

Marys River Watershed Council

August 12, 2008

Meeting started at 6:35 PM

Board Members present: Thom Whittier, Mark Taratoot, Curt Seeliger, Jennifer Beathe, Bud Laurent, Wayne Phillips, Ken Crouse

Contractors present: Sandra Coveny and Karen Fleck Harding

Other guests: Steve Carpenter, Marys Peak Natural Resources Interpretive Center

Introductions

Steve came to the meeting to give thanks from Marys Peak Natural Resources Interpretive Center board to the Marys River Watershed Council and its board, especially Karen, for the cooperative relationship between the two groups. Currently they have an OWEB acquisition grant pending and a technical assistance grant for development of a restoration plan.

Marys Peak Natural Resources Interpretive Center has a goal to develop an education center for natural resource education. The theme will be: "Where good minds and education come together using science to make decisions." They have had a recent focus on their education programs, specifically the Science, Music and Marshmallows program held each August. A volunteer group organizes these weekly presentations and social events. There is also a Spring Field Day in May for Philomath and Corvallis middle school students.

Reports

Secretary

There was a brief discussion of what to do with the meeting notes. The group agreed that Jennifer would send out a draft of the notes for corrections. Once corrections are made, Jennifer will send the notes to Mark with "PLEASE POST" in the subject line for the website. Hard copies of minutes will be backed up in the Council office.

Treasurer

Bud reported that the bank account balance on July 1, 2008 was \$36,679.73, and on July 31, 2008 was \$21,604.38, some of which is encumbered.

Bud has scheduled a meeting with an accountant recommended by TACS (Technical Assistance for Community Services) on September 10th. Bud passed out a template for a Treasurer's report.

Council Coordinator

Sandra sent out the Coordinator's Report prior to the meeting and told the group that she has been spending quite a bit of time on financial work. The largest amount of her time

has been spent managing grants and working on a matrix for the project planning committee in the hope that the board can better plan for projects and grants.

Sandra told the board that she inquired about bookkeeper activities with other watershed coordinators and asked about the information that they collect. Some of the other councils have employees, so their financial needs are different. Sandra proposes that we consider hiring a person to do both bookkeeper and administrative assistant duties. Sandra is working with Meyer Memorial Trust, would like to get a project funded, and suggested that the MRWC needs a project development committee.

Thom recommends receiving reports from coordinators and treasurer by the first of every month. In addition, flag topics that the board needs to talk about include upcoming items of interest.

Bud asked about HTML vs. Plain Text emails and prefers HTML.

Education and Outreach Coordinator

Curt asked about the Benton Water supply meetings and if anything was going on with the Muddy Creek basin. Karen is organizing the Water Supply outreach meeting for Northwest Benton County.

Karen is trying not to push projects in Muddy Creek, but to rather let interest and trust develop gradually. A request for sponsorship of a project in Muddy Creek area was referred to Benton Soil and Water Conservation District because it was in the Willamette basin.

As part of the design of the Woods Creek project (funded by Oregon Trout), Karen asked Steve Trask to do a snorkel survey and assessment of Large Wood Placement. Only one owner declined access for the survey out of about forty landowners. Karen had good conversations with neighbors and thinks that there is increased understanding of what is happening in the Woods Creek basin. Steve was impressed with the density of cutthroat trout. Some landowners are removing large woody debris out of the stream due to erosion or culvert/bridge blockage.

Blair Creek- culvert on highway is almost complete. SWCD is the acting fiscal manager and Benton County Public Works is doing the work. The Marys River Watershed Council was the applicant and responsible for grant reporting.

Update on OWEB small grants; Karen got an email from the lead person on review team, Paul Reed. At this point, the word is that those grants will likely be funded. Karen will find out later this week.

There is support for reinstalling the USGS gauging station at Rock Creek and the City of Corvallis is looking for funding to do that.

Chair

Thom met with Karen and Sandra and plans to continue to do that on a regular basis.

Thom asked Wayne about the Corvallis Watershed Tour. Wayne said it was a good tour and that there were close to 100 people on the tour. They gave the Watershed Council credit for participating in the project.

Review and discussion of projects and grant status

Sandra created a matrix with financials and descriptions of projects. She suggested that another option would be a geographic matrix “by basin and subbasin” with project types so a project planning committee could identify parts of the Marys River basin that might not be given the proper attention.

Sandra thought of another approach using GIS as a database interface to locate and keep track of the projects.

Wayne would like to see source of grants.

A glossary of terms is needed for the matrix codes.

What and how much information does the BOD need/want monthly vs. annually vs. as things change? What is the preferred method of providing this information. How much should go on the website?

We just had some updates on the website that allow us to have three separate sections for projects, assessments, restoration projects, education projects. The updates are currently hidden from the public until review is complete, and will go to the live site in the near future. Karen had in mind photos, maps of location and project descriptions. Thom thought that material on our website about projects shouldn't include maps and addresses, so as to protect the privacy of cooperating landowners.

Bud asked if we prepare an annual report each year? Sandra said that we have a description of what projects we've worked on in the past year and that the council has to put together a report for OWEB. However, there is no official Annual Report

Bud asked how far forward we are looking. How do we try to chart out where the Marys River Watershed Council is going?

Sandra said that it's almost impossible to set quantitative goals and get specific but she suggested an annual budget goal of about half a million dollars.

Thom would like to get project development committee together from the board. Is this something that we want to do? Should the whole board or just a few members be involved in that?

Bud suggested that we tackle this issue in a whole board meeting and that idea was supported by the group.

Action Item: Thom asked Karen and Sandra to come up with some ideas for our quarterly education/outreach meeting.

Fiscal Issues

Annual Budget

Do we need an annual budget? The board answered “Yes”. If so, how do we develop one with the uncertainties of granting cycles?

Bud said that there is an idea of having a part time administrative assistant and part time bookkeeper to address additional and different needs of the council.

We didn't know what we needed when we started evaluating bookkeeping and administration needs; we know better now what our needs are. The Board is evaluating the council's needs for bookkeeping and office administration.

Mark would like to see a backup of all financial data. Karen said that there are currently multiple locations of backup.

Bud noted that TACS recommended Ann White to talk to about our bookkeeping and administrative needs. He also asked if we can join River Network. Sandra thought that most of the services from River Network can be obtained free of charge. Thom suggested that this be on the agenda next month.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM