



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 4, 2014, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice-chair Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Keith Fielding	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Gerry Zimmermann	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Wes Hopkin	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Allan Patton	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Don Dobson	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 Director
James Littlely	Office and Projects Manager

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

7.3 Watersheds Forum Declaration

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 4, 2014 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 4, 2013 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 3, 2013 at Regional District of Central Okanagan be adopted."

CARRIED

5. PRESENTATION

5.1 Tricia Brett – UBC-O researcher on Endocrine Disrupting Compounds (EDCs) in Okanagan Waste Water

Dr. Warwick Sears introduced Ms. Brett and her project, noting the research began in 2007/8 and was conducted in partnership with several partners including the OBWB, the Okanagan Indian Band, Suknaqinx Indian Band, Health Canada, Province of B.C. and Interior Health.

Ms. Brett provided an overview of the concerns with endocrine disrupting compounds (e.g. found in birth control pills) in waste water and her research findings.

Among the findings, was the impact of treated waste water on living organisms, in this case goldfish. The fish were placed into MacKay Reservoir (pond with treated sewage) and a control pond. The fish in MacKay have grown much larger.

Also, the research looked at three wastewater treatment plants in the Okanagan and their different methods of discharge. In the case of Vernon, the wastewater is discharged into the MacKay reservoir and then used as spray irrigation. The Kelowna treatment plant sends its wastewater through a deep water outfall into Okanagan Lake, and Penticton releases their treated wastewater into the Okanagan River channel.

According to Ms. Brett, Kelowna changed its biofilters in 2010 which seemed to have a positive effect and may be a good option for retrofits. Also, while there were low estrogen detection levels in Okanagan Lake it is still something that should be monitored, she added.

The compounds break down in the environment, added Ms. Brett noting that they can be diluted in water and degraded by light. Degradation levels increase in spring and summer, and are lower in fall and then much lower in winter. Holding back wastewater until spring/summer might be a solution, she added, recognizing this also may be difficult.

In response to questions, Ms. Brett said that rivers are not good receiving waters for this compound because it doesn't degrade as well and, especially if the river is spawning habitat.

Ms. Brett provided a number of recommendations, including:

- That there be further polishing/cleaning of wastewater prior to release into the environment
 - o MacKay Reservoir is functioning well as an additional level of polishing
 - o Wetlands, engineered or natural, are another effective method, allowing another level of filtering and cleaning
 - o contact with soils and UV rays is also helpful

There was discussion around RDOS' efforts to discharge wastewater from the new Ok Falls plant into a wetland before it is discharged into Okanagan River. Opposition from the Canadian Wildlife Service and its concerns with impact to wildlife was also noted. Consultant Dr. Natasha Neumann commented that an engineered wetland, and a natural one, will attract wildlife.

Mike Sokol, with BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations noted that the Okanagan's EDC research is the most extensive in the province and it would like to see a consistent approach for wastewater treatment plants in B.C. He also noted that his office had recommended that the Ok Falls wastewater be filtered through a wetland before release into the river.

The board thanked the presenters for their information. Dr. Warwick Sears added that it will be useful in drafting the board's response to the federal government, asking that the issue of the Ok Falls discharge be addressed.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

2014 Renewal of Water Management Program

Dr. Warwick Sears recommended that the board change its renewal of the Water Management Program from every three years to every four, to match the local government election cycle.

“THAT the OBWB, as part of the process of the Water Management Program, request that the renewal period be extended to every four years, to match the election cycle.”

CARRIED

Environment Canada Grant Applications

An overview was provided of recent EC grant applications, including: one to collect groundwater information that would likely be connected to the BC Water Use Reporting Centre database; a study on the discharge of tertiary treated wastewater from Ok Falls into a wetland before release to Ok River; phase 2 of the Okanagan Wetland Strategy; additional funding to re-establish strategic Water Survey of Canada hydrometric stations to monitor streamflow for flood and drought planning.

BC Water Funders Update

The OBWB continues to have a presence with the BC Water Funders group, trying to raise awareness for issues we are interested in having funded.

Off-Road Report

Dr. Warwick Sears drew attention to proposed legislation which will help protect water sources. Directors discussed the legislation's significance and suggested a letter of support be sent to the province.

“THAT the OBWB send a letter to the Province of B.C., supporting the ORV legislation and emphasizing its importance.”

CARRIED

Funds for Irrigation Training

It was noted that funding has already been budgeted to help address the lack of trained irrigation installers in the Okanagan. The board was told of an opportunity to partner with the Irrigation Industry Association of BC for training.

There was some discussion about the need to train residential but also agricultural irrigation installers. It was noted that City of Kelowna and RDNO require certified installers for any work done on public land.

In response to a question, Dr. Warwick Sears suggested that the OBWB should be promoting a two-pronged approach: local governments should require certified irrigators, and should be making sure that those already working in the sector are properly trained.

“THAT the OBWB partner with the Irrigation Industry Association of BC to deliver irrigation training courses in the Okanagan; AND, that the opportunity be promoted to those working in agricultural, residential and commercial irrigation.”

CARRIED

Dr. Warwick Sears noted the recent release of a BC Water Study indicating great interest and concern on water issues. She also noted recent provincial research on Rocky Mountain Ridged

Mussels in the Okanagan, suggesting they aren't as rare or as unstable a population as initially thought. She also reminded directors about the showing of Watermark on March 17.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated Feb. 24, 2013, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel gave an overview of the previous council meeting and discussions around flood management.

It was noted that there was concern voiced that the province's current efforts are focused on emergency management and not on prevention. The need for updated flood maps was also noted.

The council's next meeting is March 13.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated Feb. 25, 2014, be received."
CARRIED

6.3 Office and Project Manager Report

Mr. Littley provided an update on mooring practices with the milfoil machines, adding that a review suggests the current practice is the most practical but will continue to be monitored.

The deadline for applications to the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program was Feb. 21, added Mr. Littley. There were 27 applications requesting a total of \$472,648 for an available \$300,000. The applications will be reviewed and recommendations will be presented to directors at the April board meeting.

"THAT the Office and Project Manager's Report, dated Feb. 25, 2014, be received."
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on response to a news release issued following the previous month's board meeting re: the OBWB's call for action by senior government on zebra and quagga mussels. In addition to several news stories, she noted the issue was also the focus of MP Dan Albas's monthly report to constituents, carried in local media.

She gave an update on the 2014 Make Water Work (MWW) campaign, noting that all Okanagan local governments are continuing as partners in the initiative. Partners that have accepted matching dollars for targeted advertising in their community are the same as those in 2013, ensuring the valley-wide message is echoed in the North, Central and South Okanagan. New full-partners this year include Summerland and Kelowna Joint Water Committee's Black Mountain Irrigation District, City of Kelowna, Glenmore Ellison Irrigation District, Rutland Waterworks District, and South-East Kelowna Irrigation District.

In addition to Watermark showing March 17 as part of Canada Water Week/UN World Water Day activities, Ms. Jackson noted the 4th annual Okanagan WaterWise Challenge for youth launches March 17 and a panel discussion on "water and energy" is also planned for March 20.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Feb. 26, 2014, be received.”
CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 OBWB Signing Authority Memo

Dr. Warwick Sears presented the signing authority memo.

“THAT the Signing Authority Resolution be approved as presented.”
CARRIED

7.2 Zebra mussel inspection program

Dr. Warwick Sears opened the discussion around Mr. Jatel’s memo and its recommendation that the province invest \$30,000 to develop a “Made in B.C.” business case for implementing a cost-neutral, user-pay sticker program for recreational watercraft.

Mr. Jatel noted that the business case will allow policy makers to assess the costs and benefits of similar user-pay programs and their suitability to B.C.

In response to questions, it was said that the program could be similar to RCMP issuing a ticket for speeding – someone with a watercraft and without a sticker could be fined.

It was suggested that the provincial program should include inspection stations, but that to be effective it should also be tied to the federal boat operators licence program.

“THAT the OBWB forward a recommendation to the Province of B.C. that it invest \$30,000 to develop a ‘Made in B.C.’ business case for implementing a cost-neutral, user-pay sticker program for recreational watercraft, ensuring B.C. water remain uninfected by invasive mussels and other harmful aquatic invasive species.”
CARRIED

7.3 Watersheds Forum Declaration

The Water Board was asked to consider signing onto a Watersheds declaration. Dr. Warwick Sears invited feedback.

After some discussion and consideration, the board decided to receive it as information.

“THAT the Watersheds Forum Declaration be received.”
CARRIED

8. NEXT MEETING

8.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be April 1, 2014 at the Regional District of North Okanagan.

9. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 4, 2014 be adjourned at 1:29 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director