

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON AUGUST 12, 2003, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN, 9848 ABERDEEN ROAD, VERNON, B.C. AT 10:00 A.M.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Director Rolly Hein	C.O.R.D.
	Director Len Novakowski	C.O.R.D.
	Director Robert Hobson	C.O.R.D.
	Chair John Slater	O.S.R.D.
	Director Eike Scheffler	O.S.R.D.
	Director Doug Hackman	N.O.R.D.
	Alternate Director Gus Boersma	O.S.R.D.
	Director Will Hansma	N.O.R.D.
<u>OTHERS:</u>	Mike Stamhuis	NORD
	Councilor Doug Dirk	Coldstream
	Karen Rothe	MSRM
<u>STAFF:</u>	Greg Armour	Field Supervisor

MINUTES:

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on May 24th, 2003 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Letter to Senator Fitzpatrick Requesting GSED Funding Partnership

Mr. Armour reviewed Board action from the previous meeting in sending a letter to Senator Fitzpatrick. The letter stated that the Board felt the role that best fit our mandate for implementing the GSED was one of focus on water issues pertaining to sustainable growth and development. The Board offered to put forward \$50,000 on a joint basis with the Federal government (90%/10% sharing) toward the Water Board taking on this role.

Mr. Armour also informed the Board of Community Futures involvement in GSED implementation. A copy of a Community Futures Development of Okanagan Similkameen letter to Sen. Fitzpatrick supporting our proposal was received as well as an offer from CFDC to fund and put on a fall workshop. The focus of the workshop would be to have key stakeholders examine the benefits of basin wide coordination of water planning, assessment and data collection.

Community Futures Development of Okanagan Similkameen had also contacted Chair Slater explaining that their expectation was that the Water Board would host the workshop as well as organized a list of participants.

Director Hobson asked if this was an initiative of Community Futures and noted that perhaps a workshop was not required if the consultant contacted all stakeholders to gather the necessary information.

Chair Slater advised that Community Futures would like the Water Board to request funding for the workshop from them.

Director Hansma commented that Community Futures would like to be the agency dispensing Federal funding.

Mr. Stamhuis noted that the proposed workshop was not well defined in terms of goals and purpose as well as deliverables.

Mr. Armour asked if this was a coordinated initiative of all valley Community Futures groups or just the Okanagan Similkameen chapter.

Director Hein noted that some of Community Futures objectives for the workshop had been met such as the establishment of a database and they should be advised of this. He also commented that we have put together a plan of action with our Proposal for a new Water Management Partnership prepared in 2000 and require agreement of the Regional Boars and funding to establish a support secretariat.

Director Hobson suggested we not approve Community Futures proposed workshop at this time but have a more detailed discussion to determine the goals of Community Futures to put this in a format acceptable to all the partners.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Hobson:

"That Community Futures be invited to the September meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board to be held in Penticton."

CARRIED.

Conference – 'Making Ecosystem Connections' June 22 – 24 in Penticton

The Board thanked Director Scheffler for a job well done in chairing the water section of the two day conference held in Penticton.

Mr. Armour advised the Board that the conference proceedings are to be posted on the internet.

Workshop - Climate Change Issues and Energy Opportunities

Mr. Armour advised that he attended this session in Kamloops. He referred to a brief memo he prepared for the Board including some comments from one presenter that seemed relevant to the importance of planning for water and energy consumption in initiatives such as the GSED.

Director Hobson noted that the Kyoto reform due out this week would have significant impact on the future of greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Request for Letter of Support for Climate Change Project Phase II

Dr. Stuart Cohen of UBC has requested a letter of support for funding of the next phase of his climate change project in the Okanagan. This is described in the attachment to the minutes of the May Board meeting attended by Dr. Cohen. Funds would come from the Climate Change Action Fund.

Director Scheffler entered the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Hansma:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter of support for the second phase of the Climate change project proposed by Dr. Cohen of UBC."

CARRIED.

Mr. Stamhuis suggested that the Board ask a few questions in the letter relating to projection on actual water supply and demand projections under the climate change scenario being studied; what the governance might be to effect the necessary changes; and what part the Okanagan Basin Water Board might play.

Director Hein expressed his thoughts that climate change information was still inconclusive and that he was not convinced that changes needed to be made. He felt that more information on the current status of water was required.

Director Hobson said that he agreed with Director Hein but still felt that climate change investigation was good work. The more we learn regarding future supply and demand of water the better off we will be in managing it. He stated that we must be able to meet instream needs for the valley and referred to the current situation in Summerland where domestic use and fisheries flows could not both be met. He said that the role of the Board was to make people aware of the need to consider the many factors required to maintain our water resources.

Director Novakowski added that the OBWB should be a leader in this education process and the problems experienced with water this summer could be a driving force in expansion of our mandate.

Alternate Director Boersma asked what the total amount of water available in our system is. He said that the effect of increased removal of water from the lakes is not well known. He added that agriculture has set limits for water withdrawals, which remain constant.

Director Hansma advised that he had fielded many complaints about low water and the relation to climate change. He noted that the recollections of many people of similar past events are short term and when records are examined there have been years of lower water levels than the current status. If climate change is indeed occurring we should be aware of the facts and utilize them in our management of water.

Director Hein remarked that water management tools should include metering and proper rates of charge for water use. He said that these tools should be part of an education program.

Director Hackman asked if agriculturists tended to over-water and if there is information on the amounts of water need for various crops.

Director Scheffler responded that there are many aspects of agriculture water use including cooling and the different crop requirements.

Chair Slater added that while requirements are known the water dose valves are not set according to these needs.

Director Hansma noted that the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture used to examine crops and advise on water usage. These staff are no longer available.

Director Hein noted that the technology to better use water in agriculture is available but we continue to waste the resource because water is under-priced.

Director Hansma said that economics do not allow the average farmer to install sophisticated irrigation controls.

Director Hobson remarked that the residential misuse of water on unsuitable landscaping builds in a tremendous future demand for water.

Director Hansma responded that xeriscaping should be a part of education on management of water.

Mr. Stamhuis commented that that some water utilities suffer more than others under situations like we are currently experiencing. Some have adequate licenses to deal with droughts while others do not. He

suggested that we need to do something regionally to make best use of water supplies.

Director Hobson observed that all of our water comes from one system and many people fail to realize this.

Director Hansma added that jurisdictional problems are a major factor against achieving cooperation. Everyone who has a license refuses to cooperate for fear of giving up their license of running short of water.

Director Scheffler said that we also fail to look at problems in water recharge areas. Logging has greatly contributed to recharge problems causing early snowmelt and lack of absorption and holding of water by the soil.

Director Hein advised the Board that assistance in obtaining cooperation is needed from senior government. He cited the example in Lake Country where the Province was invited to assess water licenses, usage, and requirements. As a result some licenses were revoked, and changes made to others. In addition, local government was empowered to police the water licenses.

Director Hackman remarked that education should include information about the use of reclaimed water.

Chair Slater noted that reclaimed water use is causing a variety of problems after years of use in some areas. The build-up of sodium from household water softeners can destroy soils.

Other Business

Federal Support for Agricultural and Rural Large Scale Infrastructure Projects

A notice was received that Golder and Associates had been retained to identify potential large scale infrastructure projects for agricultural and rural water supplies in BC.

Director Hein advised that it was the job of Golder and Associates to collect an inventory of projects and submit it to the Federal government. It is not intended for small projects but for multi-million dollar efforts. He noted that perhaps the water diversion for the Shuswap system envisioned forty years ago could be re-examined.

Moved by Alternate Director Boersma and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That the information from Golder and Associate be received."

CARRIED.

Director Scheffler commented that reconnection of the oxbows left after the Okanagan River was channelized might be a suitable project.

Mr. Stamhuis suggested that staff bring some project ideas back to the next Board meeting.

Director Hein advised that individual valley projects likely will not qualify for these grants. Large coordinated projects are needed.

Director Hobson said that Provincial dollars are needed to qualify for the Federal money and the Provincial Government has no money. In addition he wondered if engineered solutions to water supply problems takes away from our focus on non-engineered efforts.

CORRESPONDENCE:**Vic Jensen, MWLAP – Request for Funding for Sediment Core Analysis**

The Board received a request for financial support of analysis of sediment cores collected from the lake bottom by the Ministry of Water Land and Air Protection.

Mr. Armour explained that sediment cores, rather than giving a snapshot of water quality conditions that a regular water sample would, yield a long term historical view of how our practices have altered water conditions. From this we can tell such things what the optimum level of nutrient is in terms of historical fish production.

The project is being supported by the Ministry as far as collections go and by UVIC (\$5000) for core analysis; by ON Fisheries (\$5500) The Ministry is paying Queens University another \$5000 for analysis and another \$5000 – 10,000 is needed.

The Board supported the Ministry's sampling efforts in principle but has no budget to contribute financially.

Lisa Vitols, Environment Canada – Workshop In Conjunction With UBCM

A letter was received from Lisa Vitols of EC who attended the last Water Board meeting OUC. Environment Canada proposes a EC – Okanagan Local Government workshop in conjunction with UBCM on Sept. 22nd or 23rd. To see what the information needs of local government are and inform local officials what information is currently available from Environment Canada

Director Hobson noted that this workshop was not discussed at the UBCM Planning Committee and that time allocation at the Convention is very tight for most people. He suggested that this is not the best time for the workshop and perhaps it should be held later and in the Okanagan.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Hobson:

"That the Water Board suggest to Environment Canada that the proposed workshop be held at a later more convenient date and here in the Okanagan."

CARRIED.

BDO Dunwoodie – Audited Financial Statement

Moved by Director Hackman and seconded by Director Hein:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive and approve the audited financial statements for 2003."

CARRIED.

Moved by Director Hackman and seconded by Director Hein:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board the Management Letter and letter dated May 21, 2003 from the auditors."

CARRIED.

Science Council of BC - Eco Efficiency Partnership

Mr. Armour noted that the information in the BC Science Council letter fits into the GSED strategy in improving the sustainability of existing business.

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Hansma:

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the letter from the BC Science Council."

CARRIED.

Handbook on Good Governance in Restructuring Water Supply

Mr. Armour said that the outline of this document was provided for the information. The full handbook is available at the websites noted on the cover.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That the Handbook on Good Governance in Restructuring Water Supply be received for information."

CARRIED.

SEWERAGE FACILITIES GRANTS:

No Grant Applications at this Time

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:

Director Hein updated the Board on the sale of lease lots on reservoirs. He said that Premier Campbell said he was not aware of this initiative and he was trying to arrange a meeting through MLA John Weisbeck. He advised that the Okanagan Nation Alliance was also opposed to sale of these lots. Director Hein suggested that all councils and boards need a strong reminder to continue their opposition to these sales and to contact their local MLA's as well. He said we must convince the Premier that this action is the wrong thing to do environmentally and politically He noted that this is the only way that BC Lands and Assets will stop the sales.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY