



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 3, 2015, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN,
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Mike Macnabb	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Catherine Lord	Regional District North Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Andre Martin	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Don Dobson	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Peter Waardenburg	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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GUESTS

Alt. Director Rob Birtles	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
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OBWB STAFF

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

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

Dr. Sears noted Peter Waardenburg as the newly appointed director representing Okanagan Nation Alliance.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 3, 2015 be approved."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 3, 2015 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 3, 2015 at Regional District of Central Okanagan be adopted."

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

5.1 Tessa and Carrie Terbasket, Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) - Okanagan Nation Water Strategy

Ms. Tessa Terbasket provided an overview of the Water Strategy, which is in year two of four, and funded through RBC Blue Water.

The ONA views water as a life source, she said, adding the alliance is made up of eight member communities – four in the Okanagan Basin (the Okanagan, Penticton and Osoyoos Indian Bands, and Westbank First Nations) – and each have their own needs and priorities. The strategy aims to support these. In response, there have been community meetings with knowledge holders and elders, as well as women and youth focus groups and workshops.

The strategy is looking at how to ensure a healthy water supply, with a view to seven generations ahead, noted Ms. Terbasket, with priority given to nourishing indigenous plants not lawns, and providing maximum flows for fish, not minimum. The ONA is working to empower its youth, encouraging indigenous and non-indigenous to work together and build relationships on the land, she added.

Ms. Carrie Terbasket provided some background to the project and noted that ONA communities feel lost and left out without involvement in the decision-making around water. So chiefs directed staff to come up with a strategy and determine priorities. The strategy will then be handed over to the four communities to let them further develop it with their priorities.

The ONA is also looking at how to make sure the integrity of both indigenous and non-indigenous processes are upheld while ensuring First Nations needs are met. Water rights and title need to be discussed in a meaningful way, she added, so the ONA is looking at how to address this.

Following the presentation, the board was presented with a copy of the Syilx water declaration, adopted last year.

There was great interest in the presentation and further discussion. It was noted that when Glenmore Ellison Irrigation District was recently looking at water licencing there were extensive discussions with ONA.

Several directors noted the importance of increased engagement between local government and First Nations. Ms. Carrie Terbasket responded that while there are mechanisms in place for those conversations at the provincial and federal level, community to community forums may be one way to do this at the local level.

Dir. Macnabb noted the OBWB's and local governments' ongoing concern regarding invasive mussels and efforts to have it addressed through the UBCM, and asked if the ONA has the ability to get greater movement on it. Whereas local government can push on economic concerns, perhaps the ONA can push more effectively on cultural concerns, he added.

It was suggested that the board talk with the ONA's Fisheries Program Manager Howie Wright or newly appointed Board Dir. Peter Waardenburg.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Water Licencing Tool Update

Dr. Sears provided an update on the Water Licencing Tool project, explaining that the province has been looking at rolling out a licencing decision tool based on a tool and data used in B.C.'s northeast. The tool is not appropriate to meet Okanagan needs and needs to be reviewed (e.g. determining what streams are fully allocated, groundwater availability), she added, recommending a letter be sent to the province.

There was discussion about who to cc the letter to.

“THAT the OBWB write to the B.C. Minister of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and the Minister of Environment, emphasizing the need for the Okanagan water allocation system to be developed through a transparent, collaborative partnership process, continuing the precedent set by the award-winning Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project. AND, that the letter be CC’ed to Okanagan MLAs.”

CARRIED

Dr. Sears asked for approval to apply for a Gas Tax grant to help with the development of the tool.

“THAT the OBWB approves the submission of a Gas Tax grant application, under the Strategic Priorities Fund Capacity Building stream, for collaborative projects leading to development of a Water Licensing Allocation Tool for the Okanagan Basin.”

CARRIED

Okanagan Nation Alliance

Dr. Sears reported on a meeting with ONA Executive Director Pauline Terbasket and the policy advisor for the Chiefs Executive Council where they discussed the Water Licencing Tool, Protocol Agreements, and the invasive mussel issue. The ONA, she added, requires formal letters from the OBWB to engage on these issues.

“THAT the OBWB write three letters to the Chiefs’ Executive Council, (1) requesting their participation in the collaborative development of a water licensing process for the Okanagan, (2) expressing OBWB’s interest in exploring development of a protocol agreement between ONA and OBWB, and (3) requesting that the ONA express their concerns about the need for immediate action by the province to prevent the spread of invasive mussels to B.C.”

CARRIED

Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum

Sears provided a brief update on the forum, noting the date as Oct. 7-9, 2015, and requesting funds be set aside as the OBWB’s contribution to the event.

“THAT the OBWB contribute \$10,000 toward the 2015 Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum, conditional on obtaining sufficient matching funds from partner organizations.

CARRIED

BC Water and Waste Assoc. and BC Groundwater Assoc. annual conferences

Dr. Sears provided information about the two upcoming conferences. BCWWA May 27-30 in Kelowna, and BCGWA March 4-7 also in Kelowna.

Update on Snow Water Conditions in B.C.

The board was provided an update on conditions as of Feb. 23, noting that the Okanagan was not considered in trouble although the snowpack is between 77 and 92% of normal depending on what part of the basin.

Dir. Pike explained that the level snowpack isn't the only issue to consider, and that water utilities also need to consider how fast it melts.

There was some discussion about the concern with wildfires this year if supply is down and use is on the increase with people turning on the taps early for their yards.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated Feb. 25, 2015, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Council Membership Renewal

Mr. Jatel noted that the council membership is up for renewal and asked for approval of the list of agencies to be invited.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Council Proposed Membership List (May 2015 – October 2016) be approved for a term of 18 months."
CARRIED

February and March Council Meetings

The board was provided an overview of the February council meeting and presentations from Dr. Jeff Curtis on research around use of treated wastewater as spray irrigation and FLNRO staff on projects and priorities around water.

Environmental Flow Needs and Water Use Plan committees also met to discuss existing plans, and needs and opportunities for creating additional plans for Okanagan tributaries.

The March meeting will include a presentation from the Okanagan's mysis shrimp fishery, and OBWB intern Ted Wannop will be presenting on research he has been doing around First Nations court decisions concerning water.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated Feb. 20, 2015, be received."
CARRIED

6.3 Office and Project Manager Report

Milfoil program access to lakes

Mr. Littlely reported on rototilling milfoil efforts and concerns with access to work areas, adding he will be offering to provide a presentation to councils and boards to explain the issues.

There was some discussion about possible solutions, including a request for formal designations or covenants so there is a permanent record in local government GIS offices, also the use of turbidity curtains to respond to potential concerns from water utilities.

There was also talk about lack of weed transfer sites being an issue. In response to questions, Mr. Littlely noted that transfer sites should be close to where the weeds are removed from to limit trucking costs. Staff are open to suggestions for possible sites.

"THAT the OBWB send a letter to the Board of RDNO requesting a formal agreement that unless there is a specific reason that the Duteau Creek intake cannot be used, GVW provides our milfoil operators a window from December 1st to January 31st to conduct our winter rototilling in north Kalamalka Lake."
CARRIED

“THAT the Office and Project Manager’s Report, dated Feb. 24, 2015, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Joint Chamber, TOTA, OBWB-OkWW – Don’t Move a Mussel event

Ms. Jackson noted that the Real Estate Foundation of BC has agreed to provide \$1,500 to offset program costs. She is still talking with the chamber and others to find an appropriate speaker.

There was some discussion around invasive mussel signage at BC Park and forestry campsites and the need for improved locations and more of them. Staff offered to look at what is currently in place and talk with the province about how the OBWB can help address any need for more.

The board discussed a letter to the province reiterating the concern re: signage.

“THAT the OBWB write a letter of concern re: signage at parks and forestry campsites to BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC and B.C. Ministry of Environment.”
CARRIED

Canada Water Week

Ms. Jackson provided an update on Canada Water Week (March 16-22) events, noting the theme this year is wetlands. Events include the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge for youth, screening of several short wetland films at the Laurel Packinghouse on March 18, followed by a guided tour of nearby Rotary Marshes, and a panel discussion on wetlands with MC Chris Walker of CBC Daybreak South.

Other communication initiatives

A brief update was provided on Make Water Work plans for 2015, as well as efforts to help promote OBWB-supported workshops by the Irrigation Industry Assoc. of B.C. and the Okanagan Xeriscape Association.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Feb. 25, 2015, be received.”
CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program – 2015 Recommendations

Dr. Sears provided an overview of the 10-year program. Mr. Littlely noted the grants are intended to provide valley-wide benefit but are distributed based on tax requisition from the three regional districts. Staff review them based on several criteria including valley-wide benefit. Staff score each application based on the criteria set by the board and the board’s strategic interests laid out for the year.

Dir. Baker asked if it was time to review the funding available in the program and that perhaps with the commitment to the Water Research Chair coming to an end, that the funds be placed into the WCQI program. Dr. Sears offered to bring it back to the board for discussion during next year’s budget discussions in October.

Alt. Dir. Fleming suggested the need for a process so that each regional district is aware of the requests made in their region to ensure applications meet the maximum funds available. After some discussion, recognizing that it could be a cumbersome process given how applicants often submit their proposals on the last day, he added that he would like to see any unused funds

carry over to the next year.

“THAT the WCQI 2015 recommendations be approved as presented.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Pike and Dobson abstained.

7.2 OBWB Compensation Philosophy

Dr. Sears provided background to the memo noting that the board asked for a compensation review before the May board meeting. The compensation philosophy was provided to the board for discussion. Chair Findlater noted the last external review was four years ago and it was time for another.

There was some discussion around who could conduct an external review. It was noted that Tim Dhillon and Assoc. did the last one and was recommended by the Local Government Municipal Association. Following further discussion, the board asked that a proposal be brought forward in May.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be May 5, 2015 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

9. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 3, 2015 be adjourned at 1: 17 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director