

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON APRIL 3RD, 2001, AT THE BOARD ROOM, REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN, 101 MARTIN STREET, PENTICTON, B.C. AT 10:00 A.M.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Chair R. Hobson	C.O.R.D.
	Director D. Hackman	N.O.R.D.
	Director R. Hein	C.O.R.D.
	Director L. Novakowski	C.O.R.D.
	Alternate Director J. Slater (Vice Chair)	O.S.R.D.
	Alternate Director J. Piazza	O.S.R.D.
	Director J. Coady	O.S.R.D.
	Director A. Klim	N.O.R.D.

<u>STAFF:</u>	G. Armour	Field Supervisor
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<u>OTHERS:</u>	Michelle Boshard	Stewardship Coordinator
	Jennifer French	Stewardship Coordinator

MINUTES:

Moved by Director Hackman and seconded by Director Novakowski :

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on March 13th, 2001 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

DELEGATIONS:

M. Boshard and J. French – Kelowna Stewardship Centre:

Ms. Boshard outlined the concept of a Stewardship Centre proposed by a group of Kelowna stewardship organizations. She explained that her current positions as a Stewardship Coordinator employed by the Okanagan Similkameen Boundary Fisheries Partnership allowed her to assist these groups. Her position is paid by funding from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, but is administered by the Fisheries Partnership. She estimated that the amount of community stewardship contribution in volunteer time was close to \$2 million annually.

Director Novakowski asked if the provincial government was involved in the Fisheries partnership.'

Ms. Boshard said that it is.

Director Hackman asked about the purpose of organizing the stewardship groups.

Ms. Boshard replied that to date the groups have operated independently and have lacked coordination. This had led to competition for funding sources.

Director Hein asked if funding for Ms. Boshard's position was a line item in the DFO budget or if it was for a term only.

Ms. Boshard said that her position is for a five year term which is scheduled to end in March of 2002.

Director Hein asked how the location of the stewardship coordinator positions was chosen.

Ms. Boshard replied that in her case it was through agreement between DFO, the Fisheries Partnership and the Okanagan Nation Alliance where her base is. A workplan is developed and approved by all three.

Director Klim questioned Ms. Boshard's reference to assisting groups in writing proposals.

Ms. Boshard answered that she had put on work shops on proposal writing and funding sources for various stewardship groups.

Director Klim asked who determines where the funding goes.

Ms. Boshard said that each funding source has discretion over which projects are funded. Problems occur when project time requirements differ from the term of funding. This can lead to difficulties in project coordination.

Ms. French added that is difficult to 'marry' funding sources to carry out an effective program in many cases.

Ms. Boshard noted that administration is not funded by most sources and this can lead to some confusion.

Director Klim asked how these failings could be fixed.

Ms. Boshard said that a stewardship centre combined with increased networking of stewardship groups would help, while on the funding side, some coordination among sources is needed. She outlined the proposal for the Kelowna centre stressing the need for groups to share administrative costs and work together to coordinate with local government and landowners and in applying for funding. This would lead to a more efficient use of the limited money available. She hopes to provide a centralized information source for volunteers and groups, and perhaps act as a data repository for fisheries and water management information. She submitted an implementation plan for the centre and said a business plan is being developed on how to generate some revenue in order that the centre be self-sustaining.

Director Hein asked how long Ms. Boshard had been in her present position and what had been accomplished so far.

Ms. Boshard replied that she has been working for one year so far and has worked at increasing the number of and the training of volunteers. She has facilitated the agreement of stewardship groups to work together in a stewardship centre, and established seven watershed roundtables comprised of private citizens a government technical people with the goal of improving conditions in a specific watershed.

Director Hackman commented that the proposal was to have a centre in Vernon as well and he wondered how this would fit with the existing Water Stewardship Committee.

Ms. Boshard said the idea was to tie together existing groups and not to create a new group.

Director Hackman wondered if this could be handled through the Water Stewardship Committee.

Ms. French noted that the Centre would offer a range of training and information to groups and would avoid duplication of effort.

Director Coady advised that she had attended the initial meeting of the Penticton Watershed Roundtable and felt there was a need to follow up on the initial enthusiasm of the volunteers with some actions. She said there was a need for someone with the time and expertise to access funding in order to take action and this was typically not available in volunteer groups. She asked Ms. Boshard what she saw the current role of the OBWB as.

Ms. Boshard said that she knew the Board was involved in the control of Eurasian watermilfoil and in sewage treatment initiatives, but not in on the ground stewardship.

Alternate Director Slater asked, given the competition for funding among stewardship groups, if the Centre should be disbursing funding.

Ms. Boshard responded that this would be beneficial in some ways, but that a political role was not something they wanted to take on.

Ms. French said that she did not see funding as an appropriate role for the stewardship centre. Their role would be to direct groups to funding sources and help them make application.

Alternate Director Slater noted that most groups tend to focus on their own backyard and wondered if volunteers would travel to meet with other groups.

Chairman Hobson inquired about the centre start-up costs. He noted that in addition to building renovations, there was \$140,000 in on-going operational costs. He asked if the other centres would cost the same and if this money would have to come from the same sources that presently fund individual groups.

Ms. Boshard said that they hoped to fund most of the operating costs through the community groups. Some funds were already allocated by each individual group for administration.

Chairman Hobson advised that the City of Kelowna has an Environmental Division with a staff of three who do projects in Kelowna and perform public education. The Regional District of Central Okanagan has hired a new stream steward to work in the rest of the region and to participate in the Enhanced Mission Creek Program recommended by the LRMP.

Ms. French responded that the educational needs are so great that the demand will likely not be met even with these additional resources.

Chairman Hobson asked why the group wanted to house the centre in a new site when the Mission Creek Visitors Centre already exists and has space.

Ms. French said the Mission Creek facility is a visitors centre not a stewardship centre and that communication in discussion with Parks staff has not been good to date.

Ms. Boshard commented that there is a reluctance to house a community resource in a government structure.

Chairman Hobson stated that if the groups do not feel welcome at the centre paid for with their tax dollars then there is a major problem. He asked whether the role of the centre as a data repository was appropriate or whether this should be a role of OUC perhaps.

Ms. French answered that the community will not be aware of the information if it is at the college but she agreed that a stewardship centre would not be equipped to store, sort and analyze technical data.

Chairman Hobson said that to be effective the centre will have to link with local government who already has a significant investment in this area. He asked if the group would be asking local government for funding.

Ms. Boshard said that after circulation of the implementation document they would receive community input at a meeting on April 29th.

Director Coady left the meeting at 11:45.

Director Hein noted the success of the Salmon River Roundtable in restoring large portions of the river.

Chairman Hobson thanked Ms. French and Ms. Boshard for their presentation.

CORRESPONDENCE:

University of Washington – Conference on Water Resource Management in the Pacific Northwest

Mr. Armour advised that he had been invited to attend a conference in July to discuss potential impacts of climate change on the water resource of the Pacific Northwest.

Chairman Hobson said that this might be useful to identify participants for our proposed State of the Basin conference.

Mr. Armour offered to check the cost of attending and if it was reasonable would be pleased to go.

Moved by Director Kilm and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That Mr. Armour be authorized to attend the July Conference on Climate and Water Policy in the Northwest providing costs are not excessive."

CARRIED.

Fraser Basin Sustainability Indicators Workshop –Report

Mr. Armour reported on the workshop he had attended.

The workshop held in Kamloops, was one of a series to get opinions on sustainability indicators for the Fraser Basin. In other words, what data should be tracked to see if measures implemented to improve management of the water resource are working or not. They produced a workbook with 40 possible indicators and asked for comments on the appropriateness of these and for any other suggestions.

This seems pertinent to our objective of establishing a data clearinghouse. What data should we focus on? What is the purpose of collecting it? The data needs to be relevant in a reasonable time frame, that is, long term health statistics over fifty years are of limited use in assessing changes in the watershed within the time frame of the project.

Geographically, the Fraser represents a much larger basin than the Okanagan and data that is important in the upper reaches of the watershed may have little or no bearing on the lower mainland. The opposite is, of course, also true. The Basin is divided into 5 regions, each with a regional office and coordinator. Wide arrays of differing projects have been undertaken in each region, reflecting the importance of specific issues in each region. For example, the Howe Sound region has a project dealing with discharge of waste from the abandoned Britannia Mine that has obliterated marine plant and animal life in a large

area of the Sound. The Hope-Mission area has a debris management program for logs that collect in the Fraser at that point and cause potential flood concerns.

Equal funding shares from local, provincial and federal governments presently supports the Fraser Basin Council (FBC). They are aiming toward a 25% non-government share in the near future.

The indicators all will relate to the four directions set in the Fraser Basin Charter; social, environmental, economic and governance. They will be used as planning tools for the regions and to assess if there is a role for the FBC in correcting a problem. The indicators will show change and not necessarily problems. This may allow corrective programs to be implemented before the problem occurs. The indicator monitoring is intended to complement 'on the ground works' and not just be data collection for the sake of accumulating numbers.

The Fraser Basin Council currently acts as a resource to the communities in the watershed. They supply expertise, some funding, and facilitate getting projects underway which will benefit the basin in the four areas in their charter. They have had success in bringing together diverse interests to get stalled projects going or arrive at agreement on what actions to undertake where the parties involved were unable to.

SEWERAGE FACILITIES GRANT APPLICATIONS:

City of Penticton – Industrial Area

Mr. Armour advised that the community sewer project had been funded entirely from local sources and he had not yet determined whether the project had been eligible for provincial grants.

Moved by Alternate Director Slater and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That consideration of the application for a Sewage Facilities Grant from the City of Penticton be deferred until the status of the project with respect to eligibility for provincial assistance is determined."

CARRIED.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Drinking Water Protection Act

Chairman Hobson updated the Board on Drinking Water protection legislation which has been the subject of discussion between the UBCM Environment Committee and the Province.

He said that the proposed new legislation had been reviewed and while there was no provision for a truly independent office representing water, there was to be a Provincial Water Office with two appointees from Environment and health, reporting to the Health Minister. He said there will be a drinking water officer in each region of the province with a wide range of authority. Chairman Hobson noted the concerns of the UBCM Committee that watershed assessments would put a financial burden on local government and it was not yet clear what provincial funding would be available. In addition, the committee had asked for the legislation to contain the right of communities to appeal a decision of the drinking water officer which forced them to spend money and a requirement for a written statement of the reasons for any such decision.

Next Meeting

The next regular Board meeting will be May 8th at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY