



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD NOVEMBER 6, 2012, 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
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 Tom Siddon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Michael Brydon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
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 10:06 a.m.

2. LATE ITEMS

6.3 New and Unfinished Business: Topsoil Bylaws Toolkit

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 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 Oct. 2, 2012 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream, B.C.

A small amendment was noted.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 2, 2012 at Regional District of North Okanagan be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

5. **STAFF REPORTS**

5.1 Executive Director's Report

Zebra Mussels

Dr. Warwick Sears reported on a zebra and quagga mussel workshop put on by the BC Invasive Species Council on Oct. 19 that both Chair Wells and Vice-Chair Fairbairn attended. The South Okanagan-Similkameen Invasive Plant Society is also applying for a grant to conduct further mussel outreach and the OBWB wrote a letter of support and will be providing in-kind support as well in the coming year.

Images were shown to the board of the mussels and their rapid growth.

Dir. Siddon entered the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Chair Wells talked on the workshop and spoke of the infrastructure damage that the mussels cause, adding that Europe has developed two water systems – one to operate while the other one is cleaned. He also referred to a case of a boat that made its way from infested waters in the U.S. and was launched in the Shuswap. Luckily the mussels were dead and didn't spread, but it was a close call, he added.

Canadian Border Services is aware of the threat to the economy of the Okanagan, added Chair Wells, but the OBWB needs to continue to pursue action on the US/Canada border and B.C./Alberta border.

While reservoir lakes are also at risk, lakes with more calcium are especially of concern (e.g. Kalamalka Lake), the board was told.

In follow-up discussion, directors asked for a formal presentation and discussion on the issue at an upcoming board meeting. There was also agreement that public education and awareness will be important. In response, the board asked that work get underway to develop a public outreach program that would complement the work of SOSIPS.

Dir. Pike added that the board should also be open to considering mitigation efforts since once the mussels are introduced their eradication is thought to be impossible.

Further discussion suggested that the OBWB work with the Fraser Basin Council and Columbia Basin Trust – and possibly the UBCM – to make sure they are aware of the issue and look at opportunities to work together on it.

Licensing on Reservoirs

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that the District of Lake Country and South East Kelowna Irrigation District have filed appeals to the Province of B.C. on the issuing of water licences on reservoirs in their region.

Milfoil

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that the province approved partial rototilling of milfoil but not for all work sites as it has done for the last 30 years. OBWB staff met with species protection staff at the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO)'s Penticton office. The Water Board was told that the province wants to use notice of a Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel (RMRM) shell on a beach to prevent rototilling for 50 metres on either side of the shell.

FLNRO staff have been invited to attend the next Water Board meeting in Penticton (Dec. 4) to address the issue, she added.

There was lengthy discussion about the importance of the milfoil control program and rototilling as a significant control method in winter. Dr. Warwick Sears added that the province initially said that shell fragment zones would be considered no rototilling zones but it has said it would waive this requirement this year.

The Board asked staff to continue to talk with the Province and suggested that it may be time to speak with the Minister of FLNRO, Steve Thompson.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated October 31, 2012, be received.”
CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director’s Report

Mr. Jatel reported on the October Water Stewardship Council meeting and a presentation by Randy Cairns on the Water Act, its history and where modernization and the Water Sustainability Act is at.

At the next meeting, council will be discussing a Water Management Plan for the Okanagan. It is a complicated process, added Mr. Jatel, noting that the council will discuss the scope of a potential plan and a strategy to enable success.

Ag Canada and the OBWB are hosting a Drought Tournament on Nov. 16 in Kelowna. Observers include drought specialists from the U.S. who held a similar exercise and are now looking at next steps.

There was some discussion about Mr. Cairns’ presentation and the process for issuing licences in light of recent decisions to grant a licence in Lake Country and in South East Kelowna.

Staff were asked to draft a letter from the board on this issue and bring it to the next meeting for further discussion.

“THAT the OBWB write a letter asking for clarification from the province on the approval of licences, noting concerns regarding recent licence approvals in Lake Country and the South East Kelowna Irrigation District.”

CARRIED

Dir. Bauer noted that, based on Mr. Cairns’ presentation on the Water Act, it seems the modernized version is heading in the right direction. It’s expected that draft legislation will be provided for comment and that the new act will come forward in 2014.

The current Water Act allows a watershed to develop a Water Management Plan, he added, saying it is the next logical step to the work the council has done in developing a Sustainable Water Strategy and given the OBWB’s Water Supply and Demand research. At this point, the council will be determining regional support for a plan, he concluded.

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

5.3 Office and Project Manager's Report

Mr. Littley provided a report on the milfoil control program, noting that operators are having problems launching machines due to deterioration of boat launches, and accessing beaches from both the water and land to transfer weeds in the summer.

Office staff will be sending a letter to communities where there are specific problems with an offer to come and speak at an upcoming meeting.

"THAT the Office and Project Manager's Report, dated October 31, 2012, be received."
CARRIED

5.4 Communication Director's Report

Ms. Jackson provided a report on various communication initiatives including the Tap by Tap campaign (indoor water conservation kits) that has expanded in the South Okanagan and is now in Kelowna, as well as the Okanagan Science Centre's Haunted House event "Drains of Darkness" which attracted 7,000 people.

A report was provided on the WaterSmart Innovations Conference and various projects that are being pursued as a result.

The board was also presented with a wrap-up report on the Make Water Work campaign, noting that local government partners provided between \$1,000 and \$3,000 in advertising funding and received advertising worth \$92,411. Ms. Jackson noted that this was in part due to more than \$56,600 in corporate in-kind support through Pattison (for billboards), Astral Media (for radio ads and a radio/online contest), Black Press (for newspaper ads), West-Wind Nursery and Landscaping (for a prize) and other in-kind corporate donations.

The significance of having a single message echoed throughout the valley was important in reinforcing each community's conservation efforts, added Ms. Jackson.

In total, the 7 billboards were seen approximately 5.9 million times, the Facebook ads were seen 2.4 million times. In addition, the radio ads aired almost 300 times over 7 weeks in Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton (this does not include the contest ads and online promotion) reaching countless more listeners. A review of the MWW web page also shows new visits were up 55% from 2011 with 682 visitors and with people spending 2 min. 51 seconds on the site (up from 1 minute 50 seconds in 2011).

There was discussion about the positive effect water meters have had on reducing water consumption in some communities. However, it was noted that there has also been anger voiced by residents.

In response to board questions, Ms. Jackson noted that local government partners have said that the campaign was a great way to inform residents about simple ways to have a big impact in decreasing water use, especially in light of increasing water rates. Okanagan communities will be approached again soon to partner on a joint MWW campaign for 2013.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated October 31, 2012, be received."
CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**6.1 Budget Features for 2013-14**

Dr. Warwick Sears presented a budget memo for 2013-14 to the board, noting that there is a slight decrease in the tax requisition from the current year.

There was some discussion about the First Nations intern position. Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the intern has taken a full-time position with School District 23, but was key in helping the OBWB facilitate October's Federation of Canadian Municipalities infrastructure partnership workshop. The Okanagan Nation Alliance has since received \$400,000 in funds from the RBC Blue Water Initiative to define water issues and develop a strategy to engage with local governments and address these issues over the next four years. This is seen as a positive step in strengthening First Nations and local government ties on water issues, she added.

In response to questions, the Executive Director added that it is expected that there will be a smaller draw on the sewage facility grants with some grants retiring. Funds toward the milfoil program are up slightly for equipment replacement and to address new regulatory compliance issues. Also, funds have been earmarked for a summer intern to assist with the WaterWise program.

"THAT the Budget Features for 2013-14 memo, dated October 31, 2012 be received; and that the OBWB 2013-14 Budget be adopted as presented, and forwarded to the three Okanagan regional districts."

CARRIED

Dirs. Bauer and Pike abstained.

6.2 Project Contract – Ecosystem Valuation Initiative

Mr. Jatel provided a memo to the board regarding an Ecosystem Valuation Initiative project, concerning the last eight kilometres of naturalized area along Okanagan River. The project is a partnership with the federal government and First Nations.

The project was put out to tender. Based on a review of the tenders, staff recommended the contract be awarded to ECONorthwest. After some general discussion around the tendering process, the board agreed with the recommendation.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board award the Ecosystem Valuation study contract to ECONorthwest."

CARRIED

Bauer and Pike abstained.

6.3 New and Unfinished Business: Topsoil Bylaws Toolkit

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the Topsoil Bylaws Toolkit was developed by the OBWB with the Water Sustainability Partnership. The two agencies have since been talking about ways to get the toolkit out to a broader audience (e.g. through Union of BC Municipalities and CivicInfo).

Following some discussion, the board agreed that a letter be sent to UBCM, There was also a suggestion of contacting the Urban Development Institute after the UBCM has been contacted.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a joint letter with the Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC to the Union of BC Municipalities, requesting that it share information about the Topsoil Bylaws Toolkit with their membership."

CARRIED

7. NEXT MEETING

6.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is December 4, 2012 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton, B.C.

8. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 6, 2012 be adjourned at 1:59 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director