



## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes - October 27, 2023

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the Mid Snake Regional Water Resource Commission was called to order by Commissioner Brent Reinke at 9:20 am.

Present:

**Commissioners**

Brent Reinke – Twin Falls County  
Ron Buhler – Gooding County  
Dan Shaeffer – Minidoka County  
Nathan Schutte – Lincoln County

**Commission Members**

Lew Pence – Chair - Gooding  
Dan Suhr - Jerome  
Bethany Muffley – Acting Ex Director  
Gail Kleinkopf – Twin Falls

**Prospective Member**

Roger Morley – Jerome

**Observing/Tech Support**

Nate Francisco – S. Idaho Solid Waste

Commissioner Reinke began discussion about two documents distributed to commissioners that morning. One was an explanation letter from Bethany Muffley-Ahlin expressing desire to step down into a secretarial role and the other was a letter of support for Roger Morley in consideration as appointee to the executive director position for the Mid Snake RWRC (letters included below). Commissioner Reinke indicated that to comply with open meeting laws, this meeting would only serve to take in information, and that a decision would be scheduled as an agenda item at the next scheduled commission meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Commissioner Reinke opened the floor to Roger Morely so that he could give an overview of his desire to serve as executive director for the commission. Roger explained that he long ago served on the Mid Snake RWRC and could see being involved with the group in an executive director capacity. He mentioned his background as a Commissioner for Jerome County where he had served in several commissions and had also been a force that assisted in the setting up various organizations during that time. Roger expressed that he understands what it takes to get a commission like the Mid Snake RWRC off the ground, but he would need a little more information as far as what executive director duties would be, along with the group's missions and goals. He explained that he is a solution-based problems solver who likes to work with a team and hopes the commission members would provide that. Bethany commented that in her researching of Bob Muffley's files, she believes that Bob (previous executive director) had valued education above all else and had been leading this group as an information gathering entity to engage with and educate policy makers and citizens on the local issues they should be considering. Commissioner Buhler commented that it will take a team to keep this thing going and to keep everyone aware of current issues. He also went on to say that if one is willing to put in the time, and keep the Executive Committee updated so they can all work on it as a team, he sees that as the important part. Commissioner Shaeffer mentioned that the executive director would take guidance from the executive committee. Roger indicated he would consider himself as working for the Executive Committee and he would want to make sure he had their support. Roger mentioned the importance of forming relationships within teams, outside entities, agencies, communities etc. He suggested he is very good at doing these things and that building relationships is what he would intend to do as executive director. He explained that he excels in taking direction, running with that direction, and speaking with

the people who can help navigate forward. Roger did comment that he had less experience with outreach and education. Commissioner Schutte expressed to Roger that he has pertinent experience and valid connections, then went on to say that if Bethany is intending to stay on in a secretarial capacity, she would be able to fill any gaps as far as outreach and education is involved.

Commissioner Reinke explained a bit of the history on the original purpose of this commission in its response to the terrible conditions in the Snake River at the time of its creation. He then went on to acknowledge that in the 4 counties this commission represents, the commissioners may not have an updated description of current commission objectives because we are in a different time with different issues. Commissioner Reinke expressed that the primary mission in the next 12 months should be to define the mission and value of this commission in today's world. He suggested that effort needs to be refocused to address current issues with all there is to worry about in relation to water resources. Lew Pence supported Commissioner Reinke's sentiment and relayed that he had started the commission in the early 90s, and Bob Muffley had ran with it. Lew commented that the commission offers a forum for entities including federal, state, county, industry, interest groups and citizens to get together and have the important discussions addressing water issues (above and below), and work towards solutions. Dan Suhr expressed that the most important thing the commission had done was forming the agreement between counties that Jim Jones put together which gave counties the authority to group together behind a common cause, using one voice, and be able to legally take on entities who may not be behaving in best interest for the Mid Snake. Gail Kleinkopf agreed with Dan and went on to describe that the commission spends a lot of time working on updating the Plan to address current needs. He mentioned the economic evaluations that are included within the Plan that highlight the value of Ag and the value of the Snake River within the mid snake region. He expressed that updating the Plan is important all around, and relayed the value of having subject matter experts come in and present to the commission to assist in making these updates.

Commissioner Buhler offered potential topics for the commission (recreational impacts and addressing noxious weeds and invasive species that now known to occur in our Mid Snake area). Commissioner Schaffner supported that sentiment and went on to express that the invasive mussel issue is everyone's problem. Brent commented that the mussel situation is not going to go away and then went on to reference several other meetings he attends (WAG, BAG, Water Board, Water Resource Board, Canal Districts, ISDA, INEL, etc.) and suggested this is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of water issues that need to be addressed, and the need for us all to become water experts. He mentioned that the players have been changing rapidly, and many don't know the history of this group. He expressed that our mission, vision and values need to be defined for this commission to move forward in the attempt to make counties think to fund this program first, and not just as an afterthought.

Commissioner Reinke asked Roger if this discussion had helped to answer questions in relation to what the executive director role would look like in this commission. Roger suggested that it had and relayed that it had given him some good insight and direction. Commissioner Reinke asked for closing comments. Commissioner Buhler agreed with Commissioner Schutte on the importance of education. Commissioner Shaeffer indicated that we were on the right track.

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Reinke at 9:53am.

Respectfully Submitted



Bethany Muffley, Executive Director (Acting)

Important: Executive Director Information...

**B**

**Bethany Muffley-Ahlin** <bmuffley@midsnakewater.org>

Mon, Oct 16,  
3:16 PM

to Ron, Ron, Nathan, Charles, Brent, Bethany, Bob, Lew, Donna

Greetings Executive Committee,

It is with a heavy heart that I write the following message...

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to assist in keeping the Mid Snake RWRC operational since my father's passing. I am honored that you trusted me to help continue Bob's work and it has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to get to know a side of him that I never knew existed before meeting and interacting with you all. I want to thank you all for the patience you have been showing me as well as the encouragement to keep moving forward.

It has been difficult for me to find a balance between my commission, home, and work life, and I can now see that this difficulty will not ease with time. My mother, Mari Muffley, has suffered from Parkinson's disease for the past 12 years and we are starting to see a decline in her mental capacity. Dad was the one who was there for her, and now my sisters and I are trying to fill his place in that role as well. The Mid Snake Quagga Response is also one that will be ongoing for years to come. We are still in the process of discovering how this detection will impact the responsibilities assigned to us at ISDA, but I can tell you we will be throwing everything we have at eradicating the threat, and all of us have the passion to continue fighting. As far as home life, my husband has been supportive in the extra time I have been spending away from our family unit, but I can see that my increased absence is starting to impact our personal dynamics in a way that has not been healthy for either of us.

With all that, I am writing you to let you know that I am not going to be able to keep up with Executive Director responsibilities for the commission, and as much as I want to be, I know in my heart I am not the person you need to steer this ship. This group deserves someone with more knowledge and time than I am able to provide, and I very much want for you to find that perfect person before many of the members choose to retire starting in April of next year. I believe that it will be important for members to pass their acquired knowledge on to a new ED before exiting, and I don't want to take that away from the commission while I fill in as acting ED. Time, proximity, and knowledge of local water resource issues have been my biggest hurdles in all this, so I would encourage that your candidate be someone who has a

bit of all of those things. A few of the members have had ideas on suitable candidates, and I believe that Dan Suhr will be bringing someone to our next meeting to see what they think about it all.

Please know that this does not mean I intend to disappear from the commission (unless you are tired of looking at me (LOL)). I would like to continue to assist in running/documenting meetings, generating outreach, and managing the website. I am not sure how that would look from an appointment standpoint but I did see plan narrative (page 78) which outlines that an ED can employ people as needed if budget allows (see below). I would be willing to stay in as secretary for as long as needed, or for as long as the next ED would want me to. My biggest issue as acting ED is having the time and knowledge to know who to reach out to and what to say (the collaboration aspect). The secretarial stuff is not difficult for me to navigate, and is easy for me to complete remotely from Boise.

*7. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Executive Committee shall have and may exercise the following powers and duties:*

*e. To hire an executive director for the Commission, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Committee. Such executive director shall serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee, carry on its business as directed on an on-going basis, and act as its secretary-treasurer. **The executive director may, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, employ and remove any consultants, experts or other employees as may be needed with the constraints of the budget approved by the Member Counties.***

<https://www.midsnakewater.org/water-resource-plan>

Thank you so much for your time and please let me know if you have any suggestions or questions. I am still here so don't hesitate to reach out and tell me what you need me to do to help in any sort of transition.

--



**Bethany Muffley-Ahlin**

Acting Executive Director

208-830-0641

[www.midsnakewater.org](http://www.midsnakewater.org)

Letter of support for Roger Morley...

**B**

**Bethany Muffley-Ahlin** <[bmuffley@midsnakewater.org](mailto:bmuffley@midsnakewater.org)>

Thu, Oct 26,  
10:32 AM

to Brent, bcc: Lew, bcc: Rodger

Commissioner Reinke,

In speaking with Roger Morely, he has indicated that he would look forward to serving at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Roger has quite a resume and I wanted to share with you an email I asked him to generate highlighting his achievements...

*Bethany, it has been a pleasure to meet you. Thanks for the call this morning.*

*I thought I would drop you an email with regard to my experience. Went through and read the plan today and the Authorization section twice again. A lot to learn but I have experience in many of the areas included. Most of the CAFO areas are very familiar to me such as the Nutrient Management Plans and various CAFO dynamics. I am a team player and truly believe that inclusion and brainstorming can solve almost any problem.*

*As a County Commissioner from Jerome (2010-2018) I have had to address many of the dynamics related to the Snake River and the associated aquifer on many occasions. Depletion of the aquifer has been a constant concern to all of us that live here. We authorized recharge efforts during my term as Commissioner out of concern. I have also been on Planning and Zoning in Jerome with Jack Nelsen as Chairman. As Commissioners we rezoned our airport and worked as a team with many of the farm families to assure them their farming operations would not be impacted. Also, after 6 failed tries to build a jail, we 3 Commissioners got a jail bond passed by including citizen committees to be involved in the process and being very open as to procedures and expenses by holding community meetings that were advertised. The Commissioners of Jerome were all schooled in the election process. So, we decided to get the jail elected and involve the public like you would in an election. It worked with 71% approval. We also created the Snake River Canyon Park for recreation. This was another old project that could never get done. What we did was to include all the user groups (4-wheel users), BLM, Department of Lands, Jerome County, Fish and Game, Rep. Simpson, Sen. Risch and Sen. Crapo and The 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Foundation. With all our representation and our Federal officials backing the plan and informing all parties to play fair and get this done, Jerome County got a 6000-acre park for a recreational draw to the area. I also sat on the Southern Idaho Solid Waste Board for 8 years, and in that experience, we were able to build a trash fired power plant that serviced 2400 homes.*

*I told you all of this to say I can bring sides together to accomplish a task. I also was on Idaho Business Review Power list for Health Care and on the Tri-County Noxious Weed Board, Professional Voice Talent for Golds Gym, Urban Renewal Commissioner, Idaho Commission on Aging appointed by Gov. Little and nominated by Rep. Maxine Bell and I am now Chairman of the Idaho Commission on Aging.*

*I have lived on the Snake River all my life and feel attached to that beautiful body of water that the Native Americans called the great life giver. All the different tribes were called the Snakes because of the river. My family came here because of the river and the farming the river provided.*

*Bethany, I understand that this is going to be a big job, but having the commission for input, and passionate people around me to help, we will be able to get this done and try to fill your dad's shoes.*

*Respects:*

*Roger Morley*

I would now like to share my initial assessments with you. Roger was invited to the meeting by Dan Suhr who asked him if he would have an interest in taking on the Executive Director position. Before attending the meeting, he had already read through the Plan so that he would have an idea of exactly what entering this commission would entail. To me, that shows he has a genuine interest, and in taking the time to read the plan, he has a genuine interest in doing it right. We were able to have a discussion after our last meeting and he indicated that after seeing this group in action, he would be overjoyed to be appointed as our Executive Director. He sees the potential for the group and understands the importance of keeping it going (I saw in him exactly what I had (have) when I entered into this group months ago). In continuing our discussion, Roger was very excited to learn of my background in outreach and video editing. He commented that having an individual with that kind of a background will be extremely beneficial in helping us deliver pertinent messages to the public, and that it could also pave the way for the commission to create in house public service announcements to assist in reaching larger audiences.

In the time I have been with the commission, it became clear to me that all the duties my father was able to take on were probably fit to be the duties of at least two, if not three people. In my opinion, I think the only reason he was able to do this was because he had the background knowledge of being on the ground level from the very beginning (and because he was incredible). He understood the mission intimately and was a man who could get things done. It would take me a lifetime to get to his understanding. Roger is also a man who can get things done and he knows the players who can help make things happen. He understands that there will be a learning curve, but I believe he will be able to hit the ground running in a way that I would never be able to achieve. I know in earlier meetings it was discussed that Bob's compensation was not enough for all that he did. I didn't even want to look at increasing it because I didn't have the slightest clue on how much of a value I could be for the commission. I believe that Roger will be a value, and with that, I would like to propose the following...

The authorization section outlines that the ED will serve as treasurer and secretary. My proposal is that secretarial duties be taken off the ED's plate and assigned to an additional person (appointee or have it sourced out). The plan does outline that an ED has the ability to hire outside resources to assist in carrying out commission activities and this led me to the thought that a secretary could be hired on to tackle that duty. I would be willing to serve the commission in that capacity so that I can continue setting up for the meetings and taking the minutes (which are a bit of a time sink) to allow your next ED the time to find their place in the role. I would also be bringing my educational outreach background with me and would like to begin working on many of the outreach items we have been discussing in previous meetings. My suggestion is that this position be compensated on an hourly basis so that I would only be paid based on the time I am able to offer (I know some months I have more time than others). I started researching the average wages for secretaries and media content generators in the state of Idaho and have landed on \$20-25 an hour for activities performed. I asked Roger his thoughts on compensation, and he indicated that for now as he learns, he could see an increase in ED compensation to have an additional \$200 added to the \$550 monthly amount (\$750/month). Currently, there is enough money left over from previous years to cover the additional expenses I am proposing, and our proposed budget would need to be amended to include the updated amounts (it actually needs to be amended anyway since Minidoka decided not to join us this year).

I plan to work closely with the new ED to relay all that I have learned. I would also like to generate a list of items that may be helpful to dispense to newer members on our Executive Committee to help

streamline their understanding of what the commission needs from them (as far as providing guidance to the commission, appointing members, etc.). I really hope the meeting goes well and I look forward to hearing all about it. I can't be there in person but would like to call in in case anyone has any questions for me. I will see if Lew can figure out how to put me on speaker phone.

Thank you so much for your time and I hope this email was helpful!

--



**Bethany Muffley-Ahlin**

Acting Executive Director

208-830-0641

[www.midsnakewater.org](http://www.midsnakewater.org)