



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD NOV. 1, 2011, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Buffy Baumbrough	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Graeme James	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Gordon Clark	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. director Mark Pendergraft	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC

REGRETS

Director Gwen Bridge	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator
Melissa Tesche	Water Projects Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

7.1 In-camera to adopt minutes of last in-camera meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 1, 2011 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 4, 2011 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream, B.C.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 4, 2011 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Anna Warwick Sears told Board of Directors about an OBWB climate adaptation tools training workshop on Nov. 22 and 23 for local government and consultants. Natural Resources Canada is providing \$13,700 with the OBWB providing \$4,000.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Oct. 26, 2011, be received.”
CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel noted that Mr. Robert Sandford will be speaking at the next Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meeting.

Drilling for additional groundwater wells is going ahead in November and the council is discussing the best process to support valley-wide shoreline management.

Alt. Dir. Pendergraft entered the meeting at 10:21 a.m.

Mr. Jatel reported on a funding application that has been submitted to model the implications of an Agricultural Water Reserve (AWR) project in up to five Okanagan sub-basins. The work of the AWR is intended to inform the Water Act Modernization process. The BC Agriculture Council, which is also looking into an AWR, has developed guidelines for a reserve and the Water Stewardship Council is evaluating these guidelines.

Following on questions, Mr. Jatel noted that recommendations regarding an AWR will come from the Water Stewardship Council and the board will be asked for feedback.

Dir. James asked to see a copy of the BC Ag Council report and noted his interest in attending some of the stewardship council’s AWR committee meetings.

Mr. Jatel reported that 15 to 20 Okanagan utilities will be participating in the OBWB’s Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool (SWURT), reporting monthly water use. This represents about 65% of all Okanagan Basin extractions.

The council is working to establish hydrometric monitoring stations. It is also conducting a study that looks at hydrometric connectivity in the valley and what happens under different scenarios under the current First-in-Time First-in-Right system, and then what happens in the case of drought, climate change and population growth. This study will help plan for water management in the Okanagan under various scenarios, Mr. Jatel explained.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Oct. 25, 2011, be received.”
CARRIED

5.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson provided board directors with copies of the *Slow it. Spread it. Sink it!* homeowner’s guide to collecting and using rain as a resource on their property.

Directors provided a number of suggestions for distribution of the guide including libraries, middle and high schools, garden clubs (perhaps with a speaker going to speak to the clubs), the construction industry and development agencies (e.g. UDI), and local government building departments.

It was also suggested that a brochure be created, paring the information down to a few pages.

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator’s Report, dated Oct. 25, 2011, be received.”

CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 SARA listing of Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on the recent Government of Canada public consultation meeting in Penticton, regarding the proposed listing of the Okanagan’s Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel as “endangered” under the Species at Risk Act. A number of people spoke on the reasons for listing the mussel, she said, but many questions remain, including whether or not it’s even possible to bring the population back.

The impact from the listing needs to be considered, as well as other methods to protect the RMRM, added Dr. Warwick Sears. To allow the listing would affect the ability of the OBWB to control milfoil in the Okanagan, which in turn would have an economic impact on local governments. A listing could also affect lake level management and the ability to respond to drought and climate change impacts. Furthermore, surveying and relocation of the mussels, that could be required with a listing, would be costly.

The RMRM is at risk but we need to be more flexible and find other strategies to address the issue, added Dr. Warwick Sears. For example, there is great concern regarding the real potential for invasive zebra and quagga mussels to enter Okanagan waters. These mussels clog up water intakes and other infrastructure, and will certainly hurt the remaining RMRM population. They have driven freshwater mussels extinct, she added. Currently, the federal government is not addressing this issue.

After lengthy discussion, the board agreed to send a letter asking the federal government to take immediate action against zebra and quagga mussels.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board urge Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Government of Canada to take immediate action against the spread of zebra and quagga mussels into Okanagan lakes.”

CARRIED

Directors discussed the impact that listing the RMRM as endangered would have on milfoil operations, the resulting economic impact, the ability to control lake levels in the face of drought and climate change, and agreed to forward a second motion to Fisheries and Oceans Canada and to Okanagan political representatives.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, along with all other agencies involved and our Okanagan political representatives, recommending against the Species At Risk Act “Endangered” listing of the Rocky Mountain ridged mussel, because of potentially high economic impacts on local governments, potential restrictions on Eurasian watermilfoil control, and potential restrictions on lake level management reducing the flexibility to respond to drought and climate change.”

CARRIED

6.2 Report to International Joint Commission (IJC)

Dr. Warwick Sears provided a report to the board, commissioned by the OBWB, with

recommendations to the International Joint Commission, regarding the renewal of operating orders for Zosel Dam and Osoyoos Lake.

The report notes that an agreement to guarantee flows, being recommended in the U.S., cannot be done without drawing the lake down. If the concern is for fish flows, then this can be addressed by improving the operating of Zosel Dam. The report also suggests the potential to create a canal from the Similkameen to near the base of the dam, if necessary.

These recommendations, added Dr. Warwick Sears, would address Canadian flooding concerns and Canadian sovereignty to control flows on the Canadian side of the border, which will become increasingly important with climate change.

After some discussion, the board asked staff to draft a cover letter for review that states the OBWB's concerns with the renewal of the orders, that the board is in substantial agreement with the report, and highlighting some of the major points from the report. Once input has been received, staff were directed to forward the letter and report to the IJC. The board also asked that the letter and report be forwarded to the four Okanagan MPs, Foreign Affairs and Jason Kenney.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve, in principle, the commissioned report on the Renewal of Osoyoos Lake Operating Orders and that a letter be drafted with an opportunity for director input that notes the board is in substantial agreement with the report.

“AND, once approved, that the letter and report be forwarded to the International Joint Commission and Osoyoos Lake Board of Control . And that the letter be forwarded to Okanagan MPs, Foreign Affairs, and Jason Kenney.”

CARRIED

7. ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA MEETING

7.1 Matters pertaining to staff compensation

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adjourns to an In-Camera meeting at 11:52 a.m.”

CARRIED

8. RESUME REGULAR MEETING

8.1 Regular meeting resumed at 1:45 p.m.

8.2 Roundtable discussion: board successes, improvements, and future priorities

Dr. Warwick Sears thanked directors for their work while sitting on the OBWB board, recognizing that most are either up for re-election or have decided not to run again in upcoming local government elections. Directors were then invited to say a few words about their time on the board.

A number of the directors noted the growing importance of the OBWB's voice on water issues in B.C. and even Canada. The agency is small in staff numbers, but everything is done with great deliberation, and with proven results. The fact that the OBWB represents three regional districts and speaks with one voice carries great weight.

The need for continued outreach and public education on water issues was noted, at the local government level, but also with the general public. The important role of the Water Stewardship

Council was also mentioned. There was also encouragement to try and find additional solutions for milfoil control on Okanagan lakes.

It was noted that the OBWB needs to be careful to not take on provincial responsibilities and that the work of the OBWB needs to continue to promote First Nations inclusion in Okanagan water management.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 District of West Kelowna letter to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans re: Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receives the correspondence from District of West Kelowna to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans re: Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel.”
CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The tentative date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is February 7, 2012 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

11. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 1, 2011 be adjourned at 1:05 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director