

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL HELD ON April 13, 2006 AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANGAN, 1450 KLO ROAD, KELOWNA, BC AT 12:00 NOON.

PRESENT:

Bob Hrasko, Director, Water Supply Association
Tom Siddon, Co-Chair of Water Flagship Group, Okanagan Partnership
Valerie Cameron, Water Stewardship Division, Ministry of Environment
~~Paul Kluckner, Regional Director, Environment Canada (absent)~~
Deana Machin, Manager, Fisheries Program, Okanagan Nation Alliance
~~Rob Smailes, Director, Development Services, Regional District North Okanagan~~
Leah Hartley, Planner, Regional District Central Okanagan
Marty Willfong, Development Services, Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
~~Brian Symonds, A/Director, Regional Operations, Ministry of Environment (absent)~~
Bernie Bauer, Dean of Arts and Sciences, UBC Okanagan
Brian Guy, Director, BC Branch, Canadian Water Resource Association
Mike Adams, Drinking Water Protection Officer, North Okanagan Interior Health
Gord Shandler, Water Commission, BC Fruit Growers Association
Hans Buchler, Chair, Water Committee, BC Agriculture Council
Ted van der Gulik, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Scott Schillereff, Vice President, BC Ground Water Association
Dave Casorso, BC Cattleman's Association
Grant Maddock, Protech Engineering, Urban Development Institute
~~Tom Roemer, Okanagan College (absent)~~
Michelle Boshard, Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society
Rick McKelvey, Director, South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program
Drew Kaiser, CORD Environmental Advisory Committee
Neal Klassen, Contractor/Operator, City of Kelowna Water Conservation Program
Stu Wells, Community Futures
Reg Crane, Greater Vernon Water Stewardship Council
Peter Dill, Friends of Mission Creek
Denise Neilsen, Research Scientist, Agriculture Canada

STAFF:

Greg Armour, Project Manager, Okanagan Basin Water Board
Debbie Taylor, Recording Secretary

OTHERS

PRESENT:

John Slater, Chair, Okanagan Basin Water Board
Lorraine Bennest, Director, Okanagan Basin Water Board
Four others in gallery
Members of the media

Mr. van der Gulik gave a presentation on water use in agriculture from 12:00 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Siddon called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chair Siddon asked that the minutes be amended to reflect that during the election for Chair, Ted van der Gulik had also been nominated.

Moved by Stu Wells

Seconded by Valerie Cameron

"That the minutes of a meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held on March 23, 2006 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan Woodhaven Board Room be adopted as amended."

CARRIED.

3. APPOINTMENTS TO THE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Chair Siddon introduced two new representatives appointed by the Okanagan Basin Water Board to the Water Stewardship Council; Dr. Denise Neilsen and Dr. Peter Dill. He advised that Mr. Bob Whitehead had resigned due to conflicting business requirements.

Moved by Michelle Boshard

Seconded by Bernie Bauer

"That the List of Members of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be adopted as amended."

CARRIED.

4. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

"That Item 5.2 being Major Policy Focus be added to the Agenda."

All in Favour.

5. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**5.1 Vision and Mission Statements**

Brian Guy presented some suggestions for a vision and mission for the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC).

OWSC Vision Statement for the Okanagan:

An environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable Okanagan Basin, in which water of sufficient quality and quantity is available for the benefit of all water-dependent organisms and communities.

OWSC Mission Statement for the Okanagan:

The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) was created by the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) to provide policy and technical advice to the OBWB. The mission of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council is to help the OBWB fulfill its mandate to coordinate water management throughout the Okanagan basin by providing sound technical and policy advice on water issues of basin-wide relevance.

The GOALS of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council are:

- To adopt an ecosystem-based approach to thinking about and managing water resources;
- To empower the public and all stakeholders to play a role in shaping water management policy in the Okanagan basin;
- To help the OBWB create political will to achieve the objectives of wise water management in the basin;
- To promote improved governance of the water resource of the basin;
- To foster increased knowledge of the basin's water resources and increased understanding of the value of water;
- To encourage changes in human behaviour related to water;
- To share knowledge about water issues in the basin with all stakeholders; and
- To inform water policy in the Okanagan basin.

Mr. Guy proposed that a committee to the Council be struck to refine the mission vision and goals. Ms. Cameron, Mr. Crane, Mr. Guy and Mr. Hrasko volunteered to form the committee.

Moved by Chair Siddon

Seconded by Bernie Bauer

"That draft recommendations presented by Mr. Guy be received as an interim working document and a committee consisting of Valerie Cameron, Reg Crane, Brian Guy and Bob Hrasko refine the vision, mission and goals of the Water Stewardship Council."

CARRIED.

ACTION ITEM: Sub-Committee consisting of Ms. Cameron, Mr. Crane, Mr. Guy, and Mr. Hrasko to refine the vision, mission and goals of the Water Stewardship Council.

5.2 Major Policy Focus of the OWSC

Chair Siddon commented that we need to define what constitutes a water shortage, not just as an academic exercise for the future, but for the present as well. John Slater said that the recommendations of the Council will be taken seriously by the OBWB. A budget to initiate these recommendations was in place and partnership from senior government was expected.

Mr. Armour reported on the compilation of policies and projects identified by Council members as their priorities. The policy items (with associated projects in parentheses) named by the greatest number of Council members were:

- Core Philosophical Approach (develop guiding principles for adoption by OBWB)
- Water Management Plan (understanding of basin wide water usage, water basin plan, support supply and demand study)
- Water Conservation (variety of measures)
- Water Education (communication and education through pilot projects with a measurable output)

Mr. Armour added that the Council will not be taking on projects itself but will make recommendations to the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

Mr. Hrasko commented that many of the projects identified could also be considered policy issues. Core policies should be broad based and aimed at the whole basin.

Ms. Cameron noted that a water management plan is a major undertaking which might take away from progress of the Council.

Mr. Siddon replied that the Council or the Okanagan Basin Water Board should not try to replace what senior government is equipped to do. Our plan would be broad based and not regulatory.

Ms. Hartley said that many plans, such as the Okanagan Shuswap LRMP, have been shelved and never implemented.

Mr. McKelvey suggested that a water budget is the first basic step toward producing a twenty page summary of where we want to go and how to

get there.

Ms. Cameron said that the OWSC should provide high level vision and guidance and perhaps a sub-committee could look at other basin plans for information and ideas.

Mr. van der Gulik brought up the concept of water centric planning as another issue for consideration. The Town of Oliver is being used for a pilot project to enable water centric thinking to be used as a tool for planners. He said that funding for the project runs out in July and perhaps the Council should recommend funding for further projects. The B.C. Real Estate Foundation and the Ministry of Environment are also contributors. The Council agreed to have Mr. Kim Stephens of the BCWWA Water Sustainability Committee make a brief noon hour presentation at the May 11th meeting.

Mr. McKelvey said that we need an inventory of work going on in the valley.

Mr. van der Gulik offered to ask Joanne DeVries to speak at the next meeting and outline her work on the waterbucket.ca website. He suggested that \$20,000 be set aside to form a Community of Interest on the website for all Okanagan activity. Information would be constantly updated.

Mr. Guy left at 2:05 p.m.

Mr. Dill stated that putting forward a well researched model should be the responsibility of the Council.

Mr. McKelvey said there is a difference between a plan and a model.

Chair Siddon recommended we return to more immediate issues and a smaller task group might be formed to deal with the long range policy issues.

Chair Siddon proposed that a committee to the Council be struck to determine existing projects for presentation at the next Council meeting. Mr. Hrasko would chair the committee. Mr. McKelvey, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Hartley, Mr. Buchler, Mr. Kaiser, Ms. Boshard, and Ms. Machin volunteered to form the committee.

ACTION ITEM: Sub-Committee consisting of Mr. Hrasko (Chair), Mr. McKelvey, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Hartley, Mr. Buchler, Mr. Kaiser, Ms.

Boshard, and Ms. Machin to determine existing projects for presentation at the May 11, 2006 Council meeting.

Mr. Casorso left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

5.3 Project Discussion

Mr. Armour briefed the Council on the Water Quantity and Quality Initiatives Grant applications. He advised that the OBWB had allocated \$300,000 towards supporting local government projects that demonstrated better use and management of water. Five applications had been received to date. He noted that the Water Board was concerned that involvement of the Stewardship Council in assessing applications might take away from the purpose of the Council.

Ms. Machin asked if First Nations were eligible for grants.

Mr. Armour said that since First Nations did not pay into the OBWB, they were not eligible.

The Council discussed having a review committee to help make recommendations to the Water Board.

Mr. Dill said the purpose is to change attitudes and we should assist those projects that do this where possible.

Mr. Crane proposed that we get information out about where we are going, possibly through media articles.

Chair Siddon suggested a small contract to put together a communication package.

Mr. Klassen commented that we should look out for projects that would get done anyway, overdone projects, and make work projects.

Mr. Armour advised that criteria for assessment of the value of projects had been established including the preference for those with a measurable outcome. He agreed to bring the grant applications to the next meeting.

Mr. van der Gulik proposed that Alliance Professional Services develop a communication plan for the Okanagan and set up the link with the waterbucket.ca website. He will arrange for Joanne DeVries to make a presentation at the next meeting.

Mr. Slater noted that the Okanagan Basin Water Board would have to approve any contract issued.

Mr. Adams and Mr. Kaiser left the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

The meeting broke for a recess at 2:50 p.m. and reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

The Honourable Barry Penner, Minister of Environment entered the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Minister Penner presented Okanagan Basin Water Board Chair John Slater with a grant in the amount of \$350,000 toward the Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Study to be administered in collaboration between the Water Board and the Ministry. The Minister said he had an interest in the deliberations of the OWSC especially in making recommendations for future sustainable water use.

The Minister left the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Mr. McKelvey said that although we cannot limit growth in the valley, there will have to be trade-offs and we should make the best decisions possible to decide on these trade-offs.

The Council agreed to a discussion at the next meeting for 45 minutes focusing on the process of determining principles for the Council. Michelle Boshard will facilitate the session.

Chair Siddon stressed the importance of First Nations participation in this process.

Mr. Wells left the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Mr. McKelvey and Mr. van der Gulik stated that one principle should be that anyone can apply for a grant, including First Nations.

6. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2006 at 12:00 noon to be held at the Woodhaven Board Room at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Chair

Program Manager