



MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD JANUARY 5, 2010, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN, 9848 ABERDEEN ROAD, COLDSTREAM, BRITISH COLUMBIA

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Gordon Clark	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Michael Brydon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Graeme James	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Buffy Baumbrough	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Gyula Kiss	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC

REGRETS

Director Tim Manual	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Genevieve Dunbar	Office and Grants Administrator
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator

GUESTS:

Susan Latimer	Coordinator, Foreshore Inventory Mapping, OCCP
Brian Guy	Manager, Okanagan Water Supply & Demand Project
Honourable John Slater	Parliamentary Secretary for Water Allocation

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Director Baker

Seconded by Director Pike

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of January 5, 2010 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

Item 7.2 – Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project – Phase 3 report
Item 7.3 – Chair update

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 1, 2009 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

Amendments:
Item 6.1.1, correct typo

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Kiss

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 1, 2009, held at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS

- 5.1 Susan Latimer, Coordinator, Foreshore Inventory Mapping, OCCP.

Ms. Latimer presented findings of the Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) project – a program partly funded through an OBWB Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant. She noted that most large Okanagan lakes have now been mapped, documenting the current state of the foreshore and providing a baseline of information to guide land-use planning. The FIM Action Team has endorsed the development of an Okanagan Lake analysis and a single shape profile of the lake as a next step, Ms. Latimer added.

Dir. Baumbrough asked how the information is being used by local government. Ms. Latimer responded that it is currently used by local government to review development applications and it can be used to rank foreshore value.

Dir. Bauer asked about the use of video in helping develop the maps. Ms. Latimer said the video provides a visual point-in-time which is useful when dealing with development applications, but also for documenting violations for enforcement purposes.

Dir. Findlater asked about First Nations involvement in the project. Ms. Latimer said Okanagan Nation Alliance and the Okanagan Band have been contacted. The Okanagan Indian Band has responded and said they would like to be kept informed of the work but do not want to be on the Action Team. The ONA will be receiving a copy of the findings and the information is available to anyone, she added.

Dir. Clark questioned if there's an end to this type of data recording and who's paying for it. Dr. Warwick Sears answered that the OBWB has paid for portions of it, but it's a collaborative effort and the goal is to link the foreshore maps together to create an Okanagan Habitat Atlas.

Dir. Baker noted that this project is in line with the OBWB mandate in that it documents the health of the lake. Whereas in the past this was documented verbally, we now have visual evidence. Dir. Baker then asked about federal funding involvement. Ms. Latimer answered that Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans provided in-kind video-taping.

In responding to Dir. Brydon's question about who is setting the requirements for what's in the maps, Ms. Latimer said the data protocol was developed by local governments.

Ms. Latimer noted that without this documentation, the information used by local decision makers to decide what is a concern and what is not is subjective.

Dir. Clark wondered if there should be more involvement by senior levels of government. Chair Wells responded that it would likely be downloaded back to local government without financial support.

In response to Dir. Pike, Ms. Latimer said the project will not document water quality at this time.

5.2 Brian Guy, Project Manager, Okanagan Water Supply & Demand Project: Update on current status of water supply & demand study

Dr. Guy, on contract to lead the OBWB's Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project (OWS&D), presented an update to the board. In providing some background, Dr. Guy noted that the project fits the OBWB's mandate to provide basin-wide planning. The need for such a study was recognized following the 2003 Okanagan drought, especially since the last supply and demand assessment was done in 1974.

There is tremendous variability in water supply year-to-year and we have to be able to plan, especially as the climate continues to change with longer, drier summers, and there's continued population growth, he said.

Dr. Guy explained that Phase 2 data-collection is coming to a close. Preliminary results indicate agriculture accounts for 54 percent of actual water use, domestic outdoor is 24 percent, domestic indoor: seven percent, golf courses: five percent, commercial: four percent, industrial: three percent, parks/open space: two percent, and institutional: one percent. Improvements in water efficiency will be required in all of these sectors, but especially with agriculture and domestic outdoor use, he noted. Actual water use is not the same as licensed volume, and many sectors are already using substantially less than they are allocated.

With many streams already fully-allocated, developers are now moving to groundwater which is not regulated or licenced, Dr. Guy added. The project team is now preparing for the next phase of the project which will include policy recommendations to address these issues. Final results of the three-year project will be launched as part of World Water Week in March, 2010.

Dir. Baumbrough noted that the study shows tremendous inefficiencies in use. Dr. Guy responded saying that the biggest impact will be with increased efficiency in agricultural and other outdoor use.

In response to questions from Dir. Baker, Dr. Guy noted that it will be important to continue to protect upland watersheds for future water supplies and this will affect the reservoir lot issue.

Dir. Fairbairn asked how close we are to determining what is going on with water supply and demand. Dr. Guy said that the team has eked out the best information possible but more information is needed. For example, some of the work was conducted based on maps that were done in the past by various agencies. Those maps were done for particular purposes and do not answer all the questions the OWS&D project team may be looking to find.

Dir. Brydon asked what the board can do with this information and if it will be suggesting policy changes. Chair Wells answered if there is interest in this, yes. Dr. Warwick Sears added that Phase 3 is aimed at creating policy recommendations and that the board could assist with this over the next year.

Dir. Findlater noted that mandatory metering is happening in Westbank and other areas of West Kelowna will follow. The question now is how does one help agriculture become more efficient.

Dir. Baker added that the OBWB must provide this information to local governments to act upon and the agricultural community will have to be involved. Chair Wells agreed.

Dir. Kiss said that perhaps it's time we look at the crops we plant in the Okanagan, as well as encourage more golf courses to switch to recycled water and look at domestic water rates as part of the policy changes resulting from the project.

Dir. Bauer added that just because agriculture is the largest user, does not mean it is the largest waster and it does provide direct benefits such as food and tourism. Lawns offer no return on investment and so we need to proceed cautiously on policy making, he noted. Dr. Guy concluded that although golf courses use less water overall than agriculture they use more per unit of land.

Doug Findlater left the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears explained that the motion below came out of a concern raised by Dir. Baumbrough that Board Reports aren't being included in some local government agenda packages and the OBWB is missing out on a communications opportunity and perhaps a formal request would be appropriate.

Moved by Director Bauer

Seconded by Director Baumbrough

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to each member jurisdiction, with a brief overview of recent activities, an offer to make a presentation to their Board or Council, and a request that the Board Report be included in their agendas when it is made available each month.”

CARRIED

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the OWS&D project would be completed in March instead of January because of consultant contracts, adding that the goal is to officially launch the results with UBC-O for World Water Week.

She added that she has had discussions with Ministry of Environment about coordinating our communication about drought and working together towards a basin-wide effort.

Dir. Bauer suggested that the board will need to discuss how to roll out the OWS&D Project as part of World Water Week.

Dir. Findlater reentered the room at 12:42 p.m.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted the following motion came out of a request from Dir. Findlater that it would be valuable to investigate whether the OBWB should convene a technical committee of Okanagan water utilities to discuss common interests.

Dir. Findlater explained this came out of discussions among Westside water suppliers and local government about using a different model for collaboration. Discussion ensued regarding the role of a technical committee vs. the existing role of the Water Supply Association of B.C. Following the discussion Dir. Findlater concluded that the addressing of water issues was scattered before West Kelowna's incorporation and maybe this has been sorted out.

Moved by Director Findlater

Seconded by Director Baker

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to the Water Supply Association of BC, requesting that the Association convene a standing committee of Okanagan water suppliers to promote best management practices in the Okanagan Basin.”

DEFEATED

Moved by Director Findlater

Seconded by Director Baker

“THAT the Executive Director Report from Dr. Warwick Sears dated December 21, 2009, be received.”

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported that an update on the Endocrine Disruptor Project is planned for next month's OBWB meeting, Feb. 2.

Mr. Jatel also noted a proposal for Agriflex funding is being developed with support from Ministry of Environment's Water Stewardship Division and the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council's Groundwater Committee. The proposal identifies high priority and sensitive aquifers that need monitoring.

Moved by Director Bauer

Seconded by Director Baker

“THAT the OBWB authorize the grant application for Agriflex funding.”

CARRIED

Mr. Jatel presented issues that the board may wish the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) to look at and make recommendations on in the coming year, such as groundwater management, integrated storm water management, a water supply pricing policy, and Okanagan Basin Water Governance.

Dir. Fairbairn suggested these are four emergent issues and the OWSC was formed to provide expertise to the board. Dir. Brydon added the Water Act Modernization (WAM) is a once in a lifetime opportunity that should be addressed in the short-term.

Moved by Director Baker

Seconded by Director Clark

“THAT the OWSC make recommendations to the OBWB on policy positions and make Modernization of the Water Act the priority.”

CARRIED

Mr. Jatel noted that the speaker at the next OWSC meeting will be John Thompson who helped modernize Alberta's current Water Act.

To improve communication between the OWSC and the board, Mr. Jatel said OBWB staff members are now preparing highlights from the council meetings which are being included in his monthly report to the board.

Moved by Director Kiss

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director Report from Mr. Jatel dated December 22, 2009, be received.”

CARRIED

Chair Wells noted the great turnout at OWSC meetings. Unfortunately it's difficult for RDOS directors to attend because they have their regional district meetings those days. Dir. Bauer said there was discussion at the last OWSC meeting about changing the time because it was difficult for some to attend but it was decided it worked for most so it was left. Ms. Dunbar added a joint OBWB/OWSC meeting is planned for late 2010.

6.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

6.3.1 MLA John Slater e-mail regarding launch of Living Water Smart blog

Ms. Jackson reported on a meeting with a focus group for the WaterWise strategy. The group was able to provide feedback on appropriate language and imaging.

Ms. Jackson noted a news release went out encouraging applications to the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program, and an e-mail was distributed reminding people to provide input to B.C.'s Living Water Smart blog and their thoughts on the Water Act Modernization.

Moved by Director Clark

Seconded by Director Baker

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator Report from Ms. Jackson dated December 21, 2009, be received.”

CARRIED

Dir. Pike suggested staff find out how WCQI grant applicants get on their local government's agendas for council/board approval of their applications and what the deadlines are to do this to meet the grant deadline. He further asked that this information be distributed to interested parties.

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 OBWB Goals and Objectives

7.1.1 Looking back at 2009

Moved by Director Clark

Seconded by Director Findlater

“THAT the OBWB accept the 2009 report for information.”

CARRIED

7.1.2 Looking forward to 2010

Dir. Brydon suggested changing the term OBWB policy to “position” and asked if there is staff time or funding to hire someone to look at policy. Dr./Dir. Bauer asked if the OBWB should be proactive in working with the Integrated Land Management Bureau about source water protection and noted that these issues are supported with the OWS&D model. Chair Wells agreed. Dr. Warwick Sears added there is funding in Phase 3 of the OWS&D Project to work on policy recommendations.

Moved Baker

Seconded Kiss

“THAT the OBWB adopt the 2010 report, with the change in wording from policy to position, be adopted.

CARRIED

7.2 Okanagan Water Supply & Demand Project – Phase 3

Dr. Warwick Sears explained that the Okanagan Water Supply & Demand Project needs a steering committee to work closely with the board on policy development. The committee can then work out a plan to move the project forward. The organizational structure and Phase 3 plan requires board confirmation which includes re-constituting a Steering Committee and obtaining new commitments from the project partnership.

Moved by Director Baker

Seconded by Director Bombraugh

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board invite the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Environment Canada, and UBC-O to re-appoint their representatives to the Phase 3 Steering Committee of the Water Supply & Demand Project.”

CARRIED

Directors Pike and Bauer abstained.

Moved by Director Bombraugh

Seconded by Director Clark

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board request the Steering Committee to reconstitute a technical working group to guide the progress of Phase 3.”

CARRIED

Directors Pike and Bauer abstained.

7.3 Report from the Chair:

There are Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen board members who don't represent areas in the Okanagan Basin, but rather the Similkameen, and who want to be involved in water issues (e.g. the Mayor of Keremeos). Chair Wells asked Dr. Warwick Sears to begin a dialogue with them and look at ways to involve them. Dir. Clark added anything that makes for a water-conscious culture is important and should be encouraged.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Premier Gordon Campbell response to OBWB Drought Workshop Letter

Moved by Director Baker

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receives the correspondence from Premier Campbell regarding the OBWB Drought Workshop”.

CARRIED

8.2 Jamshed Merchant, Agriculture Canada, letter to Dr. Warwick Sears

Moved by Director Baker

Seconded by Director James

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receives the correspondence from Mr. Merchant of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada regarding a meeting between his staff and the OBWB.”

CARRIED

9. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held on February 2, 2010, at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

Dir. James noted there needs to be a greater attempt to involve First Nations at the OBWB. Chair Wells and Dir. Baker agreed. Dr. Warwick Sears added the OWS&D Project has looked at water needs on reserve lands so there should be an effort to include them in the outreach about the results of this project.

Dir. Pike suggested the OBWB ask the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) if it can hold its April meeting at their office and have a presentation that addressed their interests.

Moved by Director Pike

Seconded by Director Clark

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board asks the ONA to host the April board meeting at their offices and hold a presentation that discusses their interests.”

CARRIED

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Kiss

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of January 5, 2010 be adjourned at 2:21 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director