

6.2.1 One Hectare By-Law Letters

Dr. Sears explained that the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen will not meet the deadline for the Sewage Assistance Grant due to the issue of the One Hectare bylaw policy. She further explained that they are not comfortable with our policy as written and that she has been asked to speak to this Board on our policies. She has suggested RDOS to request a deadline extension which will enable time for a meeting between OBWB staff and the RDOS Board.

Chair Slater affirmed we must have consistency and not allow less than one hectare.

Dr. Sears requested that she and Glen Brown of the Ministry of Community Services give a presentation to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen on this issue of Okanagan Basin Water Board sewage infrastructure grant policies.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Baumbrough

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board request the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen receive a delegation by Executive Director Anna Warwick Sears jointly with Glen Brown of the Ministry of Community Services to share information on the respective sewage infrastructure grant policies of the OBWB and Province”.

CARRIED.

6.3 Hydrometric Monitoring Working Groups Terms of Reference

Dr. Sears informed the Board that this document is to keep the Board apprised of on-going developments with the Technical Water Monitoring Working Group. This group is moving forward and is no longer considered a pilot but an innovative first trial.

6.4 ILMB Reservoir Lots Report

Dr. Sears presented this report for the information of the Board. It summarizes the results and conclusions of the Okanagan Reservoir Lakes Lease Lots Steering Committee initiative. It includes a brief background on the Committee, including the highlights from its work, and the conditions developed through the committee’s deliberations that the Integrated Land Management Bureau will apply to any future sales of lease lots on the relevant lakes. It also provides an outline of the process that is anticipated to be followed to implement the conditions.

The Board members agreed that they are against the sale of the Reservoir Lots and that the three Regional Districts and municipalities should show solidarity to the Minister and MLAs regarding it. It was suggested that the province should implement some of the principles regarding water protection as identified in the report. The Board members also agreed they should be part of the province’s management of public lands, whether it is leased or sold. It was agreed that a letter would be written to reiterate their opposition to the idea.

“That the Okanagan Basin Water Board direct staff to write a letter to Pat Bell, Minister responsible for the Integrated Land Management Bureau and local MLAs regarding the Board’s opposition to the sale of Okanagan Reservoir Lakes Lease Lots and that the technical recommendations suggested in the report be implemented”.

Moved by Director Hobson

Seconded by Director Reid

Director Hobson excused himself from the meeting at 11:55am

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears presented to the Board the monthly Executive Director's Report.

7.1.1 Water Supply and Demand Project Messages

7.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel presented to the Board the monthly Water Stewardship Director's Report including groundwater policy recommendations (attached) developed by the Water Stewardship Council for consideration by the Board.

Moved by Director Siddon

Seconded by Director Bennest

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board support the policy recommendation presented to them entitled Support for Including Water Conservation Regulations in the BC Building Code".

CARRIED.

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:35pm and reconvened at 1:05pm.

Moved by Director Reid

Seconded by Director Pike

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board endorses in principle the two (2) groundwater policies developed by the Water Stewardship Council presented by the Water Stewardship Director titled: Harmonization of Regional District and municipal groundwater bylaws; and Increasing our knowledge of Okanagan Groundwater to Sustain our Water Resource;

And directs staff to develop a work plan for the preparation of a Tool Kit and or model by-laws that would assist regional and municipal governments implement the new groundwater policy".

CARRIED

Moved by Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Pike

"That the Okanagan Basin Water Board supports the intent of the proposed groundwater policy titled: Integrated Water Management—Support for Provincial Groundwater Legislation;

And directs staff to amend terminology and incorporate a concise work plan for the implementation of a phased pilot program within the Okanagan."

CARRIED

7.2.1 Minutes of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meeting of November 8, 2007

“That the minutes of Minutes of the Water Stewardship Council meeting of November 8, 2007 be adopted as circulated”.

Moved by Director Novakowski **Seconded by** Director Taylor

7.3 Water Stewardship Coordinator: Interim Progress Report on 2007 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants.

Ms. Dunbar presented to the Board the 2007 Interim Progress Report.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 City of Vernon letter regarding OBWB review

“That the City of Vernon letter regarding OBWB review be received”.

Moved by Director Reid **Seconded by** Director Fairbairn

8.2 City of Vernon letter regarding funding request for Turbomist Evaporator

Dr. Sears informed the Board that the City of Vernon would like to purchase a number of Turbomist Evaporators to eliminate wastewater. She explained that this request does not qualify for our grant program but that she wants to make the Board aware the city is pursuing this. She encouraged the Board to compose a letter to encourage the City to apply for an alternative grant to expand their indoor water conservation program.

Director Baumbrough explained that the City of Vernon has a policy not to use the outfall pipe except in the case of emergencies. In addition, the City has lost property at the Department of Defense Grounds and have been limited to the area they can spray wastewater. The mist evaporator is the option to avoid using the pipe and irrigation spray.

Chair Slater stated that this process does not fir with our policy. We should explain this to the City of Vernon in a formal letter to apply for conservation grants and suggest other options for them.

Moved by Director Fairbairn **Seconded by** Director Pike

“That staff write a letter to the City of Vernon explaining our Sewage Facilities Grant policy and encourage the City to apply for a water conservation grant through our Water Conservation and Quality Improvement program”.

CARRIED

Director Hobson returned to the meeting at 2:15pm

Director Reid left the meeting at 2:15pm

Director Taylor left the meeting at 2:20pm

8.3 Interior Health letter regarding the Water Supply and Demand Project

“That the letter from Interior Health regarding the Water Supply and Demand Project be received”.

Moved by Director Bennest

Seconded by Director Baumbrough

8.4 Interior Health Letter regarding the Filtration Deferral Paper

Dr. Sears introduced a letter from Elizabeth Sigalet, Assistant Director for Health Protection at Interior Health Authority. The letter commends the Okanagan Basin Water Board for recognizing the effort Interior Health Authority has taken with the Filtration Deferral paper.

“That the letter from Interior Health Authority regarding the Filtration Deferral Paper be received”.

Moved by Director Pike

Seconded by Director Hobson

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is scheduled for January 8th, 2008 at the Regional District of North Okanagan.

Chair Slater announced that this would be the last meeting attended by Director Novakowski as he is retiring from the Board.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Director Fairbairn

Seconded by Director Siddon

“There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is adjourned at 3:25pm”.

**OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
GROUNDWATER RECOMMENDATIONS V1.8**

to: Okanagan Basin Water Board
from: Nelson Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
subject: Groundwater Policy Recommendations – Integrated water resource management
date: December 04, 2007
CC:

**GOAL: DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT
PROVIDES FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF GROUNDWATER
RESOURCES**

Introduction

Groundwater is an essential component of the water budget in the Okanagan and its proper use and management is important to a healthy economy and in sustaining the ecology of the region. Groundwater accounts for 30% of the available freshwater--- globally. In contrast, surface water accounts for 0.3% of the available freshwater as illustrated in Appendix A.

Discussions about regulating groundwater in the British Columbia have been taking place for over three decades.

"A regulated system is required to register all wells and their withdrawal rates, be it daily, monthly or annually... A systematic approach can then be taken in allocating groundwater resources by determining maximum permissible well yields. As more data is gathered from various groundwater sources, aquifer properties can be established, including long term yields, allowing the resource to be more predictably forecast and protected."

Groundwater Issues in British Columbia. **October 1989.** Prepared by: BC Water Well Drilling Association, BC Branch, Canadian Water Resources Association, BC Water and Waste Association, Irrigation Industry Association of BC, Association of BC Irrigation Districts, BC Chapter, American Public Works Association, Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors.

Since 1989, the provincial government has taken the first step toward implementing groundwater regulation by enacting Phase I of the groundwater protection regulation in 2004. This regulation focuses on mandatory well driller registration, minimum well construction standards, and continues the prior system of voluntary well data reporting. The province continues to assess groundwater and promote awareness of the importance of the resource, but little progress has been made in regulating actual groundwater withdrawals since 1989.

The Water Stewardship Council (WSC), an ad hoc technical advisory committee formed by the Okanagan Basin Water Board has representatives from most of the organizations involved crafting the 1989 document, plus several others. The WSC has had the opportunity to analyze groundwater information and discuss important considerations and actions required in the Okanagan. The discussion and subsequent recommendations are mindful of our need to demonstrate leadership on water resource issues and to support good governance and sustainable water supply in the Okanagan. The following document provides for rational and specific recommendation to the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Okanagan groundwater issues.

General rationale:

- Unregulated capture of licensed surface water, negates 'first in time first in right' doctrine as identified in the BC Water Act (Appendix B).
- More and more demands are being placed on groundwater in the Okanagan.
- Most Okanagan surface water is fully allocated.
- The potential for user conflicts is increasing.
- Protecting vulnerable aquifers supports sustainable water management.
- Groundwater limited areas have not been identified, so there is a knowledge gap for land use decision making.
- In British Columbia there is no licensing required to extract groundwater, even when a well is in a fully allocated watershed.
- There is anticipated urban, suburban growth and expansion.
- Agricultural expansion is anticipated, posing additional demands on water resources.
- There is a need to institute more robust data collection, monitoring and management of Okanagan groundwater.

The following three (3) groundwater policies are recommend from the *Okanagan Stewardship Council* for consideration and adoption by the *Okanagan Basin Water Board*:

1. Harmonization of Regional District and municipal groundwater bylaws

Whereas regulating groundwater extraction and use is important for managing watershed resources.

Whereas inconsistent private water source bylaw requirements exist within and between regional districts.

BIRT that the Okanagan Basin Water Board supports the harmonization of bylaws governing development and standards of ‘proof’ of adequate groundwater supplies

and furthermore;

BIRT the OBWB supports the standardization of water supply bylaw requirements within and between Okanagan governments; and the implementation of consistent and stringent standards for well quantity & quality testing and reporting.

2. INCREASING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF OKANAGAN GROUNDWATER TO SUSTAIN OUR WATER RESOURCE

Whereas senior and local governments have not allocated funding to classify and map groundwater limited areas for use in local land use planning.

Whereas there is no mechanism to capture ‘proof of water’ reports submitted to local Okanagan government, or a system to track development of geothermal wells.

Whereas groundwater limited (or problem) areas are not mapped, so planners cannot accurately identify areas where development relying on groundwater should be avoided---link groundwater mapping with land use planning.

BIRT the OBWB support and encourage the following three (3) initiatives:

- **Mapping of groundwater limited/problem areas; and**

- The systematic tracking (and reporting) of geothermal development through building inspectors in each municipality; and
- Modifying subdivision bylaw language (in addition to the resolution in #1 above) requiring submission of proof of water reports to a designated water data base repository.

3. Integrated Water Management--- Support for Provincial Groundwater Legislation

Whereas comprehensive watershed-scale basin plans provide an integrated understanding of surface water/groundwater systems is critical to manage our Okanagan water resource.

Whereas lack of groundwater use regulation allows unmanaged capture of licensed surface water, which negates 'first in time first in right' doctrine as outlined in the BC Water Act.

Whereas except for large projects (>75 L/sec) no environmental assessment is required, meaning most groundwater development projects proceed without due consideration of implications for instream flow needs and ecological values.

BIRT the OBWB supports and encourages Okanagan governments to institute regulated groundwater withdrawal by implementing a phased pilot program within the Okanagan Basin.

BIRT the OBWB supports the implementation by the BC Government of Groundwater Legislation that provides similar treatment for groundwater and surface water for the Okanagan.