

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON OCTOBER 14, 2003, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN, 1450 KLO ROAD, KELOWNA, 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 Ruth Ann Gullen	O.S.R.D.
	Vice Chair Will Hansma	N.O.R.D.
	Director Stan Field	N.O.R.D.

<u>OTHERS:</u>	Alternate Director Patty Hanson	C.O.R.D.
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<u>STAFF:</u>	Greg Armour	Field Supervisor (OBWB)
	Mike Stamhuis	N.O.R.D.

MINUTES:

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Hansma:

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on September 9th, 2003 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

2004-2005 Provisional Budget for Aquatic Weed Control and Sewage Facilities Fund

Mr. Armour presented provisional budgets (attached) for weed control and sewage funding along with the requisition amounts from each Regional District for the budgeted amounts. A five-year projection of budget costs was also included.

Director Hein asked if the five-year projection was accurate.

Mr. Armour said that it was likely not accurate. Communities had amended their Liquid Waste Management Plans; scheduled projects had not come on-stream due to lack of senior government infrastructure funding; although the weed control portion of the five-year estimate was accurate.

It was suggested that the budget be left open until the Board decided whether a requisition for water management projects should be included.

Director Novakowski asked if the reduction in sewage grant requisition from \$1.9 million to \$1.7 million was an arbitrary amount or based on actual costs.

Mr. Armour replied that it was arbitrary. The surplus in the fund which had accrued from projects not commencing as scheduled, could be used to reduce the total requisition if the Board wished to do so. Indications at this point were that \$1.7 million would be adequate for sewage grants in 2004-2005.

Director Scheffler raised the point of funds left unspent in the Federal Provincial Infrastructure Program.

Chair Slater advised that new funding would not be forthcoming until these funds have been used up.

Director Hobson noted that the Infrastructure Grant is used for more than sewer and water projects.

Director Novakowski questioned whether OBWB assistance was available for package treatment systems.

Director Hansma advised that funding was available as long as the plants served existing development and not new expansion.

Director Hein asked if the majority contributors received weed control and sewer grants proportionate to their contributions.

Mr. Armour responded that the services were divided according to need as defined by local government and not by the amount of contribution.

Director Hein suggested to the Board that we allocate funds for water management initiatives openly in our requisition instead of asking permission for individual projects.

Director Gullen entered the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

Director Novakowski suggested keeping the total requisition the same as the current fiscal year and use the proposed decrease as a line item for water projects.

Director Scheffler noted that we need to be specific about what projects we would undertake.

Director Hein suggested some projects might be additional water storage through raising of dams; addressing specific water quality concerns; and groundwater mapping and relationships to surface water. He said these should be incorporated into a plan detailing use of extra funding.

Director Hansma said we should start with a source analysis of water for the entire watershed.

The Board agreed to delay adoption of the provisional budget until the inclusion of funding for water management projects was examined further.

Construction of New Aquatic Weed Rototiller – Capital and Operating Costs

Mr. Armour reviewed discussion of construction of a new aquatic weed rototiller from the last meeting. He proposed that the machine be added to increase the operating time now limited by shared use of one machine with Cultus Lake and with Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Mr. Armour submitted a budget for additional operating costs for full-time use of the third machine but said he had not yet received estimates on capital cost for construction. Once these were received and assuming the cost do not exceed our reserve funds, the Board could decide whether to go to tender.

Director Novakowski asked why we would give away the shared operating time even if we had the third machine.

Mr. Armour indicated that fulltime use of the three machines would be adequate to do the control work necessary in the Okanagan.

Director Field suggested that the Board write a letter to the Province indicating the need to spend money to keep pace with protecting a Provincial resource and asking for funding.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That the Water Board send a letter to the Province asking for funding to construct a new rototiller; get final estimates on the cost of the equipment; and look into funding from infrastructure grants and the GSED."

CARRIED.

Report on Environment Canada Workshop (September 30th)

Mr. Armour and Chair Slater reported on the Environment Canada workshop held September 30th.

The workshop was intended for EC to explain what resources and projects they had in the Okanagan and to determine what the needs of local government were.

Mr. Armour commented that the last session on the EC website was most informative. The website is new and still being developed but there is already a wide range of information available on water related issues. The problem remains how to integrate this information into day to day decision making at the local level.

Director Hein commented that he had looked at the website and found it confusing.

Mr. Armour offered to invite the presenter of the session to our next meeting.

Director Hobson added that the expertise of Environment Canada in the Pacific and Yukon Region is impressive and we need to find a way to entice some of this technical ability into the Okanagan.

Rural Water Infrastructure Project – Project Information Submission

Mr. Armour provided the Board with the proposal submitted for a large-scale rural water infrastructure project.

Options for use of Community Futures Funding for Furthering GSED – Discussion of Steps Required to Achieve Valley Wide Water Management Goals

Mr. Armour reviewed the September meeting attended by Community Futures of Okanagan Similkameen. CFDC is prepared to commit approximately \$13,000 towards an initial step in promoting the GSED and basin wide cooperation. The Water Board had suggested that both sides review the intent and audiences for the workshop to make sure the right issues were presented to decision-makers in local government.

Director Gullen said that quantity issues will impact growth first. She noted that in arid regions of the United States, quantity issues are the problem. The Provincial Government in BC is issuing water licenses without knowledge of the actual quantity available.

Director Hobson recalled that the workshop for a 'New Water Management Partnership' held in 2000 gave some consensus from a fairly senior cross section of Local, Provincial, Federal and First Nations representatives on a valley wide approach to water management.

He expressed concern that staff of the Provincial Ministries dealing with water has been greatly reduced and the result will be further downloading to local government.

He added that there is a need to involve the water purveyors for their opinions on Okanagan transboundary issues.

Director Hansma noted that water quality and quantity are linked. Common issues between local governments need to be identified and all parties need to be involved.

Director Novakowski stated that the immediate focus should be on water quantity and to deal with quality issues at the same time would be too large a process.

He said that there is currently no structure to manage common issues even if they are identified unless the Water Board is allowed to provide a secretariat for coordinating actions to deal with regional problems.

Chair Slater noted that this could be an outcome of the workshop and agreement of the local government decision-makers would be needed to provide the political will to go ahead.

Director Hein responded that water quantity is an issue that has been around for a long time and that seasonal variations are normal for this valley. He observed that the more people in the valley, the more the negative impacts on water quality.

Director Hansma said that we should put together the workshop and ensure that all local political representatives attend, those at the mayor and chair level, and hire a competent facilitator to provide direction.

Director Hobson observed that at the 2000 workshop there were notable absences from local government and the concept of regional water management could not be sold to these people afterwards.

Director Field said he was not convinced that Vernon would attend a workshop and also wondered how the water purveyors would fit in.

Director Scheffler commented that perhaps a strong announcement saying that the Water Board was prepared to exercise its full mandate would ensure attendance.

Director Hansma said the Regional Districts would veto this expanded role.

Mr. Stamhuis observed that the timing for involvement of all parties would be good with the drought this season. He reported that the North Okanagan had numerous water supply problems this year.

Director Hobson said finding funding to provide solutions to water issues would be an inducement to attend.

Chair Slater added that he and Mr. Armour would be making a presentation to the Water Supply Association meeting in Osoyoos at the end of October.

Director Gullen expressed a need to involve the media to create and awareness of the need to get together. She said that senior people should be brought in to identify potential funding sources to improve infrastructure and deal with quality problems. She advised that the Board should consider inviting the former Director for Water Resources for the Yukon as he had supervised a single authority that had dealt with all water issues in the territory.

Director Hansma said that senior Provincial Ministers should be invited to a facilitated workshop as well as local MLAs. In addition Senator Fitzpatrick and Minister David Anderson should attend. Community Future should be asked for agreement on this direction and a workplan should be submitted.

Director Field said that we still need to identify what we want from the workshop.

Mr. Stamhuis replied the a goal could be to get local government to allow the Water Board to set aside funds to begin to investigate water issues in the region.

Director Hobson added that a more comprehensive summary of the issues and goal for the workshop is needed. He suggested spending part of the money allocated for the workshop in doing this.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:

Sewering of Fire Damaged Area in Kelowna

Director Hobson reported that the City of Kelowna wishes to sewer the Okaview subdivision that is currently on septic systems. The area was heavily damaged by fire this summer and approximately 102 homes were destroyed along with their septic systems. Insurance will cover the cost of a sewer system hook-up for these homes but the residents of undamaged homes would face a cost of about \$12,500 each for sewerage.

He said that a decision has to be made soon before septic systems are installed leaving no chance to apply for funding through regular channels.

The Board discussed options Kelowna might have for subsidizing or providing funding to residents.

Moved by Director Novakowski and seconded by Director Hansma:

"That the Water Board ensure that the Okaview sewer project meets Water Board criteria and expedite funding from our Sewage Grant Program."

CARRIED.

International Joint Commission – New Agreement Process

Director Scheffler informed the Board that negotiations are underway for a new IJC agreement between the United States and Canada.

He suggested that water quality issues be included in this agreement allowing lower lake levels in years of high snowpack to flush the Osoyoos Lake system. He noted that the American side is spending a large amount of money on fisheries enhancement and that these stocks are in danger in Osoyoos Lake as well.

Director Hein commented that the fisheries enhancement approach might be used to achieve the water quality improvements.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Scheffler:

"That the Water Board encourage the International Joint Commission to include fisheries enhancement and water quality analysis in the new agreement process."

CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY