



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD SEPTEMBER 7, 2012, AT ROTARY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS
421 CAWSTON AVE., 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
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Alt. Director Dan Ashton	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 Gerry Zimmermann	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance

OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
James Littley	Office and Project Manager
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

6.1 Letter to District of Lake Country from Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Res. Ops

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of May 1, 2012 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 3, 2012 at Head of the Lake Hall in Vernon, B.C.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 3, 2012 at Head of the Lake Hall in Vernon be adopted."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

IJC/Osoyoos

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on the International Joint Commission's public hearings on the renewal of Operating Orders for Osoyoos Lake she attended in July. The hearings were held in Oroville and Osoyoos and attendance at the latter hearing was particularly high. She added that the board's recommendation against guaranteed flow seems to have been heard and it is likely that flows will not form part of the renewed orders. Residents noted that they wanted better communication about fluctuating lake levels and there was some discussion about the potential for an International Watershed Initiative at some point.

Milfoil Control

In follow-up to a Memorandum of Understanding signed a year ago between the OBWB and a number of U.S. agencies involved in milfoil control (including the Washington State Dept. of Ecology), the signatories met in August to discuss the potential for biological control of the weed using the native milfoil weevil. They also toured the Sterile Insect Release facility to look at the possibility of SIR rearing the weevils.

There was general agreement by the board that researching the possible use of the weevils should continue, but the need for caution before proceeding was also stressed. The example of introducing mysis shrimp into Okanagan Lake to assist the kokanee population and the problems it created for the fish was noted. Dr. Warwick Sears agreed, adding that Christina Lake may be obtaining a permit from the B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) to try the weevil, purchasing them from a U.S. company (who will capture Christina Lake weevils and rear them) at \$1.20 each.

First Nations Joint Initiatives

Okanagan Nation Alliance has received \$400,000 over four years from the RBC Blue Water Foundation to engage with local governments and develop a water strategy.

FCM Service Agreements Workshop

The OBWB is working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to put on a workshop October 23 for local First Nations bands and local governments regarding joint local service agreements. Dr. Warwick Sears encouraged board members to attend and help spread the word to their local government councils/boards and staff.

Mr. Littley entered the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

Boat Lifts Consultation

Liz Williamson of FLNRO will be coming to speak to the board next month to gather feedback regarding boat lifts in our water and talk about their proposed approach on the issue.

Zebra mussels

The OBWB is working with South Okanagan-Similkameen Invasive Plant Society to provide public outreach regarding zebra mussels. The Invasive Plant Council of BC is planning a workshop in October on quagga and zebra mussels in Kelowna.

There was discussion about the public outreach campaign in the U.S. and mandatory pullovers and interest in having the federal government take the same approach in Canada, monitoring major highways.

"THAT staff draft a letter from the Board of Directors suggesting that the federal government take action on zebra and quagga mussels, including monitoring of major highways, checking boats to prevent the spread of the invasive species."

CARRIED

Environment Canada Funding Agreement

The OBWB has received Environment Canada funding to undertake a Valuation of the Ecosystem Services provided by the “natural” portion of the Okanagan River, downstream of Okanagan Falls.

Following some discussion it was suggested that the board send a letter to Environment Canada thanking them for their continued interest in Okanagan water issues, that the letter be forwarded to Paul Kluckner, Regional Director General for Environment Canada - Pacific & Yukon Region and that it be cc'ed to local MPs.

“What the Okanagan Can Learn from Las Vegas” Workshop

As part of the Irrigation Industry Association of BC (IIABC)'s annual meeting in Kelowna this December, it is hosting a public education workshop with the OBWB and its Okanagan WaterWise program on Dec. 5. “What the Okanagan can learn from Las Vegas” will feature Doug Bennett, Water Conservation Manager for the Southern Nevada Water Authority and will be geared to a local government audience (elected and water staff) as well as interested members of the community and irrigation industry.

Reel Film Fest Sponsorship

Fresh Outlook Foundation has invited OBWB to sponsor a screening of “Last Call at the Oasis” at the Reel Change SustainAbility Film Fest on November 16th. It was recommended that the Water Board provide \$250 in sponsorship support.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board provide \$250 in sponsorship to Fresh Outlook Foundation to sponsor a screening of “Last Call at the Oasis” at the 2012 Reel Change SustainAbility Film Festival.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Bauer and Pike abstained.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated August 29, 2012, be received.”

CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel provided the board with an Irrigation Efficiency Position Paper prepared by the Water Stewardship Council noting its importance in linking the work, the interests and concerns of the two bodies.

Dir. Bauer added that the paper includes actions that can be taken to address the concerns around irrigation and that other position papers are being prepared in response to a request from the board.

After some brief discussion it was decided to defer the item to the next board meeting.

Mr. Jatel noted that Dirs. Baker, Brydon and Cunningham will be attending the next council meeting, Sept. 13, to review the work of the two bodies, as well as issues to address in the coming term.

Staff are preparing for the upcoming Invitational Drought Tournament on Nov. 16th.

An additional groundwater monitoring well has been installed above Summerland. This is the first well placed at high elevation where the snow pillow is also being monitored. There will be one more well drilled in the Central Okanagan by the end of this year, Mr. Jatel added.

Dir. Ashton exited the meeting at 1:33 p.m.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated August 28, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.3 Eurasian Field Supervisor Report

Dr. Warwick Sears presented the report on behalf of Mr. Caswell noting that harvesting season is wrapping up. Permitting applications for the 2012 / 2013 milfoil rototilling season have been submitted and staff expect to begin rototilling around Nov. 1.

“THAT the Eurasian Field Supervisor’s Report, dated August 27, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.3 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson provided an update on the Make Water Work campaign and noted early results from two focus groups that were held in Kelowna on July 30. Results suggest that the concept is strong with respondents understand the messaging, “liking it,” and feeling “empowered” be it. Further development of the concept was encouraged noting that the campaign was “likely to yield results.”

There was some discussion about how results were going to be measured. Ms. Jackson noted that partner communities have been asked to watch their water consumption rates as one way to measure, however, it was suggested it could take a few years to see these types of measurable differences.

Others added that education is an important part of changing people’s habits but it is only part of the answer and other efforts will likely be needed (e.g. installing water meters, and looking at the price of water). Education should be seen as a way of priming the pump for other changes that may be coming, encouraging residents to decrease their water use now and giving them information on how to do this.

There was also discussion about the need to get the information out to children and educators. Ms. Jackson noted that part of the work of the OkWaterWise program this year is to develop some school resources. Also, in response to a request, she will be presenting to the Teachers of Home Economics Specialists Association 2012 Provincial Conference in October. Additional opportunities to reach out to schools will be pursued, she added.

Updates were also provided on a number of other initiatives including the Tap by Tap project with City Green Solutions, FortisBC, and Environment Canada.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated August 29, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

6. LATE ITEM

6.1 Letter to District of Lake Country from B.C. FLNRO

Alt. Dir. Baker provided some background to a letter the District of Lake Country received from B.C. FLNRO. The letter states that a water licence has been requested and approved for cottage owners with properties on the district’s drinking water reservoir, and what the steps are for appealing the decision. He noted that the district has serious concerns about the allowing of the licence.

Dir. Dirk exited the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

Dir. Cunningham exited the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

Following some discussion by board directors, including examples of similar issues, staff were asked to look into the matter and keep the board updated.

7. NEXT MEETING

7.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is October 2, 2012 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream, B.C.

8. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 7, 2012 be adjourned at 2:11 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director