

Flathead Basin Commission Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2011

Tribal Council Chambers, Pablo

In attendance: Ed Heger, Chas Cartwright, Tom Smith, Jim Simpson, Jan Metzmaker, Bob Sandman, Dan Bangeman, Susan Brueggeman, C. Weber, Rich Jansen, Don Loranger, Jon Jourdonnais, Ron Steg and Caryn Miske. Quorum present.

Moderated by: Denise Germann

Action Item: Approved minutes from February 2011 minutes, subject to incorporation of additions from Tom Smith.

AIS update: Caryn Miske outlined the current status of the following:

- State legislation related to AIS (SB 343 and HB 621)
- FWP and Dept of Agriculture plans for the upcoming field season
- FWP Region I AIS Coordinator and continued need for additional assistance on AIS

Members discussed the AIS consultant position, and despite some diversity of opinion, ultimately agreed to the following:

- The Executive Director was authorized to fundraise to support an AIS consultant working in the basin.
- The AIS consultant was to be hired by another entity until at least July, when the issue would be revisited in light of (1) the R1 AIS Coordinator position status; and (2) a review of the FBC strategic priorities.

FBC mission: members discussed the differences between the “purpose” and “mission” and the following points emerged:

- The mission explains what the FBC is going to do to fulfill the purpose. Statutory duties are similar to mission.
- Objectives address how the mission will be achieved.
- Priorities explain the how the mission will be achieved in more detail.
- Mission dictates how the FBC will fulfill the purpose of the organization, and the duties fulfill the purpose.

- The website description should change “mission” to “purpose.”
- The FBC purpose is defined in statute: to protect the existing high quality of Flathead Lake aquatic environment; the waters that flow into, out of, or are tributary to the lake and; the natural resources and environment of the Flathead Basin.

Based on the discussion related to purpose, mission and priorities, and the fact that significant progress had been made on the transboundary issues which dominated the FBC’s strategic plan previously, the members agreed that the FBC Strategic Plan should be amended. It was also agreed that the Strategic Plan revision should not prevent existing from continuing to move forward.

More specifically, the members discussed the need for general guidelines and the creation of realistic goals based on the resources of the organization, along with a process on how to accomplish goals. Members agreed that goals should be selected based upon where the FBC can (1) make a difference; and (2) measure success.

Issue to be resolved as part of the Strategic Plan revision include:

- What does the FBC want to do? And how does the FBC want to accomplish its objectives?
- Examine existing priorities and rank/amend as needed.
- How does the FBC bring leadership to issues?
- Are the FBC “doers” or does the organization only provide oversight/facilitation?
- What leadership will the FBC provide?
- Will the FBC continue to function based on broad consensus-making?
- Will committees continue? If so, how will agendas for each committee be developed? Are committees still needed? If so, structure and function of committees?
- How will the FBC achieve its purpose? Authority of the Executive Director?

Transboundary goals agreed upon:

- Continue work related to existing cooperative efforts;
- Assist in implementation of the BC-MT MOU;
- Assist with transboundary policies (more than data) and coordination across boundaries; and

- Maintain communication with key contacts related to transboundary efforts.

The temporary committee that volunteered to draft the revised Strategic Plan for review by the entire membership included: Ron Steg, Jim Simpson, Tom Smith, and Bob Sandman.

Roles of FBC members, Executive Committee and Executive Director:

The members agreed that a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities was needed. Expectations for a Code of Conduct as identified by FBC members:

- How we treat others
- Respectful of diversity
- Healthy discussion/respectful listening
- Attendance at meetings
- New member orientation
- Productivity
- Citizen member/agency representatives – diversity
- Communication
- Spokesperson
- Private person versus FBC – communication policy
- Get issues out on the table
- How to do it all – reasonable expectations based on resources
- Spirit of consensus
- Clear direction to Executive Director

It was recognized that the strength of the FBC comes in part from its diversity. Therefore, consensus on how members treat each other and how members interact with each other was deemed essential.

Decision-making:

Ed Heger and others discussed that the power of the commission is strengthened when decisions are made via consensus to fulfill the purpose and mission of the FBC. The Chair stated that it was not

appropriate for members to go outside of this model in pursuing their own opinions, and that personal agendas sometimes needed to be set aside for the betterment of the basin.

FBC members can represent their own opinions, but those opinions should be separate and distinct from those positions formally taken by the FBC.

Ed Heger explained that once consensus was reached, the FBC should move forward, rather than continuing to revisit the same issues. He also stressed that once the FBC votes on an issue, ALL the members need to support the decision. He also stressed that the FBC should identify and work on those issues that all the members can come together on.

Jon Jourdonnais stated that the FBC could strive for a consensus based culture with voting when necessary. Jan Metzmaker noted that we live in a democracy and votes should be taken when needed.

The process for decision making was not resolved, and it was agreed that this topic would be more fully discussed at the May 18, 2011 meeting.

FBC Nominations: The members discussed the statutory language related to members appointed by the Governor. Formerly, citizen members had been appointed to fill these positions. However, based on the actual text which requires appointments from industrial, environmental, and other interests, it was decided that a nominating committee would be formed to identify possible candidates from these interest area. The Committee, comprised of Susan Brueggeman and Jan Metzmaker, would compile the list, draft a recruitment letter for those on the list, and contact the Governor's office to encourage appointments in compliance with the spirit of the enabling legislation.

No public comments provided.

Meeting adjourned.

