



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD NOVEMBER 3, 2015, 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 James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Andre Martin	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rob Birtles	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waardenburg	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC

OBWB STAFF

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

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 3, 2015 be approved."

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 6, 2015 at Regional District of North Okanagan

Two small amendments noted.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 6, 2015 at Regional District of North Okanagan as amended."

CARRIED

4. DELEGATION

Kellie Garcia, Summit Environmental, Okanagan Drought Planning update

Ms. Garcia provided an update on a valley-wide drought planning process, beginning with an overview of what happened as the drought deepened this past summer and some of the feedback collected from valley utilities and local governments.

One of the issues this summer, noted Ms. Garcia, was the inconsistency with how utilities responded to the drought. The concept of “One valley. One water.” is recognized but it was hard for some water purveyors to buy into knowing that they’re only responsible for their area and customers. There is a need for greater recognition that we are connected, she added.

We are already seeing the effects of climate change and this next summer we’re expecting a repeat of last year, making this effort all the more important, Garcia added.

As part of her research, a focus group has been pulled together, made up of water utilities and local governments in the Okanagan. Some of the issues being discussed include formal communication strategies and consistent and deliberate cooperation.

Other findings include:

- Of 18 major water purveyors, 5 have formal drought plans. This may include water conservation messaging on websites but not formal conservation plans.
- A valley-wide response strategy is not in place, but the OBWB has elements of the framework in place with the Water Supply and Demand Study, the Make Water Work campaign and the BC Water Use Reporting Centre web tool.
- Barriers include a persistent myth of abundance, a mishmash of water providers, and a love affair with lawns and cedars.

As part of the development of a valley-wide drought plan, she is now identifying data gaps and how to help water suppliers prepare and update drought plans, Ms. Garcia said. They are also looking at how to encourage suppliers to make conservation a year-round priority, coordinating valley-wide drought response plans, communication efforts and connecting to the provincial drought plan.

Some of the items that also should be considered moving forward, include:

- Drought agreements for priority sub-basins.
- Adoption of consistent definitions of water restriction stages, and common decision-making tools for moving between them.

Ms. Garcia said the next step is to develop actions for each recommendation and an implementation plan. As part of this process, she will be meeting with the focus group again in mid-November, deliver a draft report to the Water Stewardship Council and then present the report to the board.

OBWB could be the portal for the valley-wide messaging, materials and response, but it’s also up to each utility to get its plan in place, Ms. Garcia concluded.

Directors had several questions following the presentation. In response to one regarding storage, it was noted that this may be an important tool to address future water needs for some water suppliers.

There was also discussion about the importance of conserving and the impacts it could have had this past summer for fish. When the province asked communities to conserve it was not well understood – for fish, or senior licenses, or other purposes, added Dr. Sears. This needs to be better communicated.

There was discussion about the variability in water supply in the different parts of the valley, and how residents and even water utility staff in some communities were asking why they had to conserve. Again, it was noted that it is important to understand that the water in the Okanagan is all connected – the upland reservoirs, the aquifers and surface waters. Considering the issues for the salmon in the South Okanagan this year, it was important for everyone in the valley to do their part to help out.

The importance of political leadership was also noted.

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Proposed cancelation of January OBWB meeting

Cancellation of the January board meeting was discussed. Items that require board direction will be forwarded to directors as needed.

“THAT the OBWB cancel the regular meeting of January 5th, 2016.”

CARRIED

Planning Grant

The Province of B.C. would like to see greater uptake of the OBWB’s Groundwater Bylaw and Topsoil Bylaw toolkits, as well as the companion Green Bylaw planning guide in B.C. communities. They have provided funds to the Water Board to help with this effort.

“THAT the OBWB accept the grant titled ‘Local Government Planning Guides – Streamlining and Outreach.’”

CARRIED

Blue-Green Algae Update

The province has completed a report on the new protocol. We are looking to have it expanded to include a decision-making tree.

Drought Planning

Dr. Sears noted warmer weather predictions in the coming year but unknown amounts of precipitation and the importance of the valley-wide drought plan currently underway.

IJC’s International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control

Discussions are underway to improve Zosel Dam operations for fish. There may be funds available to move this forward.

The International Joint Commission has not yet been asked to take part in the Columbia River Treaty renegotiation, but may be in the future. If the OBWB has specific issues it wants addressed they should send them to B.C.’s Chief Negotiator.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Oct. 26, 2015, be received.”

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director’s Report

October Water Workshops

Mr. Jatel provided an update on some workshops he has attended, noting B.C.’s new Water Sustainability Act (WSA) will require Environmental Flow Needs (EFNs) to be considered for new licences. Critical Flow Needs are also included in the new act which the province can then use to

trigger water restrictions. As the province updates its own Drought Response Plan these items will be considered, he added.

The OBWB has been working with Summit Environmental in helping determine the EFNs on 18 Okanagan streams.

Staff also attended a B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations workshop on adapting forest and range practices to climate change.

Water Stewardship Council

Mr. Jatel noted a presentation at the last council meeting by ONA's Lauren Terbasket and discussion around a possible Memorandum of Understanding between the OBWB and ONA.

Dr. Sears noted staff will pursue a draft protocol agreement and bring it to the board for discussion.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated Oct. 28, 2015, be received."
CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

WCQI Grants Showcase

Mr. Littley told the board that an event showcasing 10 years of funding through the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program is set for Nov. 26 at Westbank Lions Community Centre. It is being co-hosted with the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program and the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program. The event will show the collective impact of the funding.

Mr. Littley also noted a recent BC Water Funders Collaborative meeting he attended. These external funders were also invited to come and present as a way to potentially bring more funds into the valley.

Zebra and Quagga Mussel Update

The board was provided a brief update on provincial mussel efforts, including that it is reviewing its summer program with roving inspection stations. Mr. Littley noted that there will be a meeting regarding mussels being held in Vancouver in December, put on by the Pacific North West Economic Region and the Invasive Species Council of BC.

Chair Findlater noted as the OBWB reviews its strategy and determines next steps, it may make sense to extend its efforts even further to the boating community (sellers, clubs, etc.). It was noted that boats are not the only threat, there are floatplanes and other water recreation equipment that could carry the mussels and be affected by an infestation.

It was suggested a letter be sent to the new Liberal MP in February congratulating him on his election and naming our top issues, including the need for continued federal support on the mussel issue.

There was some discussion about the OBWB's suggestion to the province that it do a business case and look at a possible user-pay sticker program. There seems to be little interest from the province and indeed concern about pushback. Dir. Gray noted that she would be willing to discuss this with the Kelowna chamber as a possible item to support.

Staff added that it would continue to work with the chamber on this mussel issue but also

reconnect with the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. There was also discussion about a possible survey of the boating community to collect feedback on a user pay program to support an upgraded provincial inspection program.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated Oct. 27, 2015, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

WaterSmart Innovations 2015

Ms. Jackson provided an overview of some of the highlights of the WSI conference including workshops on drought-planning and conservation, focusing on new and tested technologies, regulations and communication campaigns.

Okanagan Nation Alliance Water Forum

The board was also provided an update on a water forum put on by the ONA and some of the topics that were discussed for possible further action, including invasive mussels.

Ms. Jackson added that in a follow-up discussion with ONA staff, it was noted there is a general wish to keep the dialogue open and a report from the proceedings will be coming out in the weeks ahead.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Oct. 28, 2015, be received.”
CARRIED

7. **NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

7.1 Budget Features 2016-17 Memo

Dr. Sears presented the budget to the board, noting few changes from the previous year, including a net zero increase to the \$3.4 mill. budget.

With the OBWB’s past funding commitment to the UBCO Water Research Chair now met, it was recommended that the \$100,000 be directed towards milfoil equipment reserves and additional communications support, including for the Make Water Work (outdoor water conservation) and Don’t Move a Mussel initiatives.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board 2016-17 budget be accepted as presented.”
CARRIED

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be December 1, 2015 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 3, 2015 be adjourned at 1:25 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director