



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD AUGUST 5, 2014, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, 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 Wes Hopkin	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Allan Patton	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC

REGRETS

Director Patty Hanson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Keith Fielding	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Don Dobson	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
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 Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. A quorum was not present so the regular meeting was convened as a “committee” meeting.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

6. Water Management Program Review

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 5, 2014 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED in principle

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 3, 2014 at Penticton Lakeside Resort in Penticton.

A small amendment was noted.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 3, 2014 at Penticton Lakeside Resort in Penticton be adopted as amended.”

CARRIED in principle

5. STAFF REPORTS**5.1 Executive Director Report**Water Management Review

Dr. Sears noted a draft of the Water Management Program review is ready for discussion. Once approved by the board, presentations will be made to the three regional districts. The review will be discussed in greater detail later in the meeting.

OBWB September AGM

The Water Board's annual meeting is scheduled for Sept. 5. Guest speakers include lawyer Deborah Curran on the new Water Sustainability Act and the ONA will have someone present on recent water initiatives. A regular board meeting will follow the annual meeting.

UBCO Water and Biodiversity Forum

OBWB is partnering with UBCO's Biodiversity, Resilience and Ecosystem Services on a two-day forum, Sept. 15-17, with one day dedicated to water and one on biodiversity and habitat issues. Water expert Bob Sandford will be giving a free public presentation on the 16th.

BC Water Funders Field Trip

The OBWB is helping coordinate an October tour of the Okanagan for B.C. funders interested in water issues. Tours will include an irrigation district, a salmon hatchery, and a farm or vineyard.

Osoyoos Lake Board of Control

The Board of Control will be holding its annual meeting on Oct. 28 in Oroville, WA. Directors were encouraged to attend where cross-border water policy will be discussed. Dr. Sears added that the Wash. State Dept. of Ecology wants to produce a film regarding cross border collaboration on water issues and asked her to be on the project's steering committee.

Bob Fleming entered the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

Blue-Green Algae Response Protocols

Interior Health is working with provincial health staff to develop a protocol to address blue-green algae blooms for the province by end of year. In the meantime, IH has a plan that will be in place for our region as of this summer.

Bob Hrasko entered the meeting at 10:28 a.m. Chair Findlater noted that with quorum, the meeting of the board will officially begin.

Item 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 5, 2014 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

Item 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 3, 2014 at Penticton Lakeside Resort in Penticton.

A small amendment was noted.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 3, 2014 at Penticton Lakeside Resort in Penticton be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

Dr. Sears continued with her report.

Floodplain Mapping Update

Dr. Sears noted a document funded by the BC Real Estate Foundation that lists funding available to local governments for floodplain mapping. A national assessment shows the extent of the problem and the Okanagan is not immune. Each regional district has areas that flood and risk assessments are important, she added.

Wes Hopkin entered the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Agricultural Land Use Inventory Update

The OBWB is working with B.C. Ministry of Agriculture to update GIS maps that look at land use in the North and Central Okanagan this summer. The RDOS mapping will be completed next summer. The maps are used by local governments for a range of projects including master water plans and irrigation planning.

Lot Line Adjustment Questions for 1 Ha Bylaw Policy

Dr. Sears noted a request from Dir. Patton to review the 1ha bylaw as it pertains to the sewage facility grants and a possible exemption. The province is looking at the bylaw, it was noted. The board agreed to wait to see what the province says. Following further discussion, the Executive Director said that, if a change is necessary, it would be most prudent to have a blanket policy for certain exemptions that is adopted throughout the valley.

OK Falls EDC Study

UBCO has applied for about \$30,000 in federal research funding to look at the effects of endocrine disruptor compounds in wastewater, and wetlands as a strategy to address them. The research would include development of a lab that will run water samples from Ok Falls. Currently, the samples are sent to a commercial lab. A lab at UBCO will improve quality of data and cut costs. Also, based on this data, it might be possible to get further funding from environmental foundations to purchase a nearby property to build a wetland and direct the discharge from the plant to the area.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated July 29, 2014, be received.”
CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Water Stewardship Council

Mr. Jatel noted the council will be forming committees to address specific issues this year, including 1) groundwater licencing and monitoring, 2) water pricing, and 3) environmental flows.

In response to questions regarding pricing, Mr. Jatel said that council wants to develop a proposal to take to the board for discussion and approval that can be forwarded to the province.

Okanagan Wetland Strategy

Phase 1 of the strategy, conducted in partnership with RDCO and BC Wildlife Federation and funding support from Environment Canada, included an inventory of existing wetlands and noted 85% have been lost. EC has provided a \$50,000 grant to assist with Phase 2 which includes hiring a project manager to lead restoration efforts over the next two years.

Groundwater in the Okanagan

The province recently released a report on sensitive aquifers, including those in the Okanagan,

which suggest reduced flow over time.

BC Water Use Reporting Centre

The BCWURC online reporting system is being expanded to include a module for farmers to report water use. The module will be test piloted during the next fiscal year with about 10 farmers who have their own water licence.

Staff recipient of McConnell Foundation bursary

Mr. Jatel noted he received a bursary to attend the 2014 Innovation Leadership Program, hosted by University of Waterloo, Victoria and Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society, focusing on water management and governance.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated July 30, 2014, be received.”
CARRIED

5.3 Office and Project Manager Report

Milfoil Operations

Mr. Littley provided an update on milfoil harvesting operations and noted the issues in Osoyoos Lake and an upcoming meeting with provincial staff to request an expanded work window.

Weed transfers have also been a problem in the South Okanagan, added Littley who recommended that letters be sent to Town of Osoyoos and RDOS asking for permanent transfer sites.

“THAT the OBWB send a letter to the Town of Osoyoos and RDOS outlining the importance of milfoil transfer sites, and requesting the provision of permanent locations for transfer sites in the future.”

CARRIED

SFA Grant Program

Mr. Littley noted an application to the SFA program from Westbank First Nation to install a sewer line in the Campbell Road area.

“THAT the SFA application for the Westbank First Nation Campbell Road project be approved as outlined above.”

CARRIED

PNWER Summit

Mr. Littley gave an update on a meeting on invasive species held July 22 at the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Summit. The meeting included updates from various jurisdictions, including Alberta which has four inspection stations now and estimates an invasion would cost the province \$75 million a year. It was noted that as of that date, the stations had stopped eight mussel-infested boats this summer.

Here in B.C., it was reported that some Canada Border Services Agents are being trained in how to inspect watercraft even though they currently are not authorized to stop and inspect. There has also been a large increase in monitoring for infestations in B.C. waters. Also, western provinces are reportedly working together to request federal funding for increased inspections.

Directors noted the work of the Water Board in raising awareness and its apparent effectiveness in reaching the public and business community, but added there needs to be continued pressure on senior government.

The board agreed to again send letters to the province and federal government asking for an update on its previous requests for action (e.g. a recommendation that the province develop a business plan for a user-pay boat sticker inspection program). They also voted to arrange a meeting with B.C. Environment Minister Mary Polak at the upcoming UBCM.

“THAT the OBWB send a formal letter to the province asking for an update on the business plan, referencing the Alberta inspection stations, and noting that a request will be made to meet on this issue at the UBCM in September. AND THAT a similar letter, requesting an update and reiterating the seriousness of the issue be sent to the federal government. FURTHER, that a news release be issued to media with an update.”

CARRIED

There was further discussion, including the potential for meetings with local MPs, getting fact sheets out to the boating community and others who will be affected (e.g. utilities, tourism, the public) and encouraging them to contact senior elected officials. Dr. Sears noted she will begin investigating the impacts of the mussels to specific industries (e.g. hydro and recreational boating) in an effort to help them prepare for a potential invasion.

“THAT the Office and Project Manager’s Report, dated July 29, 2014, be received.”

CARRIED

5.4 Communications Director Report

Don’t Move a Mussel

Ms. Jackson gave an update on the Don’t Move a Mussel campaign, including the citizen engagement “Speak Out” initiative, developed in response to calls from residents to directors for a way to engage with senior government officials on the mussel issue.

In addition to the citizen engagement initiative, Ms. Jackson noted updates to the www.DontMoveAMussel.ca website and public outreach materials, advertising, and use of social media. Also, local governments were assisted with the development of boat launch signs. Staff also partnered with Dockside Marine to help with costs for this year’s DMM muscle shirts. The shirts are being distributed by the OBWB’s Okanagan WaterWise outreach program, Dockside, Bell Media and NewCap radio stations in the valley and Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society, she added.

In further discussions, the board agreed to continue to encourage residents to “Speak Out.”

Make Water Work

Directors were provided a report on MWW (www.MakeWaterWork.ca), a valley-wide outdoor water conservation campaign aimed at residents. The board was told of a news conference held July 9 with Okanagan mayors and councillors pledging to Make Water Work and encouraging residents to do the same. The community with the highest number of pledges per capita will be named MWW Champion. Also, one pledgee will win \$5000 in WaterWise yard upgrades thanks to this year’s contest sponsors: KelownaGardens.com, Bylands, and ProSource Irrigation. There was great media coverage of the event, said Ms. Jackson, who encouraged directors to take the pledge.

The summer’s Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator provided an overview of outreach efforts, noting many people are reporting hearing and seeing the messages and are interested in learning more.

Other communication initiatives

The OBWB participated in a funding announcement where Make Water Work funds were used to trigger a \$90,000 grant from RBC Blue Water Project to RDOS. The grant will be used to extend the work of the MWW campaign and include workshops for residents and landscapers throughout the Okanagan and the creation of more demonstration gardens that promote water conservation and protection.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated July 30, 2014, be received.”
CARRIED

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**6.1 Water Management Program Review - Draft**

Dr. Sears provided an overview of the draft Water Management Program (WMP) Review. Being a small organization, the OBWB depends on developing partnerships. With cutbacks at various agencies, the OBWB has had to adapt.

Funding for the WMP, which includes Water Science and Policy Projects, the Water Stewardship Council, Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program, and Communications and Outreach, is capped at 2 cents per \$1000 requisition and is currently 1.7 cents. Staff will continue to provide annual reports but is looking to adjust the program renewal to remain consistent with the local government election cycle.

In response to questions from the board, Dr. Sears noted some of the upcoming issues that should be researched including the state of local aquifers, surface water hydrology, and in-stream flow needs for fish which will be important to determine future licencing. Research will be prioritized based on highest risk and greatest population, she added.

Asked about the council, she said the current model works well, allowing for robust discussion around water issues before input is provided to the board. Of concern are provincial government cutbacks and retirements and the impact of losing expertise on council.

There was discussion about the WCQI program. It was noted by directors that the program is valuable, raising the bar for water management and ensuring that projects meet local needs while providing valley-wide benefit. The program also helps connect projects and partners within the valley to ensure greater success and impact. It was suggested that a sharing workshop might be useful.

“THAT the OBWB approve the draft Water Management Program review as presented.”
CARRIED

Dr. Sears noted she will be presenting a final WMP report to all three Okanagan regional district boards in the weeks ahead for program review and renewal.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Letter from B.C. Minister of Environment to OBWB Chair Findlater re: invasive mussels received.

7.2 Letter from Federal Minister Public Safety letter to District of West Kelowna re: invasive mussels received.

7.3 Letter from UDI to IHA re: water information initiative received.

"THAT the correspondence be received."

CARRIED

8. NEXT MEETING

8.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be September 5, 2014 at the Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna.

9. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 5, 2014 be adjourned at 1:43 p.m."

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director