



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD  
HELD NOVEMBER 4, 2014, REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN  
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, B.C.**

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**PRESENT**

Chair Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice-chair Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Keith Fielding	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Patty Hanson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Allan Patton	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Don Dobson	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

**REGRETS**

Director Garry Litke	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance

**OBWB STAFF**

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littlely	Office and Projects Manager

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

7.1 Groundwater regulation memo

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 4, 2014 be approved.”***

**CARRIED**

**4. DELEGATION**

4.1 Robert Birtles, Interior Health

Mr. Birtles presented the province’s proposed new Blue-Green Algae protocol, thanking the OBWB for its leadership and request for action.

Director Fielding entered the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

A standard template was needed on how to respond (e.g. to a bloom and to a beach closure), added Mr. Birtles. The protocol was pilot tested in two locations, added, Mr. Birtles, one with a non-toxic bloom in the Okanagan and one toxic in the TNRD region. In the case of the TNRD, a wind storm ended up picking up and the bloom disappeared. It also wasn’t near a drinking water

intake. But, had the wind storm not happened and the bloom was at a beach, the protocol would have required closing the beach and posting signs to help prevent illness. IH would help with appropriate messaging. IHA's roll, said Birtles is to do the water testing to see if the algae is still an issue, but it's the responsibility of the beach owner (i.e. local government or the Province) to post signs.

IHA provided feedback on the protocol and an interim plan is planned to be created by spring.

The presentation was followed by questions from the board. Mr. Birtles explained that the next step is to create an interim plan with a flow chart noting who is responsible for what (e.g. taking a complaint, etc.).

## 5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

5.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 7, 2014 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

***"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 7, 2014 at Regional District of North Okanagan be adopted."***

**CARRIED**

## 6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

### EDC project for OK Falls

The UBCO team working on this project is submitting funding applications, including one to the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (ONA is the lead applicant), leveraging OBWB funding to get work started.

### Osoyoos Lake Board of Control Annual Meeting

The International Joint Commission's (IJC) Osoyoos Lake Board of Control held its annual meeting Oct. 28. Among the items discussed were water commitments for fish and a flood control study on Okanagan River. Dr. Sears noted that she asked board members about zebra and quagga mussels and whether they were prepared for a possible infestation and was told that the dam operator had no response plan. It was recommended that the OBWB send a letter to the Washington Department of Environment and IJC about the importance of developing a plan.

The State of Washington is looking to prepare, just like B.C., Dr. Sears added, noting that the state is responsible for only has one dam (Zosel), and the rest are private or federal.

***"THAT the OBWB send a letter to Osoyoos Lake Board of Control recommending they develop an emergency response plan to address invasive mussels as they get to Zosel Dam."***

**CARRIED**

There was follow-up discussion about the use of herbicides for milfoil control on the U.S. side of the Osoyoos border and its potential impact on fish coming back into B.C. and being consumed. A motion was tabled to follow up with federal and provincial authorities.

***"THAT the OBWB send a letter to Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency and Health Canada, and cc'd to B.C. Ministry of Environment, requesting information on what testing has been done on the fish and for a copy of the reports. If no research has been done, the OBWB requests that a study be done."***

After further discussion, there was a motion to defer the motion to February and the board asked staff to do some research to determine what studies if any have been done on this issue.

***“THAT the motion re: fish studies be deferred until the February board meeting.”***

***CARRIED, Dir. Patton opposed***

***“THAT OBWB staff prepare a report for the February board meeting regarding what research has been done, including any studies from PMRA and Health Canada.”***

***CARRIED***

Dr. Sears continued with her report, noting an invitation to the Water Board to hold a third Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum, following up on the event held in 2011.

***“THAT the OBWB supports, in principle, holding an Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum III in 2015, in partnership with the IJC, Town of Osoyoos, and other partners, and encourages staff to participate in the organizing steering committee.”***

***CARRIED***

***“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated October 29, 2014, be received.”***

***CARRIED***

## 6.2 Office and Project Manager Report

### Milfoil Program

Mr. Littley reported on the acquisition of a new trailer to help transport milfoil machinery in the valley. He also noted issues around requests for milfoil control from local governments and the need to formalize the process.

***“THAT the OBWB Milfoil Control Program Operational Plan and Policy Manual be amended to include a section on Local Government Requests for Milfoil Control.”***

***CARRIED***

### Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants

The board was presented with an update on the WCQI grant program, including a recommendation for annual themes for consideration.

There was discussion around the themes and Mr. Littley noted the themes do not preclude applications that fit within the grant guidelines for water conservation and quality improvement. Also, although some important water issues are not specifically noted, Mr. Littley added that the OBWB has in some cases already committed funds to address the issue (e.g. invasive mussels). After further discussion, it was recommended that the themes be slightly expanded.

Dir. Dirk noted that he would like to see annual themes removed.

***“THAT for the 2015-16 WCQI grant competition annual theme, the OBWB seeks projects focused on drought planning, irrigation improvement, metering, restoration, source protection, water flow monitoring, groundwater and stormwater improvements; and THAT applications in these categories be prioritized for funding during staff review with the awarding of up to ten extra points toward the total score; and THAT the scoring criteria for the grant competition be maintained as outlined.***

***CARRIED, Dir. Dirk opposed***

***“THAT the Office and Project Manager’s Report, dated October 28, 2014, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

## 6.3 Communications Director Report

Joint Chamber/Tourism – OBWB-OkWaterWise “Don’t Move a Mussel” (DMM) event

Ms. Jackson provided the board with an update on a potential joint event with the Kelowna chamber and Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. There is interest from both groups in joining with OBWB’s Okanagan WaterWise program to hold a DMM “chamber-to-chamber” event. The event is intended to help raise awareness within the business and tourism community about the threat of invasive mussels to the Okanagan’s water – and economy – and learn from a chamber that is already dealing with the issue.

***“THAT the OBWB continue talks with the Kelowna Chamber and TOTA with a view to holding a joint event re: invasive mussels in the late winter/early spring 2015.”***

Other communication initiatives

Ms. Jackson provided an overview of a recent phone survey of Okanagan residents, an update to a similar survey done in 2009. The survey looked at the understanding of water issues in the valley. It also tested people’s recognition and understanding of the Make Water Work and Don’t Move a Mussel initiatives.

Chair Findlater left the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

There was much discussion about the survey and the apparent effectiveness in spreading the mussel and outdoor water conservation messages. Dr. Sears noted that the results are significant, e.g. with the DMM campaign, since other regions are looking at possibly adopting the same message.

Ms. Jackson noted additional communication efforts including a joint OBWB-ONA news conference regarding Okanagan wetlands protection funding set for Nov. 7.

***“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated October 29, 2014, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

## 6.4 Water Stewardship Director Report

Water Stewardship Council

Mr. Jatel provided an update on the latest council meeting, including a presentation by Shaun Reimer with B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. Mr. Reimer reported on studies in the Okanagan looking at the impact of climate change on regional hydrology and need for response (e.g. flood mapping, infrastructure upgrades and wetland work).

There was some discussion about the apparent lack of provincial planning to address these issues. It was also noted that it is important that the council continue to work in this area and push the province for action. Dir. Dobson, chair of the council, responded that the WSC will look at how to move this forward.

***“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated October 29, 2014, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

Dirs. Dirk and Fielding exited the meeting.

**7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS****7.1 Draft letter to Province of B.C. re: groundwater regulations**

Mr. Jatel noted there was little time to respond to the province regarding groundwater regulations. As such, the WSC's groundwater committee met Oct. 12 and drafted a proposed response that was then circulated to the council for input. One of the issues council felt needed addressing was proper provincial funding and staff resources to ensure successful implementation of the regulations, he added.

The board reviewed the submission and asked for a slight amendment to include agriculture.

***"THAT the Board send the committee letter, as amended, on Okanagan groundwater regulation implementation to the appropriate ministers and parties with standing on this issue."***

**CARRIED**

After further discussion, the board asked that the letter be cc'd to SILGA.

Dir. Wells exited the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

**7.2 Presentation – update on the Okanagan Water Systems Survey**

Dr. Sears provided the board with an update on a survey of valley water suppliers.

The review includes a look at Official Community Plans, Regional Growth Strategies, water bylaws, metering, flood plain mapping, drought and source protection plans and more. Preliminary results (not all communities/suppliers have been surveyed yet) show that of those communities metered, water use from January to March is higher than what was estimated. Dr. Sears noted it was thought the amount was 120 litres/person/day – but the survey results suggest 200. However, indoor and outdoor use from July to September is at about 800-900/person/day (the OBWB's earlier estimate was 1,000). It is possible, she concluded, that the 675 l/person/day average that the OBWB has been quoting will come down.

Dr. Sears added that to get average year-round numbers, one needs to look at over a few years.

Several directors had questions about the survey. One suggested that it would be interesting to see a correlation of pricing of water and water use. It was also noted that it is important that suppliers understand that master meters need to be recalibrated every few years, and that there will always be system loss of 6-7 per cent with leaks, etc.

Other survey results suggest that of those surveyed so far, 42% have formal drought-response plans, 31% have no plan. As for floodplain mapping, 7% have none; 18% have partial mapping done, 13% plan to map, and 62% are unknown.

Next steps include completing the review, developing a report, having it reviewed by survey participants, the OBWB and WSC, and then return to a discussion around a Water Sustainability Plan for the Okanagan.

7.3 Meeting Schedule 2015

Dr. Sears presented the meeting schedule for 2015.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

8.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be February 3, 2015 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

*“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 4, 2014 adjourned at 1:42 p.m.”*

*Adjourned without quorum*

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director