

**OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON SEPTEMBER 14 2004, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN, 101 MARTIN STREET, PENTICTON B.C. AT 10:00 A.M.**

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**PRESENT:**

Director Len Novakowski	C.O.R.D.
Director Robert Hobson	C.O.R.D.
Director Rolly Hein	C.O.R.D.
Chair John Slater	O.S.R.D.
Director Eike Scheffler	O.S.R.D.
Director Gordon Clark	O.S.R.D.
Director Sean Harvey	N.O.R.D.
Director Doug Hackman	N.O.R.D.
Director Will Hansma	N.O.R.D.

**OTHERS:**

<b><u>STAFF:</u></b>	Greg Armour	Project	Manager
(OBWB)	Mike Stamhuis	N.O.R.D.	

**MINUTES:**

**Moved by Director Clark and seconded by Director Novakowski:**

*"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004 be adopted."*

***CARRIED.***

**NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Okanagan Partnership - Presentation on Regional Water Management at Fall Forum**

Mr. Armour advised that Tom Siddon, Co-Chair of the Water Management Flagship Group of the Partnership was unable to attend.

He added that Mr. Siddon has attended two previous OBWB meetings, along with other members of the partnership, to discuss possible approaches to better manage water in the Valley. He noted that the business plan of the OK Partnership water management group had been distributed which includes a list of partnership members and description of proposed recommendations.

All of the economic interests represented in the partnership identified better coordination of Water Management as being of primary importance to ensuring sustainable economic growth.

The agenda contained other information such as the Executive Summary of the Partnership Charter and the proposal prepared by the Steering Committee struck by the March workshop participants.

Chair Slater reported to the Board on a meeting he attended with partnership executive, Community Futures, and other economic interests.

Director Hansma asked if the Partnership would consider presentation of their water management recommendations to the three regional districts possibly as an open forum discussion involving other stakeholders.

Director Novakowski wondered if the OBWB was to become a member of a larger group coordinating regional water management.

Director Clark asked about the involvement of Community Futures and Chair Slater advised that funding from Western Economic Diversification was still available from the Community Futures Group.

Chair Slater summarized that the Partnership still favours a more structured approach to regional management and coordination of water use, rather than a consensus based structure similar to the Fraser Basin Council. The FBC took many years to become effective and we may not have the luxury of that amount of time.

Director Novakowski said that any management group cannot function without staff with technical expertise. He asked if our mandate as set out in Supplementary Letters Patent is suitable.

Chair Slater noted that the mandate was very broad and required only the consent of all three regional districts to explore a broader role.

Director Hobson commented that the Board is dealing with the same package of work as proposed by the workshop sub-committee group and also the same funds for costs of operation. He noted that the money would have to be assessed from the regional districts and felt that the Central Okanagan Regional District would likely support contributing their share. He said he felt there was an advantage to bringing in industry, First Nations, and University to the water management group.

Director Hackman asked if there was any indication that senior government funding would be available and if any such funding would be annual or for a longer term.

Director Harvey advised that we all draw our water through different systems and the Water Board must be very clear on the goals and outcomes of Regional Water Management when approaching local government for support. He said he is definitely opposed to a single authority controlling all aspects of water use. He indicated that he felt the Partnership report on water management recommendations and the business plan to achieve the goals was an excellent plan; very detailed and not at all vague.

Director Scheffler noted that Osoyoos has severe water quality problems as well as quantity issues.

Director Hansma reiterated that senior government support on a sustainable basis is needed.

Director Hobson said that the Fraser Basin Council has operated for many years on three year agreement for funding. They also receive additional funds for specific projects they are asked to take on and perhaps this could be applied to the organization we are discussing. He said he felt that if the three regional boards cannot agree, there is little chance of federal support. He noted that we currently do not know the cumulative impacts of development on our water supplies and the water budget of the Valley. This would be a valuable goal to achieve.

Director Scheffler stated that there may be other sources of funding through such organizations as Ducks Unlimited or US funds through the Douglas County Public Utilities District.

Mr. Stamhuis commented that we need to learn to manage water before it manages us. Right now there is a knowledge vacuum and the problems vary for each of the 200 valley utilities which experience widely varying levels of supply problems.

Director Clark wondered if it was realistic to set up an organization with no statutory powers for decision making. He felt the body should be capable of influencing decisions with more than advocacy.

There was discussion of methods for funding a regional water management body.

Director Hobson proposed that a letter of understanding be sought involving all three regional districts.

Mr. Armour advised that the Okanagan partnership would like to ask the Water Board to contribute \$10,000 toward the cost of staging the comprehensive workshop where recommendations and business plans from all sectors of the Partnership would be presented to local government.

The Board denied the request as the workshop scope went well beyond our role in water management.

**Moved by Director Hansma:**

*"That Okanagan Basin Water Board support the Okanagan Partnership plan for regional water management and take it to the regional districts following the workshop."*

**Moved by Director Novakowski and seconded by Director Scheffler:**

*"That at the October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Okanagan Basin Water Board review the Okanagan Partnership proposal for regional water management in consultation with Chair Tom Siddon and refine the proposal for presentation to the regional districts."*

**CARRIED.**

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

The Board asked that the nature of the Partnership workshop be clarified as to whether all aspects relating to sustainable economic growth would be covered or just regional water management. The Board also asked that Mr. Siddon's agreement to make the presentations to the regional boards be obtained and that March workshop participants, local councils and MLA's within the areas be invited when these presentations are made.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

##### **North Okanagan Regional District - Change in Water Board Appointments**

The Board received a letter from the Regional District of North Okanagan appointing Vernon Mayor Sean Harvey as Director on the OBWB and Stan Field as the Alternate Director.

##### **Regional District of North Okanagan – Copy of Letter to Minister Abbott Regarding the Sale of Leased Lots on Reservoir Lakes**

The Board received a copy of a letter from the Regional District of North Okanagan to Minister Abbott regarding the sale of leased lots on reservoir lakes. The Regional Board asked the Minister to notify them if any changes in the status of the project were contemplated.

##### **John Huby – Thoughts on Water Supply in the Okanagan**

The Board received a copy of a letter from Mr. Huby directed to Penticton City Council describing his concerns about water quantity management and the need to take immediate steps to ensure a sustainable future.

The Board agreed to send a reply thanking Mr. Huby for his comments and outlining the OBWB initiatives and goals to achieve better water management.

**OBWB 2004 Financial Statements – Resolution to Approve**

Moved by Director Hackman and seconded by Director Hansma:

*"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive and approve the 2004 Financial Statements for the Water Board and that the Board receive the 2004 audit and management letters dated May 19, 2004 from the Auditors."*

**CARRIED.**

**ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE****Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection - Okanagan Basin Water Supply Study (1994)**

Mr. Armour reviewed some of the findings from the 1994 report done by Province on Okanagan Water Supplies. He said that the Province is proposing to update study and has asked for input on what should be done and what information would be of value to Okanagan local government.

The draft RFP sent out by the Province for review seemed to underestimate the scope of work to be done. The Ministry now proposes to meet with Okanagan local government to refine the study criteria.

**Groundwater Assessment of the Okanagan**

Mr. Armour updated the Board on the joint Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and Geological Survey of Canada project to assess the quantity, quality recharge areas and other parameters of groundwater in the Valley. He provided the latest written update of progress and proposed actions of the study.

**SEWAGE GRANT APPLICATIONS:****Sewer Grant Policy Regarding Retroactive Grants**

Director Hobson asked that the Board review Sewage Facilities Grant Policies especially referencing payment of retroactive grants. He said the City of Kelowna had not applied for OBWB grants for a significant number of qualifying sewer projects as they had not been informed that the Board had amended its policy to permit projects not receiving senior government grants to qualify.

Mr. Armour provided a summary of Water Board policies and the dates they became effective.

Mr. Armour said he would contact City of Kelowna Finance staff to review the qualifying projects where no grants had been applied for.

Director Hein suggested that the City of Kelowna send a letter to the Board making sure that all eligible projects from 2003 had received Water Board approval.

Moved by Director Hein and seconded by Director Hansma:

*"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter clarifying OBWB Sewage Grant policies to Okanagan Valley local government."*

**CARRIED.**

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Septage Disposal Facilities:**

Director Hansma informed the Board of the need in the North Okanagan to construct a septage plant to pre-treat effluent prior to disposal in the Vernon sewage treatment facility. He asked the Board to explore the possibility of this project qualifying for a sewage facilities grant.

Director Hein advised that the Regional District of Central Okanagan had built such a facility in Lake Country and was operating it at a profit.

The Board agreed to discuss sewer grant policy at the next meeting and eligibility of facilities other than treatment plant and main collection systems. The Board asked for information on the Provincial grant policies and on approvals by the Ministry of Health.

**Federal Minister of Environment**

Director Hein informed the Board about a meeting he and Director Novakowski had attended with the Federal Minister of Environment. He asked that the Board send a letter to the Minister to inform him of the challenges we face with water management in the Okanagan Valley and providing information on the nature and mandate of the Board.

**Moved by Director Novakowski and seconded by Director Hein:**

*"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a copy of the March 19 Workshop Subcommittee report to the Federal Minister of Environment and the report be sent to Senator Fitzpatrick noting that any assistance he could provide in reinforcing our concerns with the Minister would be valuable."*

***CARRIED.***

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

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SECRETARY