



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 5, 2013, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Keith Fielding	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Gerry Zimmerman	Regional District Central Okanagan
Alt. Director Mark Pendergraft	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tom Siddon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance

OBWB STAFF

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

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

There were no new items.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 5, 2013 be approved.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 5, 2013 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna, B.C.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 5, 2012 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna be adopted.”

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS

5.1 Eva Antonijevic, Friends of Summerland Ornamental Gardens (SOG)

Ms. Antonijevic provided a history of the SOG and its beginnings with traditional English gardens.

Dir. Siddon entered the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

Picnics at the gardens were very popular 97 years ago, noted Ms. Antonijevic. However, the gardens were abandoned in the 1980s until some retired scientists and spouses formed Friends of SOG to educate the public about Okanagan horticulture. In 1994, the group opened Canada's largest xeriscape garden. Today, 8,000 volunteer hours are donated each year to maintain the gardens.

Ms. Antonijevic explained the various classes offered at the gardens and the work done to become more water efficient and teach these principles to residents of the Okanagan.

There was great interest in the work of SOG to promote water conservation.

Dir. Cunningham noted last year's B.C. Communities in Bloom conference held in Kelowna and the emphasis on water and mention of drought tolerant grasses that are now available. The OBWB has developed a Topsoil Bylaws Toolkit, but Okanagan local governments need to take it and develop regulations, she added.

In response to questions, Ms. Antonijevic noted that more outreach is needed with local nurseries to promote water wise materials.

Dir. Bauer entered the meeting at 10:36 a.m.

Dir. Findlater noted that West Kelowna installed synthetic lawn along part of a roadway as a maintenance and water-saving measure.

Ms. Jackson added that the OBWB/OkWaterWise's Make Water Work – outdoor water conservation campaign is looking at possibly working with nurseries this year. In response to discussion about lawn, she noted the MWW campaign is aimed at encouraging people to make their water work more effectively and efficiently, recognizing the Okanagan could see big water savings by adopting simple WaterWise principles (e.g. water at night, leave grass taller, water only 1" a week, etc.).

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Heather Larratt Zebra/Quagga Mussel Presentation Update

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that Ms. Larratt is meeting with a number of local governments regarding her research, conducted for the OBWB, on zebra/quagga mussels and the potential impact to the Okanagan. She will also be one of the presenters at a public meeting in Osoyoos on April 4.

Dirs. Cunningham, Findlater and Fielding all noted interest in having Ms. Larratt present at their councils/boards.

Data Funding

The OBWB has received \$95,000 in funding to build a database to get a better picture of our water resources.

BC Water Use Reporting Centre

BC Agriculture Council and the Wine Grape Council are providing a grant for the BC Water Use Reporting Centre to expand the Centre's software tool to allow large farms to also report water use. Currently, the system is used by large licencees, such as water utilities.

CWRA Conference

The Canadian Water Resources Association is holding its B.C. chapter conference in Vancouver, March 5-8. One full day of the conference will feature Okanagan water research.

BCWWA Conference

The BC Water and Waste Association is holding its annual conference in Kelowna this year. This is the largest water and waste association conference in Canada. Organizers are expecting 1,400 people. Dr. Warwick Sears noted that she is helping organize a "Not waiting for Noah" workshop that will include information on flood plain mapping and flood risk assessment in B.C. Those directors interested in attending can contact her directly.

Vancouver Sun Op-Ed Follow-up

Dr. Warwick Sears provided an update on the Op-Ed piece, noting people were invited to respond on the Vancouver Sun comments page and they did, resulting in a higher profile to the Water Act modernization process and some good discussion. Those working on WAM seemed pleased about the discussion that was prompted. Real Estate Foundation of B.C. responded with its own letter to the Province, encouraging work on updated legislation to continue.

Lighthawk - Conservation Flights

Lighthawk, a non-profit, is offering to do flyovers of our watershed at no cost for conservation-related projects. It's a great way to engage local politicians and decision-makers in watershed related issues, said Dr. Warwick Sears.

It was suggested that the offer be mentioned to the Water Stewardship Council as a potential opportunity for the work members are doing.

Water's Next

Directors were told that the OBWB's Water Supply and Demand Project is one of 12 projects being profiled in this year's Water's Next publication (put out by Water Canada), "celebrating Canadian water excellence." Peachland's New Monaco development is also profiled.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated Feb. 27, 2013, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Water Stewardship Council

Mr. Jatel reported on the most recent council meeting noting a panel discussion on emerging issues which included Dr. Jeff Curtis talking about Endocrine Disruptor Compounds, Ed MacMullen presented on our eco-system valuation project on Okanagan River and Ms. Larratt spoke on the threat of zebra and quagga mussels. Next month we will be discussing the possibility of an agricultural water reserve in Okanagan.

Project Updates

Staff are organizing our annual water supply webinar for April.

Utilities have their water reports due to the province soon. Several Okanagan utilities are now tracking their water through the WURC. Provincial funding has been approved to look at bringing

large farms onto the system and three farms in the Okanagan will be piloted.

Staff are working to install groundwater monitoring wells in Ellison with RDCO and South East Kelowna Irrigation District near Mission Creek. Talks are also underway with the Okanagan Nation Alliance for one near Shuttleworth Creek.

Work is also underway to reestablish 15 hydrometric stations. Whereas there used to be over 150 federal and provincial stations in the Okanagan there are only 25 now, operated by Water Survey of Canada. Staff are developing partnerships to bring some of these stations back on line to help ensure a better tracking of water supplies.

After some discussion, Dir. Siddon requested an update on the impacts of the C-45 omnibus bill at the next board meeting.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Feb. 27, 2013, be received.”
CARRIED

6.3 Office and Project Manager Report

Canadian Border Services and Zebra/Quagga Mussels

Mr. Littley provided an update from Canadian Border Services (CBS) regarding efforts to prevent the spread of zebra and quagga mussels, adding that staff are willing to make information materials available to travelers.

There was some discussion about the inability for CBS to send a representative to address the board. It was suggested they be invited to participate in an upcoming webinar on the subject. Dir. Wells asked that invites also go out to MPs (e.g. Alex Atamanenko and others).

Mr. Littley noted that recent correspondence from staff at Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources states that the new provincial regulation “provides provincial officers with the power to issue decontamination orders where invasive mussel contamination is suspected.”

Dir. Bauer asked about the possibility of local governments bringing in bylaws to prevent the spread. Chair Wells noted the problem with enforcement. Public education is key, added Dir. Findlater. Alt. Dir. Hrasko suggested provincial border signage as an education tool, along with information at boat launches, including tips on how to control.

Dir. Pendergraft suggested that a self-sustaining program, similar to the U.S. – with boaters paying for a sticker saying they’re clean – would likely have support from government.

Mr. Littley suggested that invasive species should be considered part of the education and training before boaters get their operator’s licence.

Milfoil Control Program

Rototilling is being completed in Skaha Lake and North of Kalamalka Lake.

WCQI Grant

Directors were presented with a review of last year’s applications and told that staff would soon be reviewing this year’s applications and bringing recommendations back to the Board in April.

There was some discussion about the grant program. Dir. Siddon suggested that a report be published and presented at the next AGM. Perhaps a prize could be awarded to the top 3 projects as a way to raise awareness for the program, he added.

“THAT the Office and Project Manager’s Report, dated Feb. 27, 2013, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Zebra Mussel campaign

Ms. Jackson reported that she is putting together a committee to help with the development of an Okanagan public outreach campaign to stop the spread of zebra/quagga mussels. Members include Heather Larratt, Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species’ Lisa Scott, RDNO’s Anna Page, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and others.

Staff put out a call to three different marketing agencies to help develop the creative and organize the execution of the campaign. After reviewing the submissions, a contract was awarded to the company giving the best value for the OBWB’s budget.

Work is also underway to organize a webinar to present Ms. Larratt’s findings. The intended audience is local government staff, boat/tourism operators, and media. Directors were invited to make suggestions of other interest groups directly to Ms. Jackson.

Make Water Work campaign

Once again, local government partners from each part of the valley have re-committed to being part of this year’s MWW campaign development steering committee (i.e. Armstrong, RDNO, Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna, Peachland, Penticton, RDOS, Oliver and Osoyoos). While materials will be available to all partners, communities were also invited to submit a request for matching advertising dollars to help carry the message further. We were looking for at least 2 partners in each part of valley to guarantee the message being seen and heard valley-wide. Those that have partnered for additional ad funding include Armstrong, RDNO, DLC and Peachland, RDOS, Penticton, Oliver and Osoyoos.

The steering committee had its first meeting of 2013 on Feb. 12 and discussed last year’s campaign and ideas for this year. It was a very productive meeting with some new ideas being considered. Staff will be meeting with Pulse Marketing March 14 to discuss next steps.

World Water Day/Canada Water Week

Staff are organizing its 3rd annual Okanagan WaterWise Challenge for youth, inviting multi-media entries with the theme “Love Your Water Body.” Individual and class entries are being accepted. Prizes include pizza parties and pool passes thanks to Vernon Aquatic Centre, H2O Kelowna, and Penticton pool. New this year, staff have organized a variety of potential fieldtrips for classroom winners with help from the 5 Okanagan school districts. Community partners have offered fieldtrips of their water treatment plants, and Casabella Princess, Kelowna Dinner Cruises and Okanagan Cruises are partnering with OBWB/OkWaterWise to offer a 2-hour charter on Okanagan Lake where winning classes would receive a presentation on Okanagan water.

Staff are also organizing a Canada Water Week panel at Summerhill Winery for March 22 with the theme “Love your water body.”

Summer intern

An application has been submitted to Summer Jobs Canada to help hire an Okanagan WaterWise ambassador to assist with projects this summer. Staff are looking for someone with a communications and/or education background.

“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator’s Report, dated Feb. 27, 2013, be received.”

CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 OBWB Strategic Planning Memo

Dr. Warwick Sears provided directors with a memo and provided some background information, noting the discussion at last month’s board meeting re: Water Research Chair John Janmaat’s work plan. The memo is intended to help inform next month’s discussion with Dr. Janmaat when he comes to present to the board.

There was discussion about various issues of interest to the board, including Endocrine Disruptor Compounds and what dilution level is safe,

It was noted that releasing treated effluent into a channel is more harmful than into a wetland, but there is a lack of understanding of this and perhaps this could be a policy position for the OBWB.

There was also discussion about how to improve First Nations involvement at the OBWB board table.

“THAT the OBWB Strategic Planning Memo dated Feb. 27, 2013 be received.”

CARRIED

7.2 Contractual Procedures Memo Update

Dr. Warwick Sears provided an updated memo with comparisons to RDNO, RDCO and RDOS. There was general agreement that a contracting policy be formalized.

“THAT the OBWB maintain existing contracting procedures, and formulate a formal policy in the format of regional district examples.”

CARRIED

8. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The date for the next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board is April 2, 2013 at Regional District of North Okanagan.

10. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March. 5, 2013 be adjourned at 1:43 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director

