

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON JULY 11, 2006 AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN, 9848 ABERDEEN ROAD, COLDSTREAM, BC, AT 10:00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Director Len Novakowski	Regional District Central Okanagan (absent)
Alternate Director Patty Hanson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Robert Hobson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Chair John Slater	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Graham Reid	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Lorraine Bennest	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Pat Cochrane	City of Vernon
Director Bill Firman	Regional District North Okanagan (absent)
Alternate Director Jerry Oglow	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Ron Perrie	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tom Siddon	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association
Director Fabian Alexis	Okanagan Nation Alliance (absent)

STAFF:

Greg Armour	Program Manager, Okanagan Basin Water Board
Dr. Anna Sears	Water Stewardship Project Director
Mike Stamhuis	Regional District North Okanagan
Debbie Taylor	Recording Secretary

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Slater called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Chair Slater introduced Dr. Anna Warwick Sears, Water Stewardship Project Director to members of the OBWB. Dr. Sears described her experience in watershed management in California. She said she looked forward to furthering a regional approach to water management in the Okanagan Valley.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The OBWB discussed the distribution of Agenda packages. The Directors agreed that Agenda packages would be emailed to the Directors and hard copies made available at the

meeting. Agenda packages would be mailed to Director Cochrane and Director Firman. Director Fairbairn would continue to pick his Agenda package up at the NORD office.

Moved by Director Cochrane

Seconded by Director Perrie

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on June 06, 2006 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan Boardroom be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Director Perrie

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

"That the Agenda for a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board for July 11, 2006 be approved as circulated."

"That Item 4.7 being Ministry of Environment Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Study be added to the Agenda."

"That Item 4.8 being City of Vernon Environmental Advisory Committee be added to the Agenda."

CARRIED.

4. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Review of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Actions

Mr. Siddon reported that the Water Stewardship Council had formed sub committees to deal with issues such as Council vision, mission, and decision making principles. The next meeting of the Water Stewardship Council was scheduled for Thursday, September 07, 2006. Mr. Siddon added that Directors were welcome to attend a facilitated workshop scheduled for Friday, September 22, 2006.

Mr. Siddon noted that Paul Kluckner, designated by the Ministry of Environment to the Water Stewardship Council had accepted a new position in the Ministry and though he had expressed interest in the Council he had been unable to consistently attend the Water Stewardship Council meetings. Mr. Siddon offered to discuss with Mr. Kluckner the possibility of having an alternate member attend the meetings on his behalf.

The OBWB agreed that the Water Stewardship Council would develop letterhead which was distinct to the Council. Dr. Sears suggested that staff and the Stewardship Council would develop several sample logo ideas for review by the Board, and this idea was accepted by the OBWB.

4.2 Minutes of a Meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council from June 08,

2006

Moved by Director Cochrane

Seconded by Director Hobson

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held on June 08, 2006 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan Boardroom be received for information."

CARRIED.

Mr. Armour advised the OBWB that Water Stewardship Council member Rick McKelvey was no longer affiliated with the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program. Directors of the OBWB agreed that Mr. McKelvey was a valuable asset to the Water Stewardship Council bringing with him extensive knowledge and expertise. Mr. McKelvey would be looking for possible affiliation with a group interested in being involved with the Water Stewardship Council. Discussion ensued regarding increasing the membership of the Water Stewardship Council by one member or possibly inviting others with technical expertise to join as members at large.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Reid

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board endorses Rick McKelvey as appointee to the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council as a member at large to be reviewed upon the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program appointing a representative to the Council."

CARRIED.

4.3 Minutes of a Meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council from June 22, 2006

Moved by Director Cochrane

Seconded by Director Hobson

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held on June 22, 2006 at the Gray Monk Winery be received for information."

CARRIED.

Ben Kangasniemi, representing the Pacific Climate Impact Consortium (PCIC) gave a presentation at the June 22, 2006 meeting. The PCIC is a university based collaborative applied research group working to provide policy-relevant tools and information about impacts of climate change. The Water Stewardship Council will designate a representative to attend future meetings of the PCIC.

The Water Stewardship Council had discussed the lake water level constraints of the new Kelowna Bridge at their June 22, 2006 meeting. Mr. Armour reported that Ministry of Environment Acting Director of Regional Operations, Brian Symonds had discussed the matter with the Ministry of Transportation and felt that the lake level range permitted by the new bridge was adequate. The Directors agreed that the OBWB would request a recommendation from the Water Stewardship Council.

4.4 Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Position Statements on Significant Issues – Sale of Reservoir Lots

Memo dated July 11, 2006 from Mr. Armour regarding position statements of the Water Stewardship Council was received by the OBWB for approval. The Water Stewardship Council requested authorization to comment on issues without seeking formal approval from the OBWB.

Some Directors believed that the Water Stewardship Council should be permitted to provide position statements. Chair Slater expressed concern that the three regional districts and the OBWB would be included in position statements of the Council that were not necessarily their opinion. Director Cochrane expressed concern with the Council becoming its own entity and noted that the Council was created to be an advisory group to the OBWB. He understood that the Council required some autonomy however ultimately they would be responsible to the OBWB.

Draft letter dated July 11, 2006 to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands regarding the proposed sale of leased lots on drinking water reservoirs in the Okanagan Basin was received by the OBWB for approval.

Chair Slater commented that if lots were held by the leaseholders they would invest more in to the lots. Director Hobson added that if the Regional Districts needed to purchase the lots at some time in the future, they would then come at a higher price.

Director Cochrane believed that the draft letter regarding sale of reservoir lots should be directed to the OBWB as a recommendation of the Council, and then included with any Water Board action as an expert technical opinion. Director Reid shared Director Cochrane's opinion noting that the Council letter was political in nature and political comment should come from the Board. Vice Chair Cochrane suggested forwarding the draft letter along with a letter from the OBWB introducing the Water Stewardship Council. Chair Slater stated that a revised letter from the Stewardship Council should be forwarded to the Directors along with previous letters to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands would be distributed to the Directors.

Action Item: Staff to distribute copy of revised Water Stewardship Council letter along with previous letters to Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to the Directors of the OBWB.

Discussion ensued regarding amending the wording of the draft letter to read “allow the leases to lapse” rather than “not renew the leases”.

Mr. Stamhuis commented that having the Water Stewardship Council communicate with the media may be beneficial as the Council had a certain credibility that a political group may not have; however, the OBWB would maintain the right to direct the Council if the Board felt their interests differed. A statement to the Council reminding them to regard and serve the best interests of the OBWB could remove any potential conflict. Mr. Stamhuis believed that there were many issues that would be scientific or advisory and

would support the decisions of the OBWB. He did not believe that the Council should require approval for each position statement and that they had credibility that the OBWB should take advantage of.

Both Director Perrie and Director Fairbairn added that they were uncomfortable being affiliated with an opinion that they had no fore-knowledge or notification about.

Director Hobson suggested that the OBWB receive advice from the Water Stewardship Council and forward with the OBWB name attached. Discussion ensued regarding the boundary between a technical position and a political position.

Mr. Pike believed that the Water Stewardship Council should have their own autonomy however report to the media as one voice with the OBWB. Director Reid agreed adding that the Council was a policy advisory council to the OBWB.

Mr. Siddon said that members of the Water Stewardship Council employed by agencies such as the Provincial Government said they would support Council statements that differed from employer policy or initiatives.

Director Hobson noted that the OBWB needed to turn over the issues in a quick manner through an effective communications policy. The challenge was to be responsive and to use the Council's knowledge and expertise.

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Perrie

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board directs Staff to provide a protocol outlining the method for the Stewardship Council to provide advice and comments to the OBWB."

CARRIED.

Action Item: Staff to provide a protocol outlining the method for the Stewardship Council to provide advice and comments to the OBWB.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Hanson

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council draft letter to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands opposing the sale of leased lots and forward the amended letter as an attachment to Water Board correspondence."

CARRIED.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Hanson

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board directs Staff to draft a letter to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands introducing the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and enclosing the Council letter opposing the sale of leased lots ."

CARRIED.

Action Item: Staff to draft letter to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands introducing the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and enclosing the letter opposing the sale of leased lots from the Council and circulate to Directors of the OBWB for approval.

The OBWB broke for lunch at 11:56 a.m. and reconvened at 12:22 p.m.

4.5 Website Recommendation

Mr. Armour and Dr. Sears recommended to the OBWB that the Water Board set up a stand alone website maintained by Staff and distinct from the NORD site. The website would be set up for a cost of \$2500 and be maintained by Staff.

The Waterbucket website would contain water related information to the Okanagan Region whereas the OBWB website would have an OBWB branding. Director Siddon reported that the Stewardship Council recommends that the Water Board authorize the expenditure of \$16,000 to participate in the Waterbucket website.

Staff will meet with representatives of the Waterbucket site to determine what services are provided and make a recommendation to the Board.

Moved by Director Cochrane

Seconded by Director Hobson

"That Staff prepare an analysis and recommendation of the usefulness of the stand alone site and the Waterbucket site."

CARRIED.

Action Item: Staff to prepare an analysis and recommendation of the usefulness of the stand alone site and the Waterbucket website.

Moved by Director Cochrane

Seconded by Director Hobson

"That Staff set up a website independent of the NORD site."

CARRIED.

4.6 Water in the City Conference

Water in the City Conference Agenda Information was received by the OBWB for information and discussion. Mr. Armour and Dr. Sears plan to attend the September 2006 conference. The OBWB agreed that Mr. Siddon would attend as representative of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council.

Moved by Director Perrie

Seconded by Director Hobson

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board endorses Tom Siddon representing the Water Stewardship Council at the Water in the City Conference scheduled for September 17 – 20, 2006 in Victoria, BC."

CARRIED.

4.7 Ministry of Environment Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Study

Mr. Armour and Dr. Sears reported on a teleconference on the Water Supply and Demand Study. Dr. Sears reported that the Ministry is developing a model providing future projections and scenarios for the Okanagan. Director Pike expressed concern that resources were being directed to yet another model. Dr. Sears replied that the previous models were believed to be inadequate for current needs.

Mr. Armour advised a steering committee had not yet been appointed and that a project manager was not hired at this time. Staff will keep the Board informed of the status of the Study. He also advised that the Ministry had confirmed that a staff representative would be assigned to the Working Group and that a Project Manager had not yet been hired.

4.8 City of Vernon Environmental Advisory Committee

Mr. Armour advised the City of Vernon was establishing an Environmental Advisory Committee. He said that he might be interested in submitting his name as a private citizen.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Minister Ida Chong, Ministry of Community Services – Changes to Supplementary Letters Patent

Correspondence from Minister of Community Services, Ida Chong regarding changes to Supplementary Letters Patent was received by the OBWB for information.

Mr. Armour advised that he had not received any further correspondence regarding the matter. Director Reid commented that having reviewed the Supplementary Letters Patent he felt that making amendments were not going to be an easy process.

5.2 Kim Stephens – Waterbucket.ca

The OBWB received for discussion a letter from Kim Stephens, Program Coordinator of the Water Sustainability Action Plan for B.C. An accompanying Letter of Invitation to partner and lead an Okanagan section of the Water Bucket website signed by various provincial staff was included.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

“That the Letter of Invitation to lead in developing the Okanagan Community-of-Interest on waterbucket.ca be received by the Okanagan Basin Water Board for information and discussion and Staff comment.”

CARRIED.

6. SEWAGE GRANT MATTERS

6.1 Sewer Grant Policy

Local governments that create new lots less than 1.0 hectare in size which are not served by community sewer will jeopardize their eligibility for Okanagan Basin Water Board capital sewage project funding (18% of total cost).

Grant eligibility will not only be jeopardized for future infrastructure to service non-sewered small lots created but the Water Board will consider rejecting grants for other projects within the local government jurisdiction and review continued eligibility of grants already in place.

Each local government that has subdivision authority is responsible for adopting this policy. For example, if a municipality within a regional district does not comply, this will jeopardize that municipality’s status but not the regional district’s status.

Ministry of Community Services Acting Director of Engineering, Glen Brown letter of March 09, 2006 states “In addition to meeting the Liquid Waste Management Plan requirement, applications must include confirmation that a bylaw is in place which requires community sewer service to all new lots of less than one hectare in size within the boundaries under the jurisdiction of the applicant.” The OBWB discussed the necessity of municipalities having a bylaw if the province had a bylaw in place.

The OBWB agreed that existing lots in a subdivision would be eligible for project funding. Chair Slater added that if the province deemed a municipality eligible for funding that the OBWB would also deem the municipality eligible.

Mr. Armour provided a draft letter to Okanagan local government clarifying the Water Board policy regarding lots on less than one hectare not served by community sewer.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Perrie

“That the letter affirming the Water Board policy on creation of lots less than one hectare be sent to Okanagan local government.”

CARRIED.

7. WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

7.1 Grant Applications – Staff Recommendations Regarding Grants to be Funded

Moved by Director Cochrane
Oglow

Seconded by Director

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve funding of the grant application in the North Okanagan as recommended by Staff.”

CARRIED.

Moved by Director Perrie

Seconded by Director Bennest

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve funding of the grant application in the Okanagan- Similkameen as recommended by Staff.”

CARRIED.

Moved by Director Perrie

Seconded by Director Bennest

“The Okanagan Basin Water Board approve funding of the grant application in the Central Okanagan as recommended by Staff.”

CARRIED.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Reid

“That the Water Board approve the Staff recommendation for grant funding in the Central Okanagan and also authorize grants in the amount of \$27,224.50 to the applications made by the Municipality of Peachland and the Westbank Irrigation District.”

CARRIED.

8. NEXT MEETING

The meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 02, 2006 at 10:00 was cancelled. The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board was scheduled for Tuesday, August 29, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Reid

“There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.”

CARRIED.

Certified Correct:

Chair

Program Manager