



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 6, 2018, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice-Chair Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Cindy Fortin	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Ron Hovanes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Lisa Wilson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littley	Operations and Grants Manager
Kellie Garcia	Policy and Planning Specialist
Jocelyn Whalen	Communications and Outreach Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

The Chair respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Okanagan Nation.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

7.1.1 Correspondence from Regional District of North Okanagan to OBWB re: Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grant Program

Reverse item 7 and 8.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2018 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 6, 2018 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

Minor amendment noted.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 6, 2018 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

7.1 Board Chair Report

Chair Gray acknowledged the retirement of Milfoil Control Supervisor Ian Horner after 33 years of service. She also noted the previous month's Water Stewardship Council (WSC) presentations and invited fellow directors to attend an upcoming meeting.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears provided a brief update on an RFP for a floodplain mapping project.

The board was provided information on B.C. government funding being managed through the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. Applications are being accepted for invasive mussel monitoring. OBWB partner the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society is applying and partnering with the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society. Dir. Wilson added that Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) is also applying.

The B.C. Flood and Fire Review engagement team, Chief Maureen Chapman and Mr. George Abbott, will be meeting with WSC members on March 29, 3-4 p.m. Board members are also invited.

The OBWB has received grant funds from Agriculture Canada to hire an intern to research agricultural water use in the valley.

Staff are continuing to review the Water Management Program and the draft will be ready for review for the May 2018 meeting.

There continues to be concern over the increasing snowpack in our valley, warming in the arctic, and extreme weather systems elsewhere.

“THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated February 28, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Dr. Sears presented the Water Stewardship Director's report. In response to a question as to whether only lowland wetlands were being looked at as part of the Okanagan wetland strategy, it was noted that priority areas were determined with project partners, including ONA, BC Wildlife Federation and South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program. Dir. Wilson added that upland watersheds are also of concern to ONA and are being considered.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director's report, dated February 28, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley noted that Milfoil Control Supervisor Ian Horner is retiring at the end of the month after 40 years of service to the Okanagan, 33 with the OBWB. Patrick Field, the Water Board's second most senior operator will be taking over this role.

The board was provided a letter from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and their response to invasive mussels. This was in response to an OBWB letter sent Jan. 30. It was noted that the feds will be speaking with the province, OBWB and others and, that federal funding is being distributed based on improving national coordination, increasing operational activities and continuing scientific research, not by region or species.

Mr. Littley added that B.C.'s 2017 mussel outreach summary report notes 77% compliance during inspection station hours. A 2016 final report also states that the province is continuing to explore regulatory options, including strengthening legislation to support mandatory inspection for all watercraft entering B.C., something the OBWB has been pushing for.

Dr. Sears added that provincial staff, at a recent meeting, noted the B.C. government is moving away from using surplus funds and moving to base funding to support the inspection program, something the OBWB has been calling for.

There was some discussion about water-related events in the Okanagan attracting participants from outside the region and the potential to bring in invasive species. Ms. Jackson noted that, when contacted, staff have worked with event organizers, provided background information, connected them to the provincial inspection program and offered additional outreach support. This has proven to be effective, but only when staff are made aware of such events, Ms. Jackson said, adding directors and others who know of such events are encouraged to contact her.

"THAT the Operations and Grants Manager's Report, dated February 28, 2018, be received."

CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson introduced Jocelyn Whalen, 2018 Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator, hired in part through a grant from the UN Assoc. of Canada and Social Development Canada's Green Corps program.

Dir. Findlater entered the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

An update was provided on Canada Water Week festivities, including a movie night on March 21, featuring "A River Film," and sponsorship of ONA's Water Forum and tour on March 22.

The OBWB's OkWaterWise is once again partnering with the Regional District of Central Okanagan's Waste Reduction Program to sell rain barrels alongside their composters during a one-day sale event on April 22, Earth Day.

Ms. Jackson noted that staff was invited to provide input to an update of the 2015 Invasive Mussel Prevention Framework for Western Canada and provide a case study to highlight what is being doing to plan and prepare for the mussels. Information will be provided on the Don't Move A Mussel campaign and its outreach efforts.

Preliminary work is underway for the re-launch of Make Water Work 2018 with several local government and utility partners confirmed throughout the Okanagan, including RDNO-Greater Vernon Water, Lake Country, Black Mountain Irrigation District, City of Kelowna, Glenmore Ellison Irrigation District, South East Kelowna Irrigation District, Peachland, Summerland, Penticton, RDOS, Oliver and Osoyoos.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated February 28, 2018, be received.”
CARRIED

6.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia provided an update to the board on the Planning Toolkits and Guides Project, noting 60 toolkits have been uploaded to a central hub on CivicInfo BC. An OBWB-Fraser Basin Council webinar is planned for March 13 to introduce the hub. Of the 95 registrants so far from the Okanagan, Fraser Basin, Columbia Basin, Ontario, and Alberta, they include planners, engineers, park planners, and elected officials.

A wrap-up report was provided on the Agricultural Water Supply Outreach Project which was piloted last year with Greater Vernon Water (GVW) and City of Penticton. In response to questions regarding uptake by farmers, Ms. Garcia added that there may have been better participation in Penticton because they have an email distribution system with customers which GVW does not.

Directors were updated on the Mainstem Drought Triggers Project. There was discussion around the difference between local utility and provincial messaging around drought and the importance of preventing confusion. Ms. Garcia noted that the proposed stages are based on mainstem lake levels and probable distribution of water. The purpose is for utilities that draw from the mainstem lakes to incorporate the triggers into their drought plans which will ensure greater consistency in water management of this shared water. The next step is to look at how utilities make decisions.

There was some discussion about public communication with language and signage, and the need to plan for flood and drought together.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated February 28, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

7. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Water Conservation & Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program

Mr. Littley provided an update on the WCQI program and noted that there has been no increase in funding in the program since it began in 2006, even though project costs have likely increased. The board was asked to consider recommended changes to the program and if approved, they would go to the three Okanagan Regional District (RD) boards for final approval.

“THAT future WCQI grants be awarded on a valley-wide basis, according to the merit of each proposed project, based on the board-approved scoring criteria.

“AND THAT the OBWB increase the annual grant funding available to \$375,000 for the 2019-20 grant year,

“AND THAT the program funding is reviewed to account for inflation as part of the four-year Water Management Program review.”

Directors discussed the recommendations, noting support for inflation, but concern about awarding based purely on a valley-wide basis. It was suggested that the inflation amount, \$75,000 be used to start a valley-wide funding pool.

Dir Fairbairn noted that the program was initially aimed at helping smaller organizations, not just local government, take on water projects and perhaps there should be more of a push in this direction. He added that there have also been some good cross-RD projects that have been beneficial.

Dr. Sears noted the importance of awarding grants based on merit as is currently done.

In response to a question about how the OBWB ensures valley-wide benefit of the program, Ms. Jackson noted that staff connect project leads on similar projects to promote best practices and sharing of ideas, materials and more. The OBWB puts out a news release about the projects each year, but also assists grantees with their own news releases, public outreach events and materials, helping ensure valley-wide messaging. Projects are also often promoted as valley-wide through Okanagan WaterWise (e.g. videos on the OBWB-OkWaterWise YouTube channel, water protection-related events and demonstration projects on our OkWaterWise website and social media sites, foreshore mapping results on social media).

Dir. Cunningham stressed the importance of communicating how valley-wide benefit occurs.

Dir. Dirk noted that the program is worthwhile but needs tweaking, adding that priorities in one region may not be the same in another. He also questioned if the grants are for non-profits or local government. Maybe applications don't have to go through RD boards at all, he added.

In response to a question from Chair Gray, Mr. Littley said that he would review the feedback from the board, including a review the collective impact of the grant program, sufficiency of funding, and the difference between funding local government and non-profit projects.

Chair Gray noted there has been no increase in taxation for OBWB. She also spoke to the benefit of having an agency - the Water Board - provide a valley-wide service and perspective on water issues, including as part of the WCQI grant process.

Dirs. Guy and Waterman questioned if \$300,000 is appropriate since the program hasn't had an increase since 2006, is oversubscribed, and with the issues facing our valley such as climate change.

Dir. Wilson added her support for the concept of 'one valley, one water' with water management.

"THAT the Water Conservation & Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program Review report be received for information."

CARRIED

Mr. Littley noted that he would review the discussion and bring options back to the board prior to the WMP review.

7.1.1 Correspondence from Regional District of North Okanagan to OBWB re: Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grant Program

Mr. Littley asked for direction. Dir. Dirk clarified that staff prioritized the applications for consideration. Dir. Cunningham added she was absent from the meeting where this was

discussed but noted that the expertise lies with OBWB staff who understand the priorities in the valley and what is being done elsewhere.

There was discussion about the purpose of grant applicants seeking resolutions of support from local governments. Dr. Sears noted it was intended to ensure applications were consistent with a community's values and direction. Mr. Littley added that perhaps a letter of support that notes the proposed project meets water objectives would suffice.

"THAT the correspondence from Regional District of North Okanagan to OBWB re: Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grant Program be received."

CARRIED

7.2 Make Water Work & Don't Move A Mussel Campaign RFP Memo

"THAT the Board approve in principle the awarding of a contract, following a thorough review of the proposals by the evaluation team, for \$50,000 for 'Make Water Work' and \$50,000 for 'Don't Move A Mussel.'"

CARRIED

8. IN-CAMERA

8.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter)

A resolution was presented that the board go into closed meeting at 1:22 p.m.

"THAT the board meeting be closed under sec. 90 (2) (b) of the Community Charter."

CARRIED

The board rose from in-camera at 1:56 p.m.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Letter from Fisheries & Oceans Canada to OBWB re: invasive mussel response

9.2 Letter from Invasive Species Council of BC to OBWB re: continued cooperation on invasive mussels

"THAT the letter from Fisheries & Oceans Canada to OBWB re: invasive mussel response and from Invasive Species Council of BC to OBWB re: continued cooperation on invasive mussels, be received."

CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, April 3, 2018 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream at 10 a.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2018 be adjourned at 1:56 p.m."

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director