



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD APRIL 3, 2012, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, B.C.**

PRESENT

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| Chair Stu Wells | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Juliette Cunningham | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Doug Dirk | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Keith Fielding | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Director Gerry Zimmermann | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Director Michael Brydon | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Director Toby Pike | Water Supply Association of BC |
| Director Bernie Bauer | Okanagan Water Stewardship Council |

REGRETS

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| Director Doug Findlater | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Director Tom Siddon | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Director James Pepper | Okanagan Nation Alliance |

OBWB STAFF

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| Anna Warwick Sears | Executive Director |
| Nelson Jatel | Water Stewardship Director |
| Corinne Jackson | Communications and Research Coordinator |
| Kyla Lavalee | First Nations Liaison |

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

6.3 Regional District Kootenay Boundary investigation into milfoil biocontrol

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2012 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2012 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton, B.C.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2011 at Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen in Penticton be adopted."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears introduced Kyla Lavallee, First Nations Liaison intern for the OBWB and noted upcoming meetings with representatives from Okanagan Nation Alliance, the En'owkin Centre and others. Dr. Warwick Sears noted other staff changes, including James Littlely as the new Office and Projects Manager starting April 10. Melissa Tesche is staying on for a couple weeks to train Mr. Littlely. Michelle Cook's time as Research and Water Policy Intern is now complete and she will be working at Urban Systems.

A meeting was held with Allan Neilson-Welch to prepare for the board's upcoming strategic planning session in June.

The watermilfoil control program is going into repair season, getting ready for harvesting this spring/summer. It was noted that long-time milfoil operator Gord Greer will be retiring this summer. Dave Caswell has been working with the milfoil crew in preparation for Mr. Greer's retirement to ensure the program is not disrupted.

The International Joint Commission reports that it is still waiting on the State of Washington's written request for renewal of Operating Orders on Osoyoos Lake.

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that she and Mr. Jatel attended a Water Act Modernization (WAM) technical advisory committee meeting with multiple stakeholders. The province was looking for feedback to the suggested changes and is still developing the policies before it's ready to circulate for public comment. Some of the changes include regulations for groundwater and watershed management plans. The province is also looking to hold a First Nations consultation workshop in May, and then go to public feedback, she added.

The board discussed sending a letter to the province noting that the OBWB is pleased to see the WAM process continuing and is looking forward to reviewing the draft of the new act and to the public input sessions.

Dir. Zimmerman entered the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

There was further discussion about issuing a news release, stating that the OBWB is pleased that the WAM process is continuing.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board forward a letter to the Government of B.C. in support of their continued work on the Water Act Modernization process, and noting that the board looks forward to reviewing the draft of the new act and to the public input sessions. AND that the Okanagan Basin Water Board issue a news release stating the same.”

CARRIED

Meetings are proceeding with FORREX on a Climate Change Adaptation Workshop in June. The workshop is for local mayors, chiefs and chairs and senior staff in local government. It is intended to ensure a peer-to-peer atmosphere with experts available to answer questions.

Staff are also working to organize an Okanagan Invitational Drought Tournament in the fall with Ag Canada, B.C.'s Ministry of Environment, as well as Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

Between June 18 and 26, Ag Canada is hosting a Chilean delegation that is looking for information on agricultural water policy. We have been invited to meet with them and exchange information.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated March 28, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported that the ninth of 15 anticipated groundwater wells have been drilled. The latest was in West Kelowna. This is a three year program he added, noting that the team, made up of OBWB, federal and provincial staff, will be working with local governments in the Okanagan to complete the drilling of the last few wells this upcoming year.

In providing an update on the BC Water Use Reporting Centre (formerly SWURT – Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool), Mr. Jatel noted that the province is looking at the Centre as a tool to not only measure surface and licenced water use, but also groundwater use. Further, the same web-based program will be able to collect hydrometric information. Mr. Jatel said that the Centre is intended to become a one-stop place to find water management data in the Okanagan.

The province is now looking at the level of interest that some water-limited sub-basins in the Okanagan (e.g. Joe Rich, Twin Lakes) might have in being pilot areas to test its new groundwater regulations. The regulations are being created as part of the WAM process and the province is interested in the Okanagan as a water-limited region that now has monitoring.

The Centre is being piloted by Regional District of Nanaimo, Mr. Jatel added, saying that the OBWB and the B.C. government are looking to make the tool available province-wide. Currently, the Centre has more than 20 Okanagan utilities reporting water use to it with another 20 getting ready to join.

A Water Supply Webinar was held March 9. Based on the supply of water for this upcoming growing season, it’s been decided that another webinar is not needed.

The next Water Stewardship Council meeting is April 12, 12:30 p.m. at the Best Western Inn in Kelowna.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated March 22, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.3 Office and Grants Administrator Report – Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Recommendations

Dr. Warwick Sears presented the 2012 recommendations for the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program.

With \$300,000 available, the program received 39 applications with a total request of \$672,480. Unused funds returned by previous project recipients were also made available to the regional districts they were originally awarded to, bringing total funds available to \$339,154. Staff scored the applications, looking at basin-wide benefit, collaboration, promotion of best practices and other criteria.

Bauer exited the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant staff recommendations for the Central Okanagan as received.”
CARRIED

Dir. Pike abstained.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approves the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant staff recommendations for the North Okanagan as received.”

CARRIED

Dir. Pike abstained.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approves the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant staff recommendations for the South Okanagan as received.”

CARRIED

Dir. Pike abstained.

Bauer returned to the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

There was lengthy discussion about the grant program and the number of local government applications and the need to encourage more non-profits to apply.

There was also discussion about the way the fund is divided into three regions. The perception, for some, is when an organization asks for a letter of support from multiple jurisdictions it is “double-dipping,” instead of seeing the application as a valley-wide approach. It was suggested there needs to be better communication about the program’s goal of providing valley-wide benefits or a restructuring of the program to include a basin-wide project category.

In response to questions, Dr. Warwick Sears noted that any changes to the program would need approval of the three regional district boards.

It was suggested that the grant program be discussed as part of the upcoming strategic planning session.

Ms. Jackson added that the OBWB issues a news release each February, when the agency starts to accept applications, and then once the recommendations are approved. The OBWB also asks recipients to put out news releases about their projects, but will offer greater support to ensure greater follow-through. Staff will also review what else can be done to encourage greater non-profit participation.

5.4 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson provided an overview of World Water Day and Canada Water Week events, the Tap by Tap partnership with City Green Solutions, Fortis BC and Environment Canada.

The board noted the amount of outreach being conducted, with press releases, social media, websites and events, adding that these tools have been valuable in getting more information to the public.

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator’s Report, dated March 28, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Community Infrastructure Partnership Program

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on a Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) – Aboriginal

Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) meeting in Ottawa, looking at various infrastructure partnerships to address drinking water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants, and other water issues.

The FCM has offered to come out and talk to Okanagan chiefs and councils about potential funding. The OBWB's Ms. Lavalee will be contacting local bands to determine their water issues.

"THAT the Community Infrastructure Partnership Program Report, dated March 28, 2012 be received."

CARRIED

6.2 Climate Adaptation Forum

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on her meeting with Natural Resource Canada, regarding Regional Adaptation Collaboratives (RAC) funding, and noted a presentation by the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

The IBC, she said, is looking at the implications of climate change and its impact on infrastructure. Their own research is showing the number of extreme weather events and serious infrastructure failures are increasing. Local governments are being encouraged to conduct risk assessments, she added, saying that municipalities can be liable if there is an infrastructure failure.

Dr. Warwick Sears said there was much discussion about the need for local governments to adapt infrastructure design standards.

"THAT the Climate Adaptation Forum Report, dated March 28, 2012 be received."

CARRIED

6.3 Regional District Kootenay Boundary investigation into milfoil biocontrol

Dr. Warwick Sears presented a report regarding the possible testing of weevils to control milfoil in the Kootenays. The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary has asked for a letter of support from the OBWB.

There was discussion about a similar study being looked at for Osoyoos Lake, on the American side of the border. It was also noted that the Okanagan has used biological methods in the past to address aquatic issues which had unintended consequences (e.g. Mysis shrimp and kokanee work). The board suggested the matter be deferred to gather more information.

Dr. Warwick Sears added that staff can compile a report. A milfoil program update is being prepared for the province and will address biological control, she added.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board defer a decision on the use of milfoil biocontrol to gather more information."

CARRIED

7. NEXT MEETING

7.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is May 1, 2012 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

6. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of April 3, 2012 be adjourned at 1:01 p.m.”

CARRIED

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| Certified Correct: | | |
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| Chair | | Executive Director |