

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD HELD ON MARCH 06, 2007 AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN, KELOWNA, BC.

PRESENT: Chair John Slater Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Len Novakowski Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Robert Hobson Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Graham Reid Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Lorraine Bennest Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rick Fairbairn Regional District North Okanagan
Director Ron Perrie Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tom Siddon Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike Water Supply Association of B.C.
~~Director Tim Manuel Okanagan Nation Alliance (absent)~~
Director Glen Taylor Regional District North Okanagan
Director Buffy Baumbrough Regional District North Okanagan

STAFF: Greg Armour Program Manager, OBWB
Dr. Anna Warwick Sears Water Stewardship Director, OBWB
Michael Stamhuis Regional District North Okanagan
Genevieve Doyle Water Stewardship Coordinator, OBWB
Debbie Taylor Recording Secretary

OTHERS

PRESENT: Judie Steeves Kelowna Capital News

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Novakowski

"That the Agenda for a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board for March 06, 2007 be approved as circulated."

CARRIED.

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Novakowski

“That Item 10.1 being Environmental Mind Grind Challenge be added to the Agenda as a Late Item.”

“That Item 10.2 being Canadian Water Network Study: Water Security Index be added to the Agenda as a Late Item.”

“That Item 10.3 being Okanagan Basin Water Board policy for Distribution of In-Camera Minutes be added to the Agenda as a Late Item.”

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board convene an In-Camera Meeting to deal with matters deemed closed to the public in accordance with Section 92 of the Community Charter.”

CARRIED.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held February 06, 2007

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held on February 06, 2007 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

5. APPOINTMENT OF SIGNING AUTHORITIES

5.1 Resolution as to Bankers and Signatures for Municipal Accounts 2006

The Board asked that the Resolution regarding Okanagan Basin Water Board signing authorities be returned to the NORD Chief Financial Officer for amendment.

6. SEWAGE GRANT APPLICATIONS

6.1 Sewage Grant Draft Revised Terms of Reference

Mr. Armour reviewed the draft Terms of Reference for Okanagan Basin Water Board Sewage Facilities Grants and the staff recommendations for policy changes. He explained that the policies were made through OBWB resolutions to further define the operating principles of the grant program and changes required only Board resolution and no change to Supplementary Letters Patent.

The Board discussed staff recommendations for revisions to Sewage Grant Terms of Reference.

1. Local Control:

Staff recommends that OBWB policies be independent of the Province. (supersedes 1988 policy)

The Board agreed to amend the 1988 policy and make Okanagan Basin Water Board sewage facilities grant eligibility policies independent of those of the Province.

2. Small Lots not served by community sewer

Staff recommends that the Okanagan Basin Water Board maintain its eligibility requirement, adopted in 2000, for Sewage Grant applicants to have a bylaw in place that states that no lots less than one hectare not served by community sewer will be created.

The Board discussed amnesty for local governments that have approved lots smaller than one hectare since the Okanagan Basin Water Board adopted this policy in 2000.

Director Hobson suggested that all regional districts should have a liquid waste management plan in place as well.

Director Reid pointed out that jurisdictions that had complied with the bylaw may have negatively impacted their tax base and impacted individuals whose development proposals had been turned down.

Director Bennest pointed out that these communities will likely incur infrastructure costs in the future which result from poor planning decisions.

Director Reid asked how many local government jurisdictions do not have a one hectare minimum lot size bylaw in place

Mr. Armour replied that staff have collected this information and confirmed that there are a number of jurisdictions who do not have a bylaw and also some who have a policy but not a bylaw.

The Board agreed that eligibility for Okanagan Basin Water Board Sewage Grants will require that a bylaw be in place by January 1, 2008. It was felt that this allowed a reasonable time period for the process to enact the bylaw to be completed. The Board

also stipulated that no new lots less than one hectare not served by community sewer be created in the interim while the bylaw is being enacted.

Permanent Infrastructure Exception:

Staff recommends that the Okanagan Basin Water Board consider an exception to the one hectare requirement for local governments who complete a liquid waste management plan and incorporate decentralized sewage treatment serving small lots into their permanent infrastructure. Appropriate maintenance bylaws and bonds for repair or replacement of this infrastructure would also be required and the area would not be eligible for sewage grants in the future.

There was discussion over the need to evaluate these liquid waste management plans and whether the Water Board would have the expertise and capacity to do these evaluations.

It was noted that the Province approves Liquid Waste Management Plans and strict criteria are used in the approval process.

Director Hobson said that he was unsure of the Province's current capacity to do a thorough review due to staff reductions and retirement of experienced technical personnel.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Reid

"That staff be directed to determine the Province's criteria for development of a Liquid Waste Management Plan, the types of LMWPs plans, and the degree of thoroughness performed by the Province in reviewing Liquid Waste Management Plans.."

CARRIED

3. Definition of Community:

Staff recommend Definition of "Community" incorporates all Electoral Areas for purposes of Sewage Grants.

The Board accepted this recommendation.

4. Geographic Scope:

Staff recommend that communities within the Okanagan Basin watershed area are eligible for Water Board sewage facilities grants and must have a 1.0 hectare bylaw in place

The Board directed that the wording of this recommendation be changed to read 'the '1-hectare' requirement is limited in geographic scope to the portions of the regional districts within the Okanagan watershed.

Areas outside the watershed are not taxed for OBWB programs and are not eligible for grants.

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Perrie

"That the Board endorses the revised Terms of Reference for the Okanagan Basin Water Board Sewage Grants including the following policy amendments;

That Okanagan Basin Water Board sewage facilities grant eligibility policies are independent of those of the Province.

That the Okanagan Valley communities have a bylaw in place effective January 1, 2008, establishing a minimum lot size of one hectare for lots not served by community sewer.

That the Okanagan Basin Water Board may waive the 1.0 hectare requirement through preparation of an approved Ministry of Environment Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) for decentralized wastewater treatment. The LWMP must address on-site sewage in a sustainable fashion with the understanding that the system will be considered as permanent infrastructure and will be ineligible for sewerage assistance funds in the future.

That each local government with subdivision approval authority is responsible for adopting the '1.0-hectare' policy. (For example regional district grant status is not affected if a member municipality does not comply)

That the '1-hectare' requirement is mandatory within portions of the regional districts within the Okanagan watershed.

CARRIED.

6.2 Future of the Okanagan Basin Water Board Sewage Grant Program: (Item 5 from recommended revisions to Terms of Reference)

Staff recommends that OBWB investigate further infrastructure improvements needed to protect the quality of valley lakes.

6.2.1 Staff Recommendation on Update of 1993 Okanagan Basin Master Wastewater Management Plan

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Novakowski

"That Staff investigate feasibility, cost and potential funding sources for an updated Okanagan Basin liquid waste management plan which includes summary current planning undertaken by communities for plant upgrades, areas of research needed to maintain the highest quality of effluent, and policies for other expanded use of the Okanagan Basin Water Board grants."

CARRIED.

6.2.2 Kelowna Capital News Articles with respect to Emerging Issues on Effluent Discharges to the Lakes

The Board received the news items for information and discussed the issue of endocrine disrupters and pharmaceutical residues as a potential area of research that could be assisted by the sewage grant program.

6.2.3 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada letter Requesting Funding to Study the Use and Quality of Water from Okanagan Wastewater Treatment Plants

The Board directed that the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada proposal for use of treated wastewater on crops be assessed as part of the staff investigation of future uses of the Sewage Facilities grants. The Board declined funding the proposal at this time.

6.2 District of Coldstream Grant Application

6.3.1 Correspondence from District of Coldstream Confirming enactment of the One Hectare Bylaw

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Taylor

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board approves Sewage Facilities Grant funding for the District of Coldstream extension of the Kalamalka Road sewer line."

CARRIED.

6.3 Kelowna – Grant Approval Request

Mr. Armour explained that the City of Kelowna had requested approval for three sewer projects in November of 2004. All projects met Okanagan Basin Water Board eligibility criteria but only approval of the Okaview application is shown in the minutes. The McKenzie Road and Rutland Bench projects should have been approved in the same minutes.

He added that no retroactive payments would be required as the McKenzie Road and Rutland Bench projects have just been completed and debt payments will begin this year.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Bennest

"That the Rutland Bench and McKenzie Road sewer extension projects be approved for payment and that the November 2004 Okanagan Basin Water Board minutes be amended to indicate the grant approvals."

CARRIED.

Mr. Armour noted that total sewage facilities grant payments for 2007 – 2008 will be \$2.05 million with inclusion of these projects. Payments now exceed the \$1.9 million requisitioned. Surplus funds in the grant program will be used to cover the difference.

Mr. Armour informed the Board that a spreadsheet showing the projected debt payments and debt retirement will be prepared for the next Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting.

6.4 City of Vernon – Grant Approval Request

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Fairbairn

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board table Item 6.4 until further information is received."

CARRIED.

Director Taylor asked that information regarding the District of Coldstream funding contribution to the City of Vernon sewage plant construction grant application be included in the information to be collected.

Agenda Item 6.5 was lifted from the table.

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 OBWB Strategic Planning Session

The Board discussed the goals and possible timing of a strategic planning session.

Director Reid felt that the Board needed to be well informed especially on the material and recommendations being produced by the Water Stewardship Council prior to conducting a planning session.

Director Hobson commented that there is a need to develop a strategy to take the technical recommendations and translate them into local government actions and policies.

Director Bennest said that the session should include governance issues examining how the Water Board is currently constituted and its ability to function in the most effective manner.

Director Fairbairn added his support to a strategic planning session noting the need to confirm and perhaps revise our direction and vision.

Dr. Sears suggested that staff report on the products and successes of the Water Stewardship Council as background for a strategic planning session

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Novakowski

"That Staff provide a report on the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council products and successes at the July meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board and schedule a Strategic Planning Session for the Fall of 2007."

CARRIED.

The regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board broke for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

7.2 Water Supply Association of B.C. Proposal for Turbidity Notification Program Revision

7.2.1 OBWB Press Release Supporting New Water Quality Notification Proposal

Dr. Sears reviewed the press release issued by the Water Board supporting the Water Supply Association recommendation to the Interior Health Association to modify the Turbidity Notification protocol.

Director Pike commented that as a Director of the Water Supply Association, there had been little success in initiating further discussion with the IHA.

Director Reid said that Peachland had prepared a resolution to go to OMMA supporting the Water Supply Association recommendations.

Director Hobson noted that the IHA focus was on filtration of water supplies as the best way to protect public health, but that the cost of the infrastructure drains local government infrastructure dollars and could create other dangerous situations such as poorly maintained roads.

Director Reid stated that cost of filtration and related infrastructure changes in Peachland is estimated at \$55 million for a community of 5300 people with a projected population of 10,000 in 20 years.

7.2.2 Vernon Courier Editorial Opinion

The Board received the editorial concerning water quality advisories and boil water notices for information

7.3 OBWB Coordinated Water Conservation Strategy

The OBWB discussed the draft Coordinated Water Conservation Strategy put forward by staff.

Director Novakowski felt that an Okanagan strategy coordinating water conservation

measures was timely.

Director Bennest commented that this would be an opportunity to work with staff of the various communities to determine the similarities and differences in approach to conservation and make the wisest use of resources.

Director Pike observed that most areas look at their own needs and we must recognize that there is only one resource available to us all. Effective conservation is needed to give the capacity to adapt to growing population and changing climate.

Director Hobson advised that we should work closely with the water purveyors, many of whom are already working together to send out similar messages to the public.

Director Reid said that savings had been made through such measures as bulk purchase of water meters for several water suppliers.

7.4 Local Government Bylaw Review

Ms. Doyle outlined progress in review of local government bylaws for water conservation.

The Board received the Bylaw Review for information.

7.5 OBWB Letter to John Baird, Minister of Environment, Environment Canada Regarding Hydrological Monitoring in the Okanagan Watershed

Dr. Sears reviewed the letter which made recommendations to maintain and expand the hydrometric monitoring network in the Okanagan. The network has declined to the point where only 15 of 79 drainages are now monitored.

She added that Okanagan Basin Water Board staff are working with Provincial staff to put together a more comprehensive monitoring program that is well funded and has significant local input so that the data gathered are of greatest use in the Water Supply and Demand Study.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1 Minutes of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Meeting held on January 11, 2007

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Perrie

"That the minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held on January 11, 2007 be received."

CARRIED.

8.2 Minutes of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Meeting held on February 08, 2007

Minutes of a meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council were received for information.

8.3 Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Meeting Summary, February 08, 2007 – Priority Planning Session Summary

Dr. Sears reviewed the outcomes of the Priority Planning Session of the Water Stewardship Council. She stressed that this was her synthesis of the meeting discussion and did not represent recommendations of the Council.

Director Reid advised that a review of legislation and governance would best be conducted by a policy analyst who had worked with government. He said he could provide contacts at the University of Victoria.

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Bennest

"That the staff summary of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council – Priority Planning Session be received."

CARRIED.

8.4 Water Supply and Demand Study Update

Mr. Armour reported that Ministry of Environment staff advised that documentation to allocate an additional \$250,000 to the Supply and Demand study was being forwarded to the Deputy Minister for signature.

In addition, expertise has been added to the working group which now includes Bob Hrasko from the Water Supply Association, Lorraine Bennest, representing the BC Federation of Agriculture, and Darwin Horning, a municipal long range planning consultant. It was felt that the end users of the study information should be well represented at the working group.

A meeting of the Working Group is scheduled for March 07 to discuss user needs and this will be followed on April 12 with a facilitated session utilizing the Water Stewardship Council as a broad representative user group for the study output.

9. WATER CONSERVATION and QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

9.1 Press Release and Local Government Notification

The Board received information on the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant applications for 2007. Staff will review the applications and present recommendations to the Board at the May meeting.

Director Reid exited the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

9.2 Update on 2007 Grant Proposals

The Board discussed grant applications involving control of Canada Geese.

Director Hobson noted that health and pollution concerns from geese are basin wide and ongoing problems that might be best addressed through a regional body rather than by one-off grants. He added that starling control was a problem of the same type.

Dr. Sears commented that mosquito control and terrestrial noxious weed control were also programs that were conducted by individual regional districts and might also fit into a broader basin wide program.

There was discussion about the suitability of the Okanagan Basin Water Board for administering such a regional function.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Taylor

"That the OBWB send a letter to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, the Regional District of Central Okanagan and the Regional District of North Okanagan suggesting that there be discussion of noxious species control through a Board operating along the bounds of the three Regional Districts."

CARRIED.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

10.1 Environmental Mind Grind Challenge

Moved by Director Novakowski

Seconded by Director Bennest

"That the OBWB will contribute \$500 to each of the three Regional Districts towards the Environmental Mind Grind Challenge."

CARRIED.

10.2 Canadian Water Network Study: Water Security Index

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Bennest

"That the OBWB will support the Canadian Water Network Study: Water Security Index by contributing staff time to the project."

CARRIED.

10.3 Distribution of OBWB In-Camera Minutes**Moved by** Director Hobson**Seconded by** Director Bennest

"That minutes of in-camera meetings be distributed to Okanagan Basin Water Board Directors only. Other local government elected officials may obtain in-camera information by contacting an Okanagan Basin Water Board Director."

CARRIED.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board was scheduled for Tuesday, April 03, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Regional District of North Okanagan.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board adjourned to meet "In Camera" at 2:07 p.m.

Certified Correct:

Chair

Program Manager