

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON OCTOBER 12 2004, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN, 1450 KLO ROAD, KELOWNA B.C. AT 10:00 A.M.

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.
Alternate Director Gus Boersma	O.S.R.D.
Alternate Director Stan Field	N.O.R.D.
Director Doug Hackman	N.O.R.D.
Director Will Hansma	N.O.R.D.

OTHERS:

STAFF:

Greg Armour	Project	Manager
(OBWB)		
Mike Stamhuis	N.O.R.D.	
Nelson Jatel	Okanagan Partnership	
Tom Siddon	Okanagan Partnership	

MINUTES:

Moved by Director Scheffler and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on September 14th, 2004 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Okanagan Partnership - Presentation on Regional Water Management at Fall Forum

Tom Siddon, Co-Chair of the Water Management Flagship Group of the Partnership and Nelson Jatel, the Executive Director joined the Board for discussion of the Partnership regional water management recommendations.

Mr. Stamhuis summarized the information provided by staff (attached) to the Board concerning options for structuring and funding a regional council.

Director Hein indicated that he favoured a single body rather than a separate water supply council. He said the Water Board should be the funding authority.

Director Hackman commented that the suggested name 'Okanagan Water Supply Council' should be changed to eliminate the word 'supply' as it limited the focus too much.

Mr. Siddon explained that the Partnership favours an Okanagan Water Stewardship Council structured with an executive group similar to the current Water Board with the addition of First Nations representation and perhaps water purveyors, and a stewardship council of twenty to thirty members representing all stakeholders and reporting to the executive group.

He summarized the reasons supporting the need for this structure in a memorandum presented to the Board. (attached)

Director Hein asked if, in Mr. Siddon's experience an agreement requiring approval of all three parties was common.

Mr. Siddon noted that the fact that each regional district has separate Supplementary Letters Patent to establish the Water Board would indicate that a veto power was intended.

The Board discussed the ten points in Mr. Siddon's memorandum pertaining to the mandate and tasks of a new Council.

Director Hobson left the meeting at 11:10.

Mr. Siddon commented that this may be an opportune time to take this proposal to the public due to the awareness of water issues and availability of senior government funds.

Director Scheffler added that the international nature of the Okanagan Basin requires discussion with the United States regarding water quality issues in Osoyoos Lake.

Mr. Jatel explained that Mr. Siddon had presented the 'why' portion of the Partnership's views on regional water management and that he would like to talk about "how". He said that the Board, no matter how it is constituted, needs the power to make decisions. Making recommendations only tends to lead to inaction. He felt that the Board needs the ability to act on a two-thirds majority. Mr. Jatel reviewed the recommendations dating from the Okanagan Basin Study in 1974 to the March 2004 Workshop. All of these were in favour of an effective regional water management body to look at the Okanagan in its entirety.

There was discussion of the possible representation on such a body.

Director Scheffler cited the example of the Sterile Insect Release Board which required no annual review of budget during the first five years of its mandate.

Director Novakowski advised that the Board would need a voting structure and equality in financing. Would there be a weighted vote? How would the veto power of a single regional district be dealt with?

Mr. Jatel commented that the new body would, above all, require staff. He said that in business, once goals and a business plan are established, the business is staffed accordingly.

A presentation to all three regional district boards in November was discussed. The purpose would be to explain the concept of a Water Stewardship Council and the funding requirements and seek the approval of the Regional Boards. Mr. Siddon would make the presentation on behalf of the Okanagan Partnership with Chair Slater representing the Water Board.

The question of funding for the presentation and preparation, as well as ongoing involvement to establish to structure was debated.

Moved by Director Novakowski and seconded by Director Scheffler:

"That Ten Thousand dollars (\$10,000) be provided to the Okanagan Partnership to raise the profile of the regional water management initiative, to develop advocacy, and to prepare a workplan and materials to present to senior government in order to obtain funding ."

CARRIED.

The Board also wished to present the proposal to the Workshop Subcommittee for their review and support.

Mr. Stamhuis suggested that the proposal contain a clause stating that a party to the agreement could opt out after a certain number of years.

Fiscal Year 2005 – 2006 Preliminary Budget Discussion

Mr. Armour reviewed preliminary drafts of the 2005 -2006 aquatic weed control and sewage grant budgets.

He noted that the sick leave accrual and the health and safety items were complete thus the aquatic weed budget was slightly lower than the current year. The operating increase for this year and for next year over 2003 -04 is for the increased hours with the new rototiller.

The provisional sewage facilities grant budget shown on the Regional District requisition is identical to the previous two years. The attached note shows revenues and expenditures since 2002. The amount in reserve is \$1.4million and includes interest earned.

The final requisition and budget does not have to be submitted to the regional districts until December 15th.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Groundwater Assessment in the Okanagan Basin (GAOB) – Timeline on Proposed Tasks

Mr. Armour updated the Board on this joint MWLAP and GSC project on. He noted that he is on the steering committee and noted that no funding has been requested from the Board, only participation and support.

Mr. Armour advised GAOB planned to send out a newsletter to local government describing the project and asked if this should come from the Water Board.

The Board indicated that the letter and information should come from the senior partners noting the participation and support of the OBWB.

The GAOB proposed meetings with local government to determine what the study should produce that best fits local government needs. Advice was sought on how to proceed with stakeholder meetings. Should the sessions involve all municipalities or the three RD's?

The Board agreed that sessions with each local jurisdiction would be required to address all concerns.

A combined workshop is planned for the spring of 2005 to report on progress.

Mr. Armour also noted that the group has tried, without success, to hire a student from UBC Okanagan for preliminary project work. He indicated that he will pursue this with the Freshwater Science Institute.

The Board asked Mr. Armour to invite a representative of GAOB to attend a future meeting.

SEWAGE GRANT APPLICATIONS:**City of Vernon – Okanagan Landing Sanitary Sewer Extension**

Moved by Director Field and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That City of Vernon be informed that a Sewer Grant for the Okanagan Landing Sewer Extension meets Okanagan Basin Water Board criteria and will be approved upon receipt of an application and schedule of projects costs."

CARRIED.

City of Kelowna – Grants not Claimed for Locally Funded Projects

The Board reviewed City of Kelowna information on past sewer projects for which Water Board grants had not been applied for. These projects were eligible for grants but the City believed they were required to incur debt to receive grants.

Mr. Armour noted that prior to 1994 the Water Board policy was that debt had to be incurred. In November 1994 the policy was reviewed and amended at the request of the City of Armstrong.

Mr. Armour advised that in March, 1999 he had provided the City of Kelowna Utilities Manager with a copy of the policy change in a grant summary letter dated 1997. He was unable to locate the original 1994 letter to local government. From the list of qualifying projects where no grants had been applied for supplied by the City of Kelowna Finance Department, Mr. Armour said two projects were completed in the period between 1994 and 1999. OBWB grants would total about \$54,500 if the Board decided to pay retroactively.

The Board agreed to wait until Director Hobson was present to make a decision.

Eligibility of Septage Disposal Facilities for Sewer Grants:

The Board discussed the need in the North Okanagan to construct a septage plant to pre-treat effluent prior to disposal in the Vernon sewage treatment facility and whether this project qualified for a sewage facilities grant.

Mr. Armour reviewed the OBWB criteria for grant eligibility and the Federal Provincial infrastructure grant policy. He pointed out that municipal tertiary treatment plant and collection systems are eligible.

The Board discussed whether the septage facility feeding into the Vernon tertiary treatment plant met these criteria.

Director Hein noted that Central Okanagan Regional District had not applied for a Water Board grant for their septage facility.

Moved by Director Hansma and seconded by Director Hackman:

"That policy of the Okanagan Basin Water Board for sewer facilities grants include funding of septage facilities for treatment of pump out effluent from septic and holding tank systems for treatment in a municipal tertiary treatment plant."

CARRIED.

Director Hein opposed

The Board further discussed the implications of the motion.

Director Hein said he would like information on the long term cost implications of the policy and an analysis of the benefits to water quality of funding septage facilities.

Director Field said that the policy could be restricted to the North Okanagan facility and considered for others once information is gathered.

The Board agreed to look into the policy implications more thoroughly before informing local government of changes.

Fraser Basin Council Annual General Meeting

Moved by Director Field and seconded by Director Novakowski:

"That Chair Slater and Mr. Armour are authorized to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Fraser Basin Council."

CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY