



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD SEPTEMBER 9, 2016, AT THE LAUREL PACKINGHOUSE,
1304 ELLIS ST., 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 Ron Hovanes	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
James Littley	Operations and Grants Manager
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
Kellie Garcia	Communications and Planning Specialist
Lisa Houle	Communications and Outreach Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Findlater called the meeting to order at 12:21 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

5.1 Tom Siddon on Vaseux Lake water quality issues

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 9, 2016 be approved."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 5, 2016 at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

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

CARRIED

5. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 Vaseux Lake

RDOS Dir. Tom Siddon noted water quality issues at Vaseux Lake, especially with milfoil, and questioned whether treated water being released from the nearby sewage treatment plant is adding nutrients to the water, exacerbating the weed's growth. The creation of a wetland to ensure an additional filtering of water from the treatment plant will be helpful, however, he suggested, a study is needed.

Chair Findlater responded noting West Kelowna has had issues with milfoil as well, due to warmer water and rains washing nutrients in to the water. Dr. Sears added that treatment of milfoil on Vaseux Lake is difficult because of the existence of Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel which is a protected species. She suggested RDOS submit an application for a Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant to look at the water quality issue, similar to RDNO's study of Swan Lake.

In response to questions, Mr. Littley noted Vaseux and the Okanagan River Channel had been treated for milfoil in the past at the request of the province and then it was called off because it was recognized as a sensitive area. In addition, there are no areas currently available to pick up the weeds, and no motors are allowed on the lake so the OBWB would require federal approval.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears told the board that RDCO, contracted to provide accounting services to the Water Board including the management of its annual audit, is putting this service out to tender as a best practice. Directors will be notified of any recommended changes, she added.

The board was told that work has begun on a new budget for 2017-18. With no budget increase for four years, staff are now looking at a less than 2% increase for milfoil equipment costs. Chair Findlater noted that staff should also see if infrastructure grants are available to help with costs.

Dr. Sears noted she will be speaking at the September Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) conference on drought and will be part of a workshop on extreme weather events and climate change.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated August 22, 2016, be received."

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Report

Mr. Jatel noted the start of a new 18-month council term, starting November 2016 and told the board there is interest in possibly adding three new positions. Currently, the council is made up of representatives from 27 organizations, however as a growing number of members retire there is concern about the loss of expertise. The council is discussing adding two alumni positions. It is also interested in adding one Okanagan College or UBC Okanagan student position.

Staff was asked to bring a report back to the board regarding the expansion and voted to approve the membership as is.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Council Proposed Membership List (November 2016 – February 2018) as presented be approved for a term of 18 months.”

CARRIED

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated August 24, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley provided an update on milfoil control efforts noting the breakdown of a harvester in July which required repair. Thanks to extra rototilling in the winter, the impact of down time was lessened, he said.

The board was presented with a draft asset replacement plan. There was much discussion around the plan and a request that the plan be revised to address issues such as inflation. Staff agreed to provide an update at the next meeting and as the budget is prepared.

Mr. Littley added that the OBWB’s Letters Patent requires the board have approval from the three Okanagan regional districts before major equipment purchases. It is hoped that by having a pre-approved plan in place it will make the process more efficient.

“THAT the OBWB approve the Asset Replacement Plan 2016, and direct staff to seek the approval of Okanagan regional districts for the Asset Replacement Schedule given in the plan.”

CARRIED

Mr. Littley reported on a Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) invasive mussel seminar he attended in July. Among the topics discussed was the use of various products to deal with invasive mussels. PNWER, for example, is looking for preapproval to stockpile potash and other chemicals for rapid response.

Under federal legislation approved in June 2015, provincial fisheries ministers can now apply to release deleterious substances more quickly to deal with aquatic invasives. There was some discussion about the failed attempt to use potash in Lake Winnipeg and the harm it does to other aquatic life. Directors suggested a letter be sent noting that potash is not the solution and that prevention is the only viable option.

“THAT staff draft a letter re: stockpiling of potash to address invasive mussels and reiterate that prevention is the only viable option.”

CARRIED

Some board members noted they would rather see stronger prevention efforts nationally, such as uptake of the Don’t Move A Mussel campaign, than talk about stockpiling potash. Ms. Jackson noted the recent expansion of the DMM campaign to “Have the Talk” was intended to help address the board’s interest in getting the message beyond the Okanagan, encouraging local residents to talk with out-of-town guests and others who plan to bring watercraft to our valley about the risks and ways to protect our waters. There has also been interest in picking up the campaign in other parts of the province, she added, saying that staff is open to sharing materials with others, including BC Hydro, Fortis BC, etc.

Dir. McKortoff added that RDOS is sending a motion to the UBCM that boats not be permitted to come into the province from outside of B.C.

Mr. Littley concluded his report noting one of the action items to come out of the PNWER meeting was to send letters to the Canadian government regarding last year's \$4 million investment by the U.S. Congress towards inspection stations, asking Canada to match it and improve Canada Border Services Agency enforcement. This is consistent with a letter sent by the OBWB in May 2016.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated August 23, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson gave an update on the Make Water Work residential outdoor water conservation initiative, noting the campaign runs until mid-late September while people are still watering. The contest, however, ended Aug. 21. Peachland was named Make Water Work Community Champions, having collected the greatest number of pledges per capita in the valley. An announcement of the \$6,000 Grand Prize Winner of a WaterWise yard upgrade will be announced soon, she added.

A news conference was held Aug. 10 to announce expansion of the Don't Move a Mussel campaign, encouraging residents to "Have...the talk" in response to a growing call to get our message beyond the Okanagan and thereby further strengthen the Okanagan's own mussel defence. Have the Talk (HTT) messaging has been added to the www.DontMoveAMussel.ca website, can be seen on buses and heard on radio, and more. The news conference was well-attended, Ms. Jackson added, saying Kelowna Chamber's President and Vice-President were also on hand to lend support and say a few words. The mussel campaign runs to the end of September, in sync with the boating season.

Lisa Houle, the summer's Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator, provided a wrap up report on the various projects she completed in the office (e.g. updated eco-educators listing and a Communications and Outreach manual) and the extensive work she did outside the office. Over the course of the summer, Ms. Houle attended 22 events and spoke with 1,266 people, providing outreach on Okanagan water issues including invasive mussels and water conservation. The majority of people she spoke with had heard about the mussels. Others had heard or seen the message but needed more information. Several noted they would feel comfortable "Having the talk" with friends and neighbours. There was concern, she noted about apparent lax inspections at Canadian border crossings and the need for greater outreach outside the Okanagan. People were also happy to talk water conservation, she added.

Ms. Jackson concluded her report noting some of the other communications projects she is assisting, including the "Social Life of Water" museum exhibit, an aquatic invasives exhibit at the Environmental Education Centre, and a BCWF RAPP App to track and report illegal activity in watersheds.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated August 24, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

6.5 Communications and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia provided an update on the Okanagan Agriculture Drought Status Outreach Project noting consultants have been hired to create outreach methods and materials for water utilities to assist ag water users during drought, helping them prepare for and respond to low water

availability. There will be two test pilots, she added, including Greater Vernon Water. Phase 2 will have the outreach materials available as templates for other communities.

The Mainstem Lakes Drought Triggers Project is also underway with draft recommendations being reviewed by a technical team. Dr. Sears added that Brian Symonds is developing recommendations for decision criteria for utilities so when the lake is at a certain level they can trigger watering restriction stages in unison, acknowledging that they all draw off the same water source.

“THAT the Communications and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated August 23, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Okanagan Nation Alliance Contract Approval Memo

Dr. Sears presented a memo regarding a contract with ONA for the Environmental Flow Needs project.

In response to questions from the board, Mr. Jatel noted the project originally identified 19 streams. Field work has been conducted on 11, however information has been collected on all 19. The work is helping identify the environmental and critical flow levels required to protect fish stocks.

“THAT the OBWB enter into a contract with the Okanagan Nation Alliance for \$184,000 for the provision of field work related to the Environmental Flow Needs project.”

CARRIED

8 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2016 at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream at 10 a.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 9, 2016 be adjourned at 1:44 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director