



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD FEB. 7, 2011, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Mike Macnabb	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Keith Fielding	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Gerry Zimmermann	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Michael Brydon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tom Siddon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator
Genevieve Dunbar	Office and Grants Administrator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Dr. Warwick Sears called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. APPOINTMENTS TO THE OBWB

2.1 Board Appointments and Elections for 2011

Regional District of North Okanagan

Director Rick Fairbairn
Director Juliette Cunningham
Director Doug Dirk
Alternates – Rob Sawatzky, Bob Fleming, Mike Macnabb

Regional District of Central Okanagan

Director Keith Fielding
Director Doug Findlater
Director Gerry Zimmermann
Alternates – Patty Hanson, James Baker, Gail Given

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Director Stu Wells
Director Tom Siddon
Director Michael Brydon
Alternates – Ron Hovanes, Dan Ashton, Mark Pendergraft

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

Director Bernie Bauer
Alternate – Ted Van der Gulik

Water Supply Association of BC

Director Toby Pike
Alternate – Bob Hrasko

Okanagan Nation Alliance

Director – James Pepper

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Dir. Fairbairn nominated Dir. Wells as Chair. Seconded by Dir. Siddon.
There being no other nominations, Dir. Wells was declared Chair by acclamation.

Dr. Warwick Sears turned the meeting over to Chair Wells.

Dir. Bauer nominated Dir. Fairbairn for Vice-Chair. Seconded by Dir. Cunningham.
There being no other nominations, Dir. Fairbairn was declared Vice-Chair by acclamation.

4. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

8.5 Staff compensation policy

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 7, 2012 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

6. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

6.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 1, 2011 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna, B.C.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 1, 2011 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna be adopted.”

CARRIED

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears provided an overview on the OBWB, noting the region’s diverse geography, climate and population change, gaps in information, coordination and planning, shrinking government and tighter funding, and an update expected to B.C.’s water legislation.

In response to questions regarding the need to conserve water but the impact this has on collecting enough funds to maintain a utility’s infrastructure, Dr. Warwick Sears noted the Water Board has conducted preliminary research looking at a rate structure for the Okanagan. However, this would be difficult given the variety of water utilities in the valley, she added.

Directors discussed the need to create a water ethic – a recognition of what the true cost of water is.

Dir. Findlater noted that consumption in District of West Kelowna dropped significantly when they moved to metered billing.

Milfoil Control

Milfoil control work is being conducted with all three rototillers this winter, with one in Kalamalka Lake and two on Okanagan Lake. The Water Board is also working with the province regarding environmental regulations and its impact on milfoil control efforts.

Staff also met with Environment Canada re: their proposed listing of the native Rocky Mountain ridged mussel as endangered.

Water Research Chair

Work is underway to set up a Community Advisory Committee to UBC-Okanagan's Water Research Chair. Okanagan regional districts, through the OBWB, provided significant funds to set up an endowment for the chair. The regional districts will be asked to appoint someone to the committee. The university's Provost will likely act as committee chair and the university has asked Dr. Warwick Sears to be vice-chair.

The advisory committee is the link between the regional districts/the community to the university/research chair. The committee will meet two times per year.

OBWB Chair Wells suggested that the new Water Research Chair, once they are named and begin their work, make a presentation to the Water Board.

IJC/Osoyoos

In November, the OBWB's Board of Directors provided a report with recommendations to the International Joint Commission (IJC) regarding any renewal of operating orders on Osoyoos Lake. A report from the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum in September has also been forwarded to the IJC for final approval. The commission is now reviewing the report and it will then be posted to the OBWB website.

Formal consultation on the renewal of the orders will be held sometime between May and July. Once Washington state has submitted its application the OBWB should review it and decide how to approach Okanagan local governments at that time, she added.

Dir. Bauer noted his UBCO students have been studying the issue and are developing a submission to the IJC recommending any new order not guarantee flows and continue to address lake levels only. Chair Wells suggested the board may want to hear from Dir. Bauer's class.

Dir. Siddon suggested that Canadian IJC commissioner Lyall Knott be invited to speak to the OBWB.

Water Act Modernization

Work on the Water Act Modernization is continuing. Water for the environment and groundwater are some of the biggest and most complex issues being discussed.

Following some discussion by the board, Dir. Siddon noted that more work needs to be done to connect with First Nations on water issues. Fellow board directors agreed. Chair Wells added that the OBWB is looking at ways to facilitate the participation of ONA at the OBWB table.

Dr. Warwick Sears offered to look into this further, and suggested it may be valuable to have a liaison internship position to improve exchange between the board and the ONA.

RBC Blue Water Project Panel

Dr. Warwick Sears has been invited to sit on the RBC Blue Water Project advisory panel. The project is a multi-year, \$50-million fund for water projects. She will be replacing Dir. Siddon who recently stepped down. The board acknowledged Dir. Bauer in originally working to have the Okanagan represented on the panel.

Drought Tournament

Forrex and OBWB staff are looking at holding a drought scenario workshop, geared to utility managers and those in a decision-making capacity to prepare for potential drought. The event is being based on a successful workshop held in Saskatchewan.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Feb. 1, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

Dir. Pepper entered the meeting at 12: 30 p.m.

7.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

7.2.1 Okanagan Water Stewardship Council: backgrounder

Mr. Jatel reported on the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)’s various projects, including drafting of an efficient irrigation policy paper, a Source Protection Primer, an examination of the connection between water licences and real estate transactions in B.C., and creation of an Agriculture Water Reserve. An OWSC committee is working with BC Agriculture Council and B.C. Ministry of Agriculture staff on the ag water reserve project and is looking at modeling an AWR in two sub-basins in the Okanagan.

7.2.3 Okanagan Water Supply Communications

A drought planning webinar will be held March 9 to review current and expected water supplies for the coming growing year. The session is a useful tool for water utilities and water users (e.g. agricultural users) in helping plan water use.

There was discussion around an OBWB-funded Endocrine Disruptor study and whether it may be useful to have the authors come and present their findings to the board since there are some new directors. It was suggested that a copy of the report be circulated and an enquiry made to determine if the researchers have any new information to report.

7.2.2 Groundwater Monitoring Project

Mr. Jatel reported on an OBWB news conference held Feb. 3 for the Okanagan Groundwater Monitoring Project – a partnership between the Water Board, the federal, provincial and Okanagan local governments. The project team identified 15 sensitive aquifers in the valley, at-risk in part because of land use pressure. Monitoring wells are being drilled in these aquifers to track supplies – something none of these partners could have done alone, but by working together will all benefit from having this data.

The project was identified as an example of the type of innovative solutions developed through partnerships at the OWSC table.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Jan. 31, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

7.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson provided a report on various communications initiatives, noting the successful groundwater project news conference with local, provincial and national media attention. Work is underway, she added, on Phase 2 of Make Water Work – a valley-wide outdoor water conservation advertising campaign. In addition to working with local government partners in the valley to develop messages and materials they can use, the OBWB has offered funding to assist communities with advertising costs in their local area. A number of communities throughout the valley have asked to partner, including Armstrong, RDNO/Greater Vernon Water, Lake Country, Penticton, RDOS, Oliver and Osoyoos. Ms. Jackson noted there is still funding available for another Central Okanagan partner and if anyone is interested, to contact her.

Plans are underway to hold the OBWB's annual panel discussion as part of UN World Water Day/Canada Water Week events. The panel is set for March 20 and the topic (following on the UN's theme) is Water and Food Security. Staff are once again organizing a contest to engage Okanagan children and youth in water issues. The contest will begin at the start of Canada Water Week and run until Drinking Water Week in May.

OBWB staff are working with BC Water and Waste Association's province-wide Drinking Water Week committee, providing an Okanagan voice to the discussions. The campaign runs May 13-19 and the OBWB will be contacting Okanagan communities, encouraging involvement and assisting where possible (e.g. with proclamations, holding public outreach events such as tours of watersheds or water treatment plants). The committee is working to develop materials to be distributed (e.g. children's activity sheets, buttons, etc) and a contest to encourage B.C.ers to conserve and protect their water.

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator's Report, dated Jan. 31, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

7.3.1 OBWB Communications Overview

Ms. Jackson provided an overview of the various communication initiatives and tools used by the OBWB to reach its audience. The audience includes local and senior government officials, residents, researchers, media and other water stakeholders (e.g. farmers, ranchers, tourism, etc).

Tools include the posting of agendas and minutes on the corporate website (www.obwb.ca), distribution of a monthly Board Report, holding an Annual General Meeting and publication of an annual report. Presentations and workshops are held, water policies and documents are created and distributed. The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council is a broad-based technical advisory body to the OBWB Board of Directors and meets monthly. The council discusses policy direction and has led to a number of on-the-ground projects (e.g. Groundwater Monitoring Project).

The OBWB also holds a number of news conferences each year and distributes several news releases. The Water Board holds its own community outreach events and assists with others. It has also created outreach materials (e.g. the Slow it. Spread it. Sink it! Homeowner's Guide to Using Rain as a Resource and a Local Government Guide for the Water Supply and Demand Project). Okanagan WaterWise is the OBWB's public outreach and education program which has its own website (www.okwaterwise.ca). The OBWB's valley-wide outdoor water conservation campaign – Make Water Work – is part of the WaterWise program. The agency is also using social media to engage its audience (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and a blog).

Following some discussion, Alt. Dir. Pepper suggested it would be useful to frame some of the communications material with a First Nations lens, making it easier for indigenous communities to embrace. Staff noted the recommendation and will be looking into this further.

“THAT the Communications Overview Report, dated Jan. 31, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

7.4 Grants Administrator Report – Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grants

Ms. Dunbar noted that WCQI grants applications are now being accepted. The deadline is Feb. 24 and applications require a council or board resolution in support. Additional information is available at www.obwb.ca.

Staff will review the applications and bring recommendations forward to directors at the April board meeting.

“THAT the Grants Administrator report, dated Jan. 30, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8.1 Signing Authority

Dr. Warwick Sears provided the board with an updated signing authority resolution.

“THAT the Signing Authority resolution be adopted as presented.”

CARRIED

8.2 The Year Ahead – Strategic Planning

“THAT item 8.2 The Year Ahead – Strategic Planning be deferred to the March 6, 2012 board meeting.”

CARRIED

8.3 Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Report

“THAT item 8.3 Cooperative Weed Management Area Report be deferred to the March 6, 2012 board meeting.”

CARRIED

8.4 Request for Funding – Meadowlark Festival

Some background information was provided to the board from the Meadowlark Festival, requesting sponsorship. Dr. Warwick Sears noted the festival’s valley-wide importance and recommended \$500 be approved out of the OBWB’s sponsorship fund.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve \$500 in funding to the Meadowlark Festival for sponsorship.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Bauer, Pike and Pepper abstained.

8.5 Staff Compensation Policy

Dir. Bauer suggested the board create a policy to look at staff compensation.

There was discussion about the various types of policies. Dr. Warwick-Sears offered to bring an existing policy forward to the next meeting for the board to review. A number of directors offered

to provide examples as well.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board create a staff compensation policy.”

CARRIED

Dir. Findlater opposed.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 City of Kelowna to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada re: Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussels

9.2 International Joint Commission to OBWB re: renewal of Osoyoos Lake Operating Orders

9.3 Town of Osoyoos to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada re: Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the correspondence.”

CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

10.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is March 6, 2012 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

11. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 7, 2012 be adjourned at 2:09 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director