



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD JULY 7, 2015, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN,
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, 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 James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Andre Martin	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Mark Pendergraft	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Rob Birtles	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Peter Waardenburg	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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GUESTS

Alt. Dir. Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
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OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littley	Operations and Grants Manager

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 7, 2015 be approved.”

CARRIED

3. DELEGATION

3.1 Renee Clark – Greater Vernon Water, Water Quality Manager

Ms. Clark presented on source protection concerns in the Greater Vernon Water area, in particular with people recreating in and around its water reservoirs and driving onto dams.

GWV includes three large storage reservoirs: Aberdeen Lake, Hadda Lake and Grizzly Lake. Although the agency owns the first two, it only has a water licence on Grizzly, she noted. Staff have put up signs explaining that these are drinking water sources. They have also fenced areas to keep cattle out. But the signs are shot at and defaced and need replacing every year.

There is also a dam safety issue, she continued, explaining that the RDNO would be liable if someone was to get injured. Staff do weekly surveillance and have put in barriers as suggested by the province, but people find their way around them. At the same time, the province continues to cut back on its own enforcement, Clark added.

While GVW has the right to lock and gate access to the licenced reservoir (Grizzly), it does not have the right to exclusive use which has caused problems, Clark said. Staff have been working with the province to try and address the issue, including the possibility of applying for a lease on the land which prohibits public access. It is a cumbersome and lengthy process but the best option and one that staff will be taking to its board, she added.

Another solution is public education, explaining that protecting water at the source is less costly than trying to treat water that has been contaminated, Clark said.

There was some discussion following the presentation, including a question around the use of the new Off-Road Vehicle Registration as a potential way to address the issue. It was noted that Natural Resource Officers can enforce the new rules and people can be reported by licence plates that will be required, but the province pushed the new licencing requirements from June 1 to November. Ms. Clark added that NROs would benefit from RCMP enforcement given the evidence of guns being used in the area.

Chair Findlater noted similar problems with source protection in the Bear Creek area and how government and the Okanagan Trail Riders came together to address it. In the end, grants were provided to build a proper trail system to help keep riding out of source waters and it is now enforced by the trail riders group. Perhaps a similar effort in the North Okanagan would help, he noted.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2015 at Summerland Waterfront Resort

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2015 at Summerland Waterfront Resort be adopted."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

August Board Meeting

Dr. Sears reminded the board that the August meeting has been cancelled.

OBWB Annual Report, AGM and 45th Birthday

The OBWB's 2015 annual report will be presented at its annual general meeting on Friday, September 4th. Keynote speaker is Julia Lew from Southern Nevada Water Authority on quagga mussel in Lake Mead. She will be discussing the economic impacts and efforts to manage the mussels.

OBWB Compensation Review

Tim Dillon and Associates has received updated OBWB job descriptions. An interim report is expected in July, which will be circulated.

Updated OBWB Watershed Policy and letter to B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO)

In June the board asked that a letter be sent to FLNRO re: watershed protection with an updated version of the OBWB's watershed policy. On further deliberation it was decided that RDNO should provide an update first and that the 2013 resolution to UBCM be also discussed.

Directors reviewed the documents and the RDNO presentation and agreed to adopt a revised policy and forward it with a letter to the ministry.

"THAT the OBWB's watershed policy be revised as presented and forwarded with a letter to B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations requesting improved enforcement."

CARRIED

Letter to Ministry of Health re: Blue Green Algae Protocol.

Dr. Sears explained that the protocol, aimed at helping local governments respond to blue-green algae blooms, is still waiting to be adopted and suggested sending a letter to the Ministry of Health asking for it to be completed. The board agreed, asking that the letter be cc'ed to local governments, cautioning that there is a higher potential for blooms with the warm weather, and include information on what to look for (with photos) and what to do if they suspect a bloom.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to the Province urging approval of the Blue Green Algae Protocol and cc Okanagan local governments stating concern because of the early warm summer and potential for blooms. THAT the letter include information on what to look for and next steps if local government staff suspect a bloom."

CARRIED

RDNO Inter-regional Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Measurement and Evaluation Grant Application

RDNO staff requested matching funds to trigger a Real Estate Foundation of BC grant to create common measurements for RGS (e.g. water quality and quantity) – items that the OBWB has been promoting among Okanagan municipalities. It was recommended that funds be approved, recognizing that this project would further Water Board efforts.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board provide \$15,000 in matching funds to RDNO for their regional indicator study, contingent on their receiving a grant from the Real Estate Foundation of BC."

CARRIED

Sponsorship of CRT workshop

On October 7th, the day prior to the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum, a workshop is being organized by the Canadian Water Resources Association (CWRA), focused on the Columbia River Treaty. Okanagan waters are within the Columbia Basin system. It was recommended that the OBWB contribute funding to subsidize participant costs.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board contribute \$3,000 to reduce participant registration costs for the Columbia River Treaty workshop in Osoyoos, October 7th."

CARRIED

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated June 30, 2015, be received."

CARRIED

Water Stewardship Council

Mr. Jatel noted the positive response to the joint board/council meeting in June.

A committee of past council chairs will be meeting to review the work plan for the coming term which will be presented to the board for review.

A number of grant applications have been submitted or are awaiting finalization. Mr. Jatel noted that the council's Groundwater Committee has submitted research proposals for funding to the province. A joint proposal with ONA for wetlands work has been successful and is being finalized with Environment Canada. Also, an application has been sent for federal funding to research Environmental Flow Needs.

Additional items noted was the OBWB's co-sponsorship of an international conference on forests and water, currently underway in Kelowna, in part looking at logging and impacts on water supply.

There was also discussion about varying water restrictions in the valley given the drought and a suggestion that the OBWB should perhaps take a role in addressing this. Dr. Sears noted that staff have been working on a gap analysis with Okanagan utilities and local governments and have identified the need for drought plans which will include a review of restrictions.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated June 30, 2015, be received."
CARRIED

5.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Milfoil update

Mr. Littley provided an update on milfoil noting this is reportedly the worst and earliest bloom in 30 years. Additional work was done in Osoyoos in the winter which was effective but given the rampant growth, operators are working extra hours to stay ahead of the weed. One issue causing problems for the program however, noted Littley, is development along foreshore, limiting the number of available transfer sites. Staff are now working with the City of Kelowna to address this.

In the longer term, staff are also reviewing equipment replacement costs and additional staffing. Rototilling restrictions by the province are also being reviewed to see if the OBWB can get some exemptions.

There was discussion about local and senior governments contacting the Water Board when new infrastructure is installed in the lake (e.g. docks). Mr. Littley said he would follow up on the suggestion.

Health and Safety Program Update

It was recommended, with changes in health and safety regulations and staff, that there be an update to the OBWB's program. Successful safety audits will result in fewer incidents but also lower insurance rates, Mr. Littley noted. The board agreed.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board accept the proposal of Interior Safety Solutions to update the OBWB's Health and Safety Program."
CARRIED

"THAT the Operations and Grants Manager's Report, dated June 30, 2015, be received."

CARRIED

5.4 Communications Director Report

Make Water Work (MWW) and Don't Move A Mussel (DMM)

Ms. Jackson provided an update on the outdoor water conservation (MWW) and the invasive mussel (DMM) campaigns. Materials for both programs are being distributed to an ever-increasing number of local government, business and non-profit partners, helping get the word out.

In addition, staff have been working with a trademark lawyer and a marketing firm to trademark and develop branding guidelines for MWW, DMM and Okanagan WaterWise, based on a growing number of requests to adapt and use the materials outside the Okanagan.

Other communication initiatives:

Ms. Jackson noted the strong media attention in June in response to a news release regarding milfoil issues, the board's position statement on mussels, the launch of the MWW campaign and public statements concerning off-roading in watersheds.

It was noted that Christine Cooper has been hired for the summer as the Communications and Outreach Coordinator. Ms. Cooper is working with MWW and DMM partners and attending events on behalf of the OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program, as well as working on a number of in-house communication projects.

The board was also updated on the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge "Get Wild About Wetlands" contest. Winners included a Grade 1 class at Ellison Elementary. Their winning video entry can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njmBhDn_wIE. As part of the prize, the kids chose a 2-hour boat cruise on Okanagan Lake, with a private class lesson on Okanagan water led by a team from the Okanagan Science Centre. Prizing was donated thanks to OSC, Cruise Okanagan and SD22 who provided the busing free-of-charge.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated June 30, 2015, be received."

CARRIED

Dirs. Martin and Dirk exit the meeting.

6. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Zebra-Quagga Mussel Update

Mr. Littley introduced an amendment to the board's position statement on mussels, recognizing recent changes to federal legislation and revising its request to the province to commit to funding treatment and containment should an invasion occur.

There was some discussion by directors with the board passing a motion to amend.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adopt the changes to the position statement as recommended."

CARRIED

6.2 OBWB Governance

Dr. Sears presented her report on governance in response to questions from the board at the June meeting.

The fact that the OBWB is not incorporated and is instead a legislated partnership has created issues, she noted (e.g. insuring milfoil equipment). In discussions with the province, it was suggested that the Water Board pursue incorporation through the new Water Sustainability Act and its Water Sustainability Plan (WSP) process. However, the regulations for WSPs are not yet in place. The board asked that staff continue to research its options and pursue incorporation.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Sept. 4, 2015 at 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 July 7, 2015 be adjourned at 1:24 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director