s Environment Conference”.	Secretariat	January 23, 2006
9.3: Council members interested in nominating an alternate member to submit a letter/email to secretariat, providing contact information for the nominated alternate member, confirming that the sector supports the nomination of the individual and briefly describing why the individual is being nominated.	Council members	Ongoing
9.4: Come back to the March AWC meeting with draft terms of reference for a project team to define conservation, efficiency and productivity, how to determine baseline and how to measure future improvements for Council to consider.	Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity working group	March 7, 2006
9.5: Develop a ½ day workshop for Council to work through key foundational questions related to becoming an independent organization at the March meeting. In preparation for a workshop, provide members with the key questions and additional background information on CASA, operation of current Secretariat, etc.	Secretariat & Executive	February 15, 2006
9.6: Council members with an interest to advise Terry Sly of additional representatives from their sector for the Water Management Knowledge Broker Function working groups.	Council members	January 31, 2006
9.7: Come back to the March AWC meeting with draft terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function.	Water Management Knowledge Broker Function working group	March 7, 2005

Attachment 3: Meeting #9 Decision Log

At this meeting, the Alberta Water Council made the following decisions:

Decision 9.1: Council agreed to form a working group to develop a draft terms of reference for a project team to define conservation, efficiency and productivity, how to determine baseline and how to measure future improvements for Council to consider.

Decision 9.2: It was agreed by consensus to adopt the Proposal for AWC Transition to an Arm's Length Organization.

Decision 9.3: Council agreed to form a working group to develop a draft terms of reference for a project team to describe and design the water management knowledge broker function.

Attachment 4: Meeting #9 Agenda

Alberta Water Council
Agenda, Meeting #9
January 18 & 19, 2006
The Sutton Place Hotel, Edmonton
10235 – 101st Street

GENERAL BUSINESS OF COUNCIL

JANUARY 18, 2006 – Evening Session (William Tomison Room)

- 7:00 1.0 Presentation: Clean Air Strategic Alliance 2 hrs**
- 1.1 Introduction (Peter Watson)
 - 1.2 Industry Perspective/History (Mike Kelly)
 - 1.3 NGO Perspective/Electricity Project Team (Martha Kostuch)
 - 1.4 Government Perspective/Flaring & Venting Project Team (Michael Brown)
 - 1.5 CASA Fundamentals (Donna Tingley)
 - 1.6 Questions and Discussion

JANUARY 19, 2006 – Afternoon Session (Winter Lake Room)

- 1:00 2.0 Administration – Chair 30 min**
- 2.1 Welcome and approve agenda
 - 2.2 Approve Summary Report (November 17, 2005 meeting)
 - 2.3 Review of actions from last meeting
 - 2.4 Media, Communication and Outreach Activities
 - 2.5 Executive Committee Report
- 1:30 3.0 Water Use Efficiency and Productivity working group 45 min**
- David Hill will lead a discussion on a different approach to address the various tasks and their complexities in furthering water conservation, efficiency and productivity. Council will be asked to approve the proposed future direction.
- 2:15 4.0 Transition to Arm’s Length Organization 15 min**
- Terry Sly will provide an update on advice received from AENV lawyers and Peter Watson will lead discussion on a proposal for moving forward on becoming an arm’s length organization.
- 2:30 Coffee Break 15 min**
- 2:45 5.0 Presentation: Transboundary Water Agreements 45 min**
- Alberta has a legal obligation to its neighbours to ensure water is shared and delivered in the streams that cross inter-provincial and international boundaries. Jim Vollmershausen and Robert Harrison will discuss the federal and provincial roles related to Alberta’s transboundary water agreements and review the current issues.

- 3:30 6.0 Other Business 5 min**
New items of business or other items of information for Council
- 3:35 7.0 Key Messages and Preparation for Next Meeting (Chair) 10 min**
Confirmation of the key messages from this meeting will be requested.
- 3:45 Adjournment**