



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 6, 2012, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, 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
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director James Baker	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 Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

5.3 Water Stewardship Director Report
9.2 Correspondence re: agricultural water in Oliver

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2012 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 7, 2012 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

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears recommended that a Strategic Planning session, looking forward to the next three years, be held in place of the regular June meeting. The Sustainable Water Strategy went through a recent review which can be redistributed to directors to help facilitate discussion.

“THAT the OBWB hold a strategic planning session on June 5, 2012 in place of the regularly scheduled board meeting.

CARRIED

An update was provided on the milfoil control program, noting that a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) is currently evaluating work areas and work windows to address B.C. Ministry of Environment issues.

Dir. James Baker entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Concern was raised by some directors about the importance of milfoil control in Okanagan lakes and the need to ensure that the program can still be effective. It was also noted that the OBWB's rototilling and harvesting methods of control are intended to be the least invasive methods to control the aquatic weed.

In response to a suggestion from Dir. Bauer, Dr. Warwick Sears noted that staff could provide a report to the province that outlines the OBWB's issues (e.g. mussels, tourism and the economy), that recognizes the ministry's issues (water quality and fish) and provide suggestions.

The board was told that the Office and Grants Administrator Position has been restructured into an Office and Project Management position and assured that there would be no impact on the budget.

UBC Okanagan is expected to make an announcement regarding the Water Research Chair in April or May.

International Joint Commissioner Lyall Knott has offered to make a presentation to OBWB directors at their May meeting and provide an update on the renewal of Operating Orders on Osoyoos Lake.

The board was advised that the OBWB has received \$20,000 from Environment Canada funding to assist with drilling of a groundwater monitoring well in Summerland and West Kelowna.

The OBWB is planning a Workshop on Climate Change for local government CAOs, Chiefs and Mayors and Water Board directors. The workshop would showcase recent climate change modeling work that has been done and the results of the Water Board's recently completed Hydrologic Connectivity Study, showing how different water utilities might be affected by drought. The workshop will be an opportunity for local officials to have direct access to the experts and ask questions in a private, peer-learning environment. The event will be co-hosted by FORREX and the Okanagan Sustainability institute, and set the stage for the Invitational Drought Tournament in October.

The drought tournament will allow participants an opportunity to use the Water Supply and Demand results to test various scenarios in the case of drought, work through issues and develop a drought plan. It will also allow the province to test its drought regulations and help Okanagan water utilities get started on developing their own drought plans.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated March 6, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.2 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson reported on OBWB events planned to celebrate UN World Water Day/Canada Water Week, including a public forum on water for food being held at Summerhill Pyramid Winery on March 20, 5-6:30 p.m. Speakers include Yehalem Metiku with Partners in the Horn of Africa, Okanagan Water Stewardship Council vice-chair Ted van der Gulik – also with B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, UBCO anthropology professor John Wagner, Javan Bernakevitch with Permaculture BC, Michael Nickels – also a permaculturalist, and the Water Board’s Dr. Warwick Sears.

The Okanagan WaterWise Challenge will also be held again. This year, Okanagan school classrooms are invited to enter multimedia submissions. The theme is “Save water for what matters most.” The contest is open to Kindergarten to Grade 12 classrooms. Prizes include classroom pizza parties, pool passes and the winning entries posted to the OkWaterWise website. The Water Board is partnering with the Regional District of North Okanagan, the Kelowna YMCA/YWCA and City of Penticton for the pool passes.

The WaterWise Challenge begins March 19, at the start of Canada Water Week. Winners will be announced during Drinking Water Week (May 13-19).

Ms. Jackson noted that plans for Drinking Water Week (DWW) are well underway with local governments having been contacted about holding events in their communities. Posters, advertising and other items are also being prepared. Communities are also being asked to proclaim Drinking Water Week as one way to raise awareness, she said, recommending that the Water Board join the effort.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board proclaims May 13 to 19 Drinking Water Week in the Okanagan.”

CARRIED

The Water Board had a booth at the Building Sustainable Communities conference in Kelowna (Feb. 27 to March1), allowing the agency to share information with delegates about the work of the OBWB as well as some of its publications. The conference was also a valuable networking opportunity. Staff also attended a few of the sessions.

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator’s Report, dated Feb. 24, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

5.3 Water Stewardship Director Report

The current 18-month term for the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) ends April 30. Mr. Jatel provided a list to the board, recommending various water stakeholder organizations be invited to have representatives at the council for the term beginning May 1.

Mr. Jatel noted the current council reviewed priorities for the coming term and it is expected that many of the same members will be returning, ensuring continuity. It was suggested that the Water Board has fish and game clubs represented but may also want to include naturalist organizations.

Dir. Bauer added that the OWSC and the way it is set up has had great benefit, allowing groups to address common issues. The council, he added, is interested in having increased direction from the board.

There was some discussion about issues that could potentially be looked at, including current and emerging threats to water quality (e.g. endocrine disruptors), the impact of regulatory changes with senior governments (e.g. the Forest Practices Code, Drinking Water Protection Act, the practice of QEP's now looking at septic disposal).

It was suggested a joint meeting of the board and council would be useful.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the Water Stewardship Council Membership list for May 2012 to October 2013."

CARRIED

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated March 2, 2012, be received."

CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Report

A report was provided regarding a meeting, held Jan. 12, between OBWB milfoil staff and U.S. agencies working in milfoil control, looking at ways to work together.

"THAT the Cooperative Weed Management Area Report, dated Jan. 30, 2012 be received."

CARRIED

6.2 Proposed ONA liaison internship

Dr. Warwick Sears provided a report to the board, recommending the hiring of a nine-month intern as a liaison between the OBWB and Okanagan Nation Alliance. The position has ONA support, she added.

The recommendation came out of a series of discussions at the board, including a mutually agreed need to strengthen the relationship between the two agencies. In part, the issue has been a lack of understanding about the different processes and protocol that each body uses.

The intern would be First Nations, explained Dr. Warwick Sears, and would work with the ONA, providing water supply information (e.g. the Water Supply and Demand project information). The liaison would also help develop materials for the Okanagan WaterWise website from a First Nations perspective.

A majority of directors agreed that this process would be an important start to improving communication.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board establish a nine-month First Nations Liaison internship, for an individual to enhance collaboration, communication and the free flow of information between the OBWB and Okanagan Nation Alliance."

CARRIED

Drs. Bauer and Pike abstained.

6.3 Regional boating/dock building

The board discussed a request from RDCO regarding whether or not research has been conducted on the capacity of Okanagan lakes for boat traffic and their impact on water quality.

After some discussion it was suggested the request be forwarded to the Water Stewardship Council to consider developing a policy, and when approved by the board the policy should be forwarded to the province. A valley-wide workshop for local governments was also suggested.

7. **ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA**

7.1 Matters pertaining to staff compensation

8. **RESUME REGULAR MEETING**

Dir. Baker exited meeting

9. **CORRESPONDENCE**

9.1 RDOS letter to OBWB re: Similkameen Water Plan

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the correspondence from RDOS to the Water Board.”

CARRIED

9.2 Town of Oliver correspondence to OBWB re: agricultural water as an essential service

Dir. Findlater exited the meeting at 2 p.m.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the correspondence from Town of Oliver to the Water Board.”

CARRIED

10. **NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is April 3, 2012 at Regional District of North Okanagan.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 6, 2012 be adjourned at 2:08 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director