



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD OCTOBER 2, 2012, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	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 Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Alt. Director Don Dobson	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North 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 10:07 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 2, 2012 be approved.”

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Sept. 7, 2012 at Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna, B.C.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Sept. 7, 2012 at Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna be adopted.”

CARRIED

4. PRESENTATION

4.1 Liz Williamson and Patrick Tobin, B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Ms. Williamson explained that the province wants to improve foreshore management and engage local governments in that effort.

Currently, a dock application can take three years to be approved because of a backlog, so the province wants to streamline its processes in cases where habitat is not an issue and it's a straightforward application, while still ensuring social values and safety.

Guidelines have now been developed and the ministry would like to meet with local governments to talk about how to work together on foreshore management, Ms. Williamson said. Local governments need to start thinking about what they want to see in their communities, she added, noting that those that do not have bylaws in place (e.g. regarding boatlifts) should look at this because once one person alters a shoreline, others are likely to do the same.

There was recognition that there has been frustration that the province hasn't addressed private moorage issue more seriously but the Province's approach is changing, Ms. Williamson assured.

Mr. Tobin, Regional Manager for Compliance in Thompson Okanagan, added that with the restructuring to form FLNRO there is greater commitment to enforcement of water issues. The first priority is public safety and the second is water protection because of the semi-arid nature of the region and the importance of protecting the quality and quantity of the region's water, he said. The reason there is a focus on docks is out of concern for the water and the impact of unregulated dock building in the lakes, he added. Various provincial departments are working with the public, making sure people have permits when enforcement officials arrive on scene.

This fall and summer, the ministry plans to conduct a fly-over of Okanagan Lake as part of developing an enforcement and compliance strategy. Documents such as the Foreshore Inventory Mapping the OBWB helped fund might be useful, added Mr. Tobin.

In response to questions, Mr. Tobin explained that enforcement is currently complaint-driven and they receive hundreds of complaints. Staff are hoping that by having an inventory of issues provided by local governments, it would help prioritize enforcement efforts.

Ms. Williamson stressed the importance of working with municipalities and regional districts to ensure structures that are provincially approved fit within the interests of local government. And this is where bylaws are important, she stressed, to ensure that when approval is given that the provincial staff's judgment is correct.

In response to questions, Ms. Williamson added that non-compliant structures are not going to be tenured into compliance and will need to be addressed.

There will be efforts made to work with dock-building businesses, they added, trying to ensure proper permits are in place before work begins and encouraging businesses to promote compliance from within. The province will also be working with realtors to address these issues. Sometimes, people just need to know what the rules are, added Williamson.

The province has said the a permit should be issued within 140 calendar days, and for a dock in non-critical habit areas it should be two months or less. Staff are working towards this.

The province's first propriety is tackling docks. Later, it may also look at other changes to the foreshore, including fences, rocks, vegetation and retaining walls.

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

IJC/Osoyoos Update

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on Osoyoos Lake noting the International Joint Commission seems to be on track to renew Operating Orders for February 2013.

The Osoyoos Lake Board of Control also held its annual meeting Sept. 24. Members of the U.S. Osoyoos Lake Association were in attendance and spoke about their concerns with milfoil control and other issues. There was talk about the development of an International Watershed Initiative (IWI) to address Canada/U.S. issues and a feasibility study is being conducted.

Dir. Pike entered the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

There was discussion about the potential for an IWI and the potential for it to improve communication with the public.

Dir. Dirk exited the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Milfoil

The summer harvesting season has wrapped up and the milfoil crew is now conducting maintenance on the equipment. GPS surveys of the milfoil beds are also being done this week.

FCM Workshop

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and OBWB are holding an inter-governmental services agreement workshop on Oct. 23 at Penticton Trade and Convention Centre. The workshop is intended for those involved in the developing of service agreements, including elected officials, operations, planning, and finance staff in First Nations and local government.

The workshop is free. Please RSVP through FCM.

Evaporation buoys

OBWB let the public know through the media about two buoys moving to other parts of the lake.

Dir. Dirk re-entered the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated September 25, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

Dir. Siddon asked for an update on an item from the Sept. 7 board meeting regarding the province issuing a water licence on a Lake Country reservoir. It was noted that Lake Country submitted an appeal.

During discussions it was noted that the Water Act states that the province can only provide a licence on surplus unrecorded water, but it appears that other licences are being issued. These licences, it was argued, do not take into account drought management plans in place for some of these reservoirs which could cause problems during a shortage. There is also the precedent that is created when the province issues a licence in these circumstances.

Dir. Pike suggested that the Board send a letter to the province voicing concern over this practice, requesting that no more licences be granted until the Lake Country appeal, and a similar one in South East Kelowna Irrigation District are resolved.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted there are two issues: 1) the precedence that some directors have spoken to, and 2) the suggestion that people can apply for the licences and they would simply be subject to FITFIR (where if there wasn't enough water they would be cut off) and the implications this can have for licensee's investments.

After some lengthy discussion, staff were asked to look into the matter and present an update for the board to consider at the next board meeting.

"THAT staff look into the issuing of water licences on allocated reservoirs and present a report to the Board of Directors at the next meeting."

CARRIED

Dir. Pike opposed.

5.2 Water Stewardship Director's Report

Mr. Jatel reported on the September Water Stewardship Council meeting and an exercise with board representatives and council members looking at the OBWB's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. A report was provided.

This led to some discussion about the value that the OBWB provides to local government, and whether it is too research-based. Dir. Dobson pointed out that the Water Stewardship Council volunteers provide between \$500,000 and \$1 mill. per year in in-kind time to the Water Board.

Mr. Jatel also gave an update on the Invitational Drought Tournament being put on by the OBWB, the province and Agriculture Canada, the establishment of groundwater monitoring wells, the re-establishment of hydrometric stations, and the BC Water Use Reporting Centre.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated September 25, 2012, be received."

CARRIED

6.3 Communication Director's Report

Chair Wells reported to the board on the Make Water Work-Tap by Tap contest in Penticton, noting that it was very successful and followed up on the larger Make Water Work campaign (with billboard advertising and more) around the valley. He noted that the Tap by Tap initiative is now moving out of the South Okanagan and into the Central and North.

Dr. Warwick Sears continued the report and went over the Communication Director's memo dated Sept. 25, 2012.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated September 25, 2012, be received."

CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 New groundwater study memo:

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on the Groundwater Assessment of the Okanagan Basin (GAOB) Project, noting that \$18,620 in funding has been approved for UBCO's Dr. Craig Nichol and a student to look at groundwater/surface water interactions.

There was some discussion about the technical aspects of this project.

Dr. Warwick Sears then reported on a separate groundwater modeling project which is an extension of the Water Supply and Demand Study. This will help us move from a MIKE SHE model to a WEAP model, and will provide a much better picture of groundwater components of the water balance. Staff recommended a motion to the board to allow the developer of the software to improve this model. Dr. Warwick Sears advised that the developer had already worked on this project and had specialized knowledge and expertise to continue it, and that there were time constraints which made the issuance of the contract a priority.

More discussion followed about the Water Board's general tendering process.

"THAT the groundwater contracts be tendered as recommended by staff and that staff review board policy for tendering projects that are more than \$25,000."

CARRIED

6.2 Letter to Government of Canada re: zebra mussels

After some discussion, the letter was accepted by the board and it was suggested that the letter be also sent to Environment Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the provincial government.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board's letter requesting federal action on zebra mussels be forwarded to Environment Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the provincial government."

CARRIED

6.3 Irrigation Efficiency Position Paper

Mr. Jatel reported that the paper is intended to provide support and address Board leadership on the issue of irrigation efficiency.

"THAT the OBWB's Board of Directors adopt the Irrigation Efficiency Position Paper as developed by the Water Stewardship Council and that a letter of thanks be forwarded to the council."

CARRIED

7.4 New Business:

Dir. Siddon reported that RDOS would be receiving a \$500,000 gas tax grant to enable diversion of treated wastewater from the new Okanagan Falls wastewater treatment plant into the wetlands at Vaseaux Lake, instead of discharging it directly to Okanagan River.

In follow-up discussion, Chair Wells noted that the RDOS board representatives will gather more information.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

8.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is November 6, 2012 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna, B.C.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 2, 2012 be adjourned at 2:01 p.m."

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director