



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MAY 3, 2016, 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 Cindy Fortin	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 Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rob Birtles	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director [Undesignated]	Okanagan Nation Alliance

OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littlely	Operations and Grants Manager
Kellie Garcia	Communications and Planning Specialist

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

- 6.1 In-camera
- 6.3 Invasive Mussel Framework

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of May 3, 2016 be approved."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of April 5, 2016 at Regional District of North Okanagan.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of April 5, 2016 at Regional District of North Okanagan be approved."

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS

5.1 Solomon Tesfamariam, UBC Okanagan - Tool to Help Measure B.C. Drinking Water Quality

Dr. Tesfamariam spoke to the growing issue of aging infrastructure in the Okanagan and the problems it is causing for water quality and delivery. Compounding the issue is climate change, soil corrosion, lack of investment and deferred maintenance, he noted.

The Okanagan Basin Inter-Utility Performance Benchmarking Initiative was developed for small to medium-sized water utilities, serving a population of 25-50,000. The purpose is to assist municipalities with limited resources and capacity, address their issues. Key performance indicators the model looks at are: water quality, hydraulic flow and quantity of flow, and system integrity. It considers performance indicators, comparing average, poor and best performances. Once benchmarks are determined, local governments then have a baseline to work from, he added.

Board directors thanked Mr. Tesfamariam for the presentation noting this type of work, looking at infrastructure needs and doing necessary upgrades, can be a tough sell to taxpayers, but is important.

5.2 Don Dobson of Dobson Engineering and Craig Nichol with UBC Okanagan – Mission Creek Groundwater Project Update

Mr. Dobson provided an overview to the Mission Creek groundwater project noting its importance in better understanding the interaction between ground and surface water.

Interest in the project began initially as a result of earlier studies that found that Mission Creek was losing surface water in the area between Gallaghers and Ziprick, but gaining water in the lower level part of the creek. It was suggested that more research be done to look at what was happening in the creek. At the same time, South East Kelowna Irrigation District was looking at obtaining another groundwater source, the OBWB was working with B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations on developing Environmental Flow Needs (EFNs) in the Okanagan to assist with provincial licencing decisions, and Rutland Waterworks which relies on groundwater was interested in research conducted by UBCO which suggested the water level in a Rutland aquifer was dropping.

As such, all of these partners came together to better understand what is happening in and around the creek. As part of the project, 10 transects have been set along Mission Creek to monitor flow and groundwater levels.

Okanagan Nation Alliance (who is a partner on the EFN project) has been contracted to do data collection. Eight surface monitoring stations have been installed (adding to the two that were already in place). Groundwater monitoring stations have been installed, and a database system is being set up to ensure greater access to the information collected.

Dr. Craig Nichol spoke to UBCO's earlier research on groundwater and its involvement in this project.

The earlier research, he noted, found the need for more information to better understand what is flowing in and out of Mission Creek. This is especially important information as the province looks to licence ground water use. Through these monitoring stations, we will now have a multiple year record of when the stream is gaining water and losing water. We can see where water is being pumped, for example during irrigation season, and its effects on the creek.

In response to questions, Mr. Dobson said that it is hoped that the project will continue for five years, allowing for greater information gathering during hopefully high and low water years. Two

of the monitoring stations are already long term, he added, noting Water Survey of Canada has one, and Black Mountain Irrigation District has another.

Dr. Sears added that the project was intended for one year, but given several of the partners' concerns about water supplies it has the potential to continue.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears noted that the June board meeting will be short and move into a joint board-council session that will include a special June Workshop on First Nations Rights and Title. The workshop will look at the 2014 Tsilhqot'in decision by the Supreme Court of Canada and the Okanagan Nation context.

A resolution was presented that the board go into closed meeting at 11:05 a.m

"THAT the board meeting be closed under sec. 90 (2) (b) of the Community Charter to discuss confidential information that relates to negotiations between the OBWB and senior government."

CARRIED

Regular meeting was resumed at 11:25 a.m.

Dr. Sears provided an update on the UBCO Water Research Chair noting that under the terms in which Dr. John Janmaat was appointed chair that he be reviewed every five years. Having recently completed his first five years, he will be meeting with the three Okanagan regional districts (RDs) and present on his research. The RDs helped fund the first five years through the OBWB.

The board was presented the latest information on water supplies. Whereas there was a healthy snowpack in the upper elevations this winter, the early spring has melted the mid-elevation snow in Brenda Mines which is now well below average. The snowpack at Mission Creek is now below average. Environment Canada is reporting this as one of the three warmest winters since the 1900s. The heat is expected to continue through spring and is causing an early start to the fruit season. Directors were told that spring rains are needed to help prevent a bad fire season.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated April 27, 2016, be received."

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director's Report

Mr. Jatel presented a report on the completion of Okanagan Wetland Strategy: Phase 2, including restoration efforts. development of the OkanaganWetlands.ca website profiling nine wetlands in English, French and Sylix, and more.

Phase 3 will include the development of a formal strategy for further wetland protection, enhancement and creation. The strategy will be available to local governments and others.

The annual Water Supply Webinar was held April 15, providing up-to-date information on snow pack, surface and groundwater and the upcoming forecast for spring. Attendance was down and staff will look at how to build its audience.

The April Water Stewardship Council meeting included a presentation on forestry and water. The May meeting will include a presentation from Interior Health on water quality.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated April 26, 2016, be received.”
CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley presented on the “Our Living Waters” forum he attended, noting that discussions included efforts to improve water data, federal laws and policies to address water protection, best management practices and toolkits, and how to create a cultural shift in the value of water.

The board was provided an update on B.C.’s new Invasive Mussel Prevention Framework. It was noted there is concern with the possibility of provincial downloading of responsibility if the mussels are introduced into Okanagan waters, and with the federal government allowing approval of deleterious substances to combat the mussels at the expense of larger ecosystems. However, the framework also lays out a plan to coordinate efforts and push for greater federal involvement.

Mr. Littley noted that the winter rototilling for milfoil is now complete. Extra hours were added to the winter program and it’s hoped that it will help address the problem weed, especially through its spring-summer growing season.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated April 27, 2016, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson noted the Make Water Work (MWW), outdoor water conservation initiative, will re-launch on May 11 with a news conference. Mayors from throughout the valley will be attending to Take the Challenge to conserve and encourage their residents to do the same.

The MWW Plant Collection has expanded from 23 to 54 plants. Also, two new garden centres have joined the MWW Plant Collection program for 2016, bringing the total to nine in the valley. As such, nearly all Okanagan residents have the ability to walk into a garden centre in their community and find Make Water Work plants, added Jackson. It also means that each Okanagan local government (partners in MWW) now has a garden centre, with the exception of Peachland which has no existing garden centre, that they can partner with to help promote low-water landscapes.

With the early start to spring, there has already been strong interest in and promotion of MWW, including at the Okanagan Xeriscape Assoc. Plant Sale, Summerland Ornamental Gardens Mother’s Day Plant Sale, with a presentation to the Kelowna Garden Club, a special event by Peachland’s Climate Action Team, and more.

Don’t Move a Mussel is also ramping up, getting ready for the relaunch of the initiative for the spring/summer water recreation season. Staff have also been busy responding to an increasing number of groups asking for materials and information to help spread the word, including the National Melges Sailing Competition in Kelowna, the Vernon Yacht Club Boat Show, Father’s Day Fishing Derby and more.

A MWW-DMM table was also set up at the recent Southern Interior Local Government Assoc. AGM where there was great interest in both programs.

The OBWB has posted for an Okanagan WaterWise Communication and Outreach Coordinator for the summer to help with MWW, DMM and other water communication issues. Application deadline was April 29 and resumes are now being reviewed with an intention to hire for June 6.

Ms. Jackson noted that the rain barrel sale with RDCO went well. Pick ups are this and next weekend.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated April 27, 2016, be received.”
CARRIED

6.5 Communications and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia provided an update on activities including meetings with various local governments in the valley to implement Phase 1 of the Building Drought Resilience report. Some of this includes discussions around how to create efficiencies, and adoption of consistent valley-wide watering restrictions. A planning meeting with major utilities is set for June 3.

Work is also underway to address drought communication between the province and local governments, as well as how to improve uptake of various toolkits to help municipalities be more resilient to climate change (e.g. groundwater bylaw toolkit, etc.).

It was noted that there has been some resistance to topsoil bylaws by the development community. Ms. Garcia responded, saying she is working with local governments and others to address these issues.

“THAT the Communications and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated April 27, 2016, be received.”
CARRIED

7. **CORRESPONDENCE**

7.1 Letter from federal Min. of Public Safety to OBWB re: invasive mussels

“THAT the correspondence from the federal Minister of Public Safety re: invasive mussels be accepted as information.”
CARRIED

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be June 7, 2016 from 9 - 10 a.m., followed by a joint Board-Water Stewardship Council meeting and workshop from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The meetings will be held at the Coast Capri Hotel in Kelowna.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of May 3, 2016 be adjourned at 1:08 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		

Chair		Executive Director