

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON JUNE 11, 2002, AT THE BOARD ROOM, REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN, 101 MARTIN STREET, PENTICTON, B.C. AT 10:00 A.M.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Director R. Hobson	C.O.R.D.
	Director R. Hein	C.O.R.D.
	Director L. Novakowski	C.O.R.D.
	Director J. Cardoso	O.S.R.D.
	Director J. Coady	O.S.R.D.
	Alternate Director Ruth Ann Gullen	O.S.R.D.
	Director D. Hackman	N.O.R.D.
	Director W. Hansma	N.O.R.D.

<u>STAFF:</u>	G. Armour	Field Supervisor
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MINUTES:

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on May 7th, 2002 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

DELEGATIONS:

Paul Kluckner, Regional Director, Corporate Branch and Erik Karlsen, Environment Canada

Mr. Kluckner made a presentation to the Board on Environment Canada's perspective on promoting an ecosystem management strategy in the Okanagan Valley. He reminded the Board that Bruce Kay had reviewed the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative (GBEI) in a presentation to the Board a year ago. He said that the five major ecosystem initiatives currently underway in Canada are not identical but represent unique adaptations to situations and circumstances in the individual areas. The priority ecosystems in BC were identified as the Fraser River system where the Fraser River Action Plan ran from 1993 to 1998. The legacy from that plan was the Fraser Basin Council which is supported by a per head tax and consists of local government and other stakeholders who come together to deal with a variety of issues.

Mr. Kluckner noted that the Georgia Basin was the second priority area and the ecosystem initiative is entering year five of a five year commitment. The ecosystem approach integrates environmental, social and economic goals and is a partnership of stakeholders in the geographic area working together toward coordinated action. It also acts to support local actions and solutions and develops and transfers new knowledge and best management practices. Data is collected to measure and report on trends.

Director Hein asked who manages the data collected.

Mr. Kluckner responded that both the Province through the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management and Environment Canada have collected and interpreted data and are working toward meshing these databases. He said that one objective was to eventually take local data and use it to show regional trends and possibly integrate it into a national database.

Mr. Kluckner noted that the GBEI is linked to other organizations including the Fraser Basin Council, UBCM, Regional Growth Strategies and US government agencies.

Director Hein wondered what types of questions were to be answered by the data collected.

Mr. Kluckner said that information pertained to localized problems. There were too many factors at work to draw general conclusions over a larger geographic area.

Mr. Kluckner stated that the GBEI interaction with local government is helping to change federal policies. Traditionally the Federal Government has not dealt directly with the local level. He added that Environment Canada is pursuing funding to continue the GBEI and to add the Okanagan Basin. This would be an effort to incorporate ongoing ecosystem projects and bring the various initiatives together as well as help fill gaps. He said he and Mr. Karlsen had come to discuss the needs of the Okanagan and the interests, issues and priorities of local government. He indicated that he required the basis of a proposal by the end of summer to submit for budget consideration in September.

Director Hansma advised that the Water Board is limited in its current scope of activities by the approval and funding required from the regional districts.

Director Hackman asked if Environment Canada was looking for a financial contribution from the Water Board, or just information.

Mr. Kluckner said that he was looking for an indication of where Federal efforts could be utilized to fill gaps of bring communities together in order to better manage environmental resources.

Director Coady said our focus should be on what is needed in the valley, rather than on how much money is available and how to access it. She noted that the OBWB had initially looked at taking a leadership role to bring varied interests together in the valley but found that this was not within its mandate or financial resources.

Director Hansma commented that in many cases, individual local government were taking on programs which could be better implemented regionally. He asked how this was handled in other areas under ecosystem management.

Mr. Kluckner replied that the Fraser Basin Council is incorporated as a society with directors representing the various regions of the watershed. It has no decision-making role that is binding on the municipalities, but relies on information sharing and good will to achieve regional programs. The GBEI is directed by a Government Agency Steering committee that seeks to align the federal and provincial programs being delivered in the area. The goal is to mutually address priorities and avoid overlap.

Director Hein stated that there is importance in having this type of steering committee to form a coalition to drive a new system of management. We seem to be unable to arrive at this point on our own.

Director Cardoso said there is currently a low desire in local government to participate regionally and to consider ecosystem issues.

Mr. Kluckner describe the mandate of Environment Canada Corporate Services:

Clean Air – there is currently an effort to link data with costs of health care and to look at the effects of air traffic and marine vessels on air quality. Ozone and particulate forecasting is done and the effect on human health is resulting in such science as changes to sulphur content of fuels.

Clean Water – Water quality and quantity monitoring has been done for many years as part of the Water

Survey of Canada. This includes not only conventional components but such areas as endocrine disrupters from pharmaceuticals.

Environmental Monitoring and Conservation – including Species at Risk Legislation and preservation of migratory corridors.

Climate Change – at the global, national and regional levels. Monitor and predict changes in stream hydrographs and the implications and adaptations of changes. Concerned with reduction of ozone but also the adaptations which might take place to eventual climate change.

Weather and Environmental Prediction – such as the Mountain Weather Station in the Okanagan. Supplies a great deal of information to agriculture, industry, as well as road safety.

Director Hackman asked how Federal initiatives are communicated to the public.

Mr. Kluckner answered that traditionally the Federal programs have been noted for producing good science but Environment Canada is now trying to go a step further and make knowledge readily available to assist in local decision making.

Director Novakowski agreed that there are problems facing the OBWB in expanding its mandate and in working at the regional level. He asked what options the Federal Government has to create the incentive to work together.

Director Hein followed up on the federal interest in the Okanagan and whether it was regarded as a source of data for an example of the benefit of a regional approach to long term planning for Canada and perhaps internationally. He asked how much money might be available.

Mr. Kluckner said he would consider \$200,000 as a ballpark estimate if a proposal were included in his budget.

Director Hein said he would be in favour of establishing a Federal – provincial Steering committee to work towards a local regional management authority that would ensure issues are addressed to preserve the environment. He asked if there were specific examples of success stories from the GBEI.

Mr Karlsen said that it would be possible to get a description from local government of how they benefited from the GBEI.

Director Coady noted that the Water Board workshop in the fall of 2000 had incorporated a wide range of interests and developed a vision of water management in the Okanagan on a regional scale as well as some specific objectives. She added that there was insufficient leadership in local government to start and that creation of a new body where the OBWB is in a supportive role and local government is not investing new money might supply that leadership.

Director Hansma agreed that while he had hoped for a broader mandate for the Water Board to address valley issues this was not forthcoming.

Chairman Hobson commented that we have many fractured jurisdictions that impact on the environment of the valley. He said it is important to bring resource users, regulators, non-government groups, and First Nations together. He listed a number of regional programs and discussions underway in the valley and noted that these varied interests are not working together. He stated that some areas where these interests should be brought together to cooperate included scientific efforts to bring information to a current status and environmental indicators to identify benchmarks and predict trends,

Mr. Kluckner said that due to the complexity of issues, not all could be addressed.

Director Hein asked who would support a new organization over the longer term?

Mr. Kluckner said that the other Federal program followed a five year time frame with consideration of renewal at the end of that period. These program were not intended to go on forever but be terminated at some point.

Director Hein asked if the \$200,000 figure was a per year allocation.

Mr. Kluckner said that it was but a proposal needed to be developed and submitted.

Director Coady noted that the Fraser Basin Council came out of the Fraser River Action Plan. Without the planning phase it would be difficult to take any effective action.

Mr. Kluckner advised that it would be necessary to develop a vision of what the valley might look like based on growth projections and from that work back to issues that need to be addressed.

Chairman Hobson commented that a problem for Environment Canada would be to identify the client they would be working with in the Okanagan. Would it be the Water Board or the Regional Districts, or some new group? He noted that this will not be clear by the end of summer and wondered what Environment Canada would need to prepare a proposal.

Mr. Kluckner said that perhaps a Federal Provincial steering committee could be established on an interim basis and be represented by a staff member who would carry on outreach to local government over the course of the first year.

Director Cardoso said that the previous Federal provincial effort, the Okanagan Basin Study was not followed up on and as a result many recommendations were never implemented.

Chairman Hobson said that the Water Board had never included all agencies with an interest in or mandate for water. It was made up of the three regional districts.

Director Hein stated that a steering committee approach could be used to start the process and the final form may or may not resemble the present Water Board, but would incorporate the necessary people.

Mr. Kluckner said that he would consider the feedback given by the Board and return, if the Board wished, for additional discussion of what would work for Environment Canada to become involved in the Okanagan.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Kluckner and Mr. Karlsen for their presentation.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Green Sustainable Development Strategy

The Board received a summary of the goals of the project.(attached)

Chairman Hobson advised that RDOS Chair Dan Ashton was chairing the group, working with Westland Resources to develop a strategy and priority projects which would be eligible for Western Economic Diversification funding. The group consists of the three regional board Chairs, Senator Ross Fitzpatrick, representative from the Province, Community Futures, and Vanessa Sutton, Chief Administrative Officer of RDOS. He added that he saw links to areas of interest for the Water Board particularly projects which

provided solutions to environmental problems and which served as pilot projects for potentially exportable Canadian technology.

Simon Fraser University Water Workshop

Alternate Director Gullen reported on the workshop that she attended in late May. She submitted a summary of information from the event. (attached)

CORRESPONDENCE:

Okanagan Basin Technical Working Group

A letter asking for a decision from the Board about assisting with the planned ecosystem conference in the Spring of 2003 was received from the Okanagan Basin Technical Working Group. (OBTWG)

Moved by Director Coady and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board participate, as requested, in the spring 2003 Ecosystem Conference sponsored by the Okanagan Basin Technical Working Group."

CARRIED.

Director Cardoso opposed.

Director Coady commented that the Board needs to take on this role in order to raise our profile and express our interest and cooperation.

Director Cardoso was concerned that the OBTWG had not done a good job of keeping south Okanagan residents apprised of its actions. He said he would be more comfortable in participating in organizing the conference if the RDOS Board approved as well.

Director Hein noted that we may have an answer from Environment Canada by the spring and that might give us a key position in a conference on ecosystem based management.

Okanagan Similkameen Boundary Fisheries Partnership

A letter from the OSBFP was received asking the Water Board to attend a meeting with the steering committee.

Director Hein moved to receive the letter. There was no seconder.

Director Coady said that it was time we met with this group and talked to the steering committee about mutual objectives.

Moved by Director Coady and seconded by Director Cardoso:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board arrange to meet with the steering committee of the Okanagan Similkameen Boundary Fisheries Partnership."

CARRIED.

Regional District of North Okanagan

The Board received a memorandum from Corporate Controller T. Mori outlining proposed changes to the 2002 – 2003 fiscal year budget. (attached)

Moved by Director Coady and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water receive the memorandum from T. Mori and that he be directed to take the steps outlined in the memorandum concerning trade payables and accrued vacation time and that he determine in consultation with Director Hackman, a policy for funding accumulated sick pay."

CARRIED.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting will be held July 9th in Kelowna if required. The meeting will be chaired by Vice Chair Coady.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY