

Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve Annual General Meeting Minutes 2008

January 10, 2008

RM of Park Boardroom

7:30 pm

Attending: Ray Frey (Chair), Victor Baraniuk (RM of Clanwilliam), Ken Kingdon (Parks Canada), Martin Woodley (RM of Strathclair), Rudy Usick (RM of Clanwilliam), Nick Fiarchuk (RM of Grandview), Dennis Tokar (RM of Dauphin), Daryl Nuestader, Roger Schroder (Parks Canada), Dave Smith (RM of McCreary), Ilse Ketelsen (RM of Rossburn), John Hogg (RM of Shoal Lake), Sandy Walter (Nature Conservancy), Dwayne Blackbird (Collation of First Nations), Larry Kostenchuk (RM of Rosedale), John Whitaker (RM of Clanwilliam), Herb Goulden (RM of Park) and Valerie Pankratz (Executive Director).

1. Minutes from the last General Meeting of November 8, 2007 were read and discussed.

Motion: John Whitaker, Dave Smith.

“That the minutes from the November 8, 2007 General Meeting be accepted as circulated.”

Carried

2. Chairs Report

Achievements –

Constitution:

- The RMBR Constitution has been updated to be more inclusive in its membership. The number of directors was increased to nine members including a position for past-Chair.
- A spot has been reserved for First Nations since the inception of the Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve. Within this Biosphere Reserve there are 4 First Nations – Valley River, Waywayseecapo, Keeseekowenin, and Rolling River and until now this position has not been filled. This position will soon be filled allowing us to build upon the trust invested in this organization by the First Nations communities involved.

Strategic Plan:

- A Strategic Plan has been completed which allowed for review and updating past effort of the Biosphere Reserve. The results will give us direction for the next 4-5 years. A major goal is to gain higher visibility for the RMBR.

Caching Riding Mountain:

- The Caching Riding Mountain program has been nominated for the Parkland Tourism Award and Manitoba Tourism Award in the Product Development category.
- Seven Community Geocaching Workshops were held in partnership with Friends of Riding Mountain National Park throughout Manitoba for Manitoba Regional Tourism Network.

Partnerships:

- We recognized that we need to have a closer relationship/partnership with the Government of Manitoba. To that end we've opened dialogue with the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. Our original charter sponsorship was Department of Rural Development which is now Intergovernmental Affairs.
- Our relationship with RMNP remains strong. They continue to provide funding and support for the RMBR. There are a number of changes in their financial management system and as Parks local understanding of the new rules increases we are developing our "Financial Agreement" which will be ready for signature in the next few weeks. Roger Schroeder of Parks Canada will be assuming most of the duties Ken Kingdon originally had and will be our liaison regarding RMBR.
- We are continuing the work of Bovine Tb Stakeholder Committee. There seems to be a lull in enthusiasm because the TB situation is no longer seen as a crisis. Our aim is to ensure this group continues its work as this issue has not gone away.

Other Programs:

This is the area the Valerie has made great strides for the RMBR.

Caching Riding Mountain – a successful program that is increasing the visibility of the RMBR and generates revenue for not only the organization but has a direct economic impact within the within the entire Biosphere Reserve through events such as the GPS Adventure Quest and GPS Eco-Challenge. Seven Community Geocaching workshops were facilitated throughout Manitoba in Partnership with Friends of Riding Mountain National Park and funded by the Manitoba Regional Tourism Network and hosted by MAFRI. The Caching Riding Mountain program has been nominated for a 2007 Tourism Award under the New Product category.

The Prairie Mountains – Research in the Riding, Duck and Porcupine Mountains is complete and now printed. Copies will be given to all schools and libraries as well as RM offices within the RMBR. These books will also be for sale through RMBR and The Nature Shop in Wasagaming.

Seminar Series – The seminar series has been resurrected. The first seminar was done approximately 15 years ago introducing the topic of climate change. Our next seminar will be held in Rosburn on February 21st, 2008 and interestingly enough climate change will once again be the topic.

ASPnet Program – UNESCO Associated Schools Network Program - This past year we have been working with both Rosburn Elementary and High School and Onanole Elementary School to obtain ASPnet designation. There are 8 ASPnet schools within Manitoba all of which are located within Winnipeg. Rosburn has not had the teacher participation it has had in the last few years as they have had a change in staffing however Onanole teachers and students are very keen. The theme they have picked for this year is World Hunger.

Biosphere Bob – this program geared to grades 3-5 allows students to become familiar with the Biosphere Reserve concept and to realize that they live within a Biosphere Reserve. Onanole Elementary School has been hosting Biosphere Bob.

Sustainable Woodlot Management – an agreement in principle has been reached with the LSRCD for some funding for this project. As well the Nature Conservancy has noted that they would be will to add their support through signage and are working toward including MAFRI in this project as well. Manitoba Conservation may become additional partners in this project. This

is an education/training is sustaining woodlots. There are many reasons to sustain a healthy woodlot including biodiversity, habitat improvement and economic revenue.

Challenges

Visibility – one of the ongoing challenges of the RMBR remains raising the profile and visibility of the RMBR.

Membership – in order to become more visible we need more people working to make the public aware of this organization. The constitution has been changed to allow the RMBR to increase its membership significantly through a general public membership. A fee structure will be proposed.

Municipal Founders Support – in order to do more work, garner support for programs and the charge of fees we need our municipal founders support. The executive director and chair will attempt to meet with all of the member RM councils over the next 2-3 months in this regard.

National Support – Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA) has been working diligently to secure long term funding for all Biosphere Reserves in Canada. Our Executive Director is part of that effort as she holds the Treasurer position on the CBRA board. It appears that there is some progress as meetings with deputy ministers have revealed that national funding of Canadian Biosphere Reserves is being discussed at higher governmental levels and we may be on the agenda once again.

RMBR Office – This has been an ongoing challenge which has not yet been resolved. Valerie continues to work out of her home and the Friends of RMNP office.

Succession Planning – Perhaps the biggest challenge is how we can keep the board enthusiastic and vibrant. A number of the members of the RMBR have been with the organization for many years and are now looking to bring new members on board to steer the RMBR into its next phase. Without new and interested members the organization will not be able to sustain itself.

Opportunities:

Partnership – Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District would like to partner with the RMBR and the Sustainable Woodlot Management Program.

ALUS Program – Alternative Land Use Services - is a pilot program that is in its 3rd and last year. This is an incentive program available to landowners (RM of Blanchard) in order to maintain ecological services that the land provides to society such as retain marshes for water quality and aquifer recharge, maintain woodlots, and retain grassland. Nearly 80% of landowners in the RM of Blanchard have signed up for this program. The program is gaining support national in Alberta, PEI. The Prime Minister has been briefed about this project and it is potentially a topic on this week First Ministers agenda. This may be an area the RMBR may want to become involved in the future.

3. Financial Report - may be requested

Motion: Herb Goulden, Denis Tokar

“That the Financial Report be accepted as circulated.”

Carried

4. Executive Directors Report – see attached report
5. Business Arising

First Nations Involvement – Many First Nations people are not aware of the Biosphere Reserve and all that it has to offer including partnership opportunities. It would be useful to visit the First Nations councils along with the remainder RM Councils in the next three months.

Constitution – A draft of the revised RMBR Constitution was given to all members at the 2007 AGM for review and comment. The RMBR Board of Directors would like to approve the revised RMBR Constitution.

Motion: John Hogg, John Whitaker

“That the Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve Constitution revised in 2007 be formally approved.”

Carried

6. New Business

Membership Fees – The new Constitution is a good framework document; however, there may be a need to review the membership fee structure. There is nothing regarding what happens to an RM that does not want to pay the membership fee. This will be discussed at all RMBR meetings with member RMs. Changes to the constitution in this regard can then be made at next year's AGM.

Proposed Membership Fees

- \$200.00 annual fee per member Rural Municipality
- \$100.00 annual fee for other organizations, business and NGO's within the RMBR
- \$20 annual fee per individual/family
- \$10 annual fee student/senior

Benefits of Membership

Municipality - reimbursement of some costs (i.e. gas mileage for meetings), raises the profile of the whole community, bring in expertise through workshops, free use of logo (with some restrictions), reduced rates for workshops and events, invitation to participate in RMBR programs (i.e. Tourism - GPS Adventure Quest), acknowledgement of support in literature.

Other Organizations, Business, NGO - raises the profile of the whole community, bring in expertise through workshops, free use of logo (with some restrictions), reduced rates for workshops and events, acknowledgement of support in various literature

Individual/Family/Student/Senior – newsletter, invitation to and reduced rates for workshops and events, reduced rates on RMBR products (i.e. 10% off books, t-shirts, etc)

Motion: John Hogg, Herb Goulden

“That the Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve membership fee structure be accepted in principle.”

Carried

7. Committee Reports

- Seminar Committee - “Climate Change – What Does It Mean to You”
 - Seminar on Climate Change to be held in Rosburn on February 21, 2007
 - Marg Tarleton - seminar moderator,
 - Climate Change On The Prairies – An Overview – Dr. Hank Venema – International Institute Of Sustainable Development
 - Climate Change Implications for Agro – Manitoba. Leloni Scott, Manitoba Agriculture and Rural Initiatives
 - Seminar Wrap-up - Bob McNabb, Minnedosa Farm Producer

Action: Valerie will send out a copy of the Climate Change Workshop poster to High Schools within RMBR for their interest.

- Woodlot Management Project – Demonstration area for woodlot management. Daryl Nuestader and Valerie met in December to discuss the project in more detail. Daryl will contact those interested in being a part of the steering committee and a draft project proposal will be created in order to obtain funding from the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District as well as for other funding such as the Southwest Regional /development Corporation Board and Nature Conservancy. John Whitaker and Herb Goulden submitted a Project Outline which was distributed to members.

Action: Daryl Nuestader will call a meeting of the proposed Woodlot Management Project steering committee.

Herb Goulden Steps Down – with regrets long time member of the RMBR appointed by the RM of Park has handed in his letter of resignation to the RM of Park and to the RMBR. Herb noted that it was time to get new faces and bring some youth to the RMBR board. Ray Frey has been appointed by the RM of Park to take over Herb’s position.

Herb noted that he has had a great time working with the RMBR board and urged the board to keep up the momentum of the last few years. He noted his desire to have the Board of Directors to meet more often and that there be a closer relationship with the Executive Director in the future. Herbs parting advice to the organization was that “Good governance is the key to a good board.”

On behalf of all the RMBR members, Board of Directors and Executive Director, the Chair, Ray Frey, extended our sincerest thanks for all the hard work and good advice Herb had to give over his many years with the RMBR. Herb was a valuable asset to RMBR and his absence on the board will be felt.

8. Election of Board of Directors

Five members from the founding Rural Municipalities.

Ilse Ketelsen nominated Ray Fry, RM of Park for the position of Director.

Herb Goulden nominated Nick Fiarchuk, RM of Grandview for the position of Director.

John Whitaker nominated Ilse Ketelsen, RM of Rossburn for the position of Director.

Dave Smith nominated Victor Baraniuk, RM of Clanwilliam for the position of Director.

Victor Baraniuk Declined.

Dave Smith nominated Rudy Usick, RM of Clanwilliam for the position of Director.

Herb Goulden nominated Dave Smith, RM of McCreary for the position of Director.

Dave Smith declined.

John Hogg nominated Martin Woodley, RM of Strathclair for the position of Director.

Ray Frey nominated Denis Tokar, RM of Dauphin for the position of Director.

Motion: Herb Goulden, John Whitaker.

“That the nominations for the Board of Directors from the founding rural municipalities cease.”

Carried.

As the result of six (6) persons being nominated for the five (5) positions of Directors a vote was held.

Ray Frey (RM Park), Nick Fiarchuk (RM of Grandview), Ilse Ketelsen (RM of Rossburn), Rudy Usick (RM of Clanwilliam), Martin Woodley (RM of Strathclair) are elected as members of the Board of Directors for the Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve.

Two members from the members at large.

Herb Goulden nominated Daryl Nuestader.

Victor Baraniuk nominated Sandy Walter.

Motion: Herb Goulden, John Hogg.

“That the nominations for the Board of Directors from the members at large cease.”

Carried

Daryl Nuestader and Sandy Walter are elected as members of the Board of Directors for the Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve.

Dwayne Blackbird will acquire the name of the First Nations representative to the Board of Directors and the Chair of the RMBR will be elected at the first Board of Directors meeting.

9. Reports

China – John Whitaker:

- A delegation of Chinese protected land managers came to Canada two years ago. One of the Biosphere Reserves they visited was RMBR
- They were particularly interested in twinning with RMBR however they were more interested in working with RMNP rather than us per se. They are interested in things like Visitor Management and job shadowing rather than Biosphere Reserve issues. This twinning project would be considered more of an aid project as China does not have the same level of expertise as Parks Canada.
- In order for this to go forward there would have to be support from RMNP and Parks Canada
- Parks Canada is not sure what the current policy is for international exchanges such as this. This would have to be reviewed by the Parks Canada central office
- Past Superintendant, Greg Fenton was interested in becoming engaged in the project however nothing was put in writing. At this point it is unclear as to whether or not Parks Canada is interested.

Action: Roger Schroeder will look into the possibility of a twinning project with the Jiuzhaigou Valley Biosphere Reserve

Parks Canada – Ken Kingdon - Samples

Deer Samples

- 291 samples have been received from GHA 23 and 23A
 - 191 samples from ducks
 - 3 or 4 years ago - over 1000 samples
- There is some concern with the low amount of samples collecting in RM of Rosburn, and Grandview
- 90% of the samples in 23A are bucks

Elk Samples

- Only 28 samples from all in 23/23A
- December/January – 18 samples were collected

- compliance from elk hunters is high
- hunters not getting samples
- even numbers in gender

Classified Count

- Cow to calf ratio - 45 usually to 100 cows
 - This year it was 60 calves to 100 cows
 - Elk population is doing ok in the case of calf recruitment
- Saw more elk than in the last four years 644 elk seen
 - 2005 - saw only 338
 - seems that there is no correlation in how many we see in the February total count
 - last year count was 2000
- Where are the elk inside the park?
 - no major shifts in where the elk are from years ago
 - conditions inside the park this year are not moving out of the park
 - snow station at moon lake still in operation
- 3 positive elk from last season - were pulled out
 - 2 cows - 1 bull - early April since then there has been nothing
 - plan to capture 150 to 160 animals in total

10. Adjourn - next meeting date March 13, 2008 – General Meeting

2008 RMBR Meeting Schedule - TBA

March 13, 2008

May 8, 2008

July 10, 2008

September 11, 2008

November 13, 2008