



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD NOVEMBER 1, 2016, AT THE 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 Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Lisa Wilson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Rob Birtles	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Ron Hovanes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
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OBWB STAFF

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

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 4, 2016 be approved.”

CARRIED

3. DELEGATION

3.1 Jason Schleppe – Ecoscape Environmental Consultants on Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) and Milfoil Mapping of Okanagan Lake

Mr. Schleppe provided an overview of FIM mapping that has been done along Okanagan Lake starting in 2004, including more recently in the Central Okanagan as part of an OBWB Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant to the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

FIM was first used in the Central Okanagan to respond to concerns regarding growing non-compliance with foreshore development and the impacts on areas known for their high environmental value. Its intention was to help guide land development and understand the cumulative impacts of alterations along the shoreline and find restoration opportunities, explained Mr. Schleppe.

The mapping includes FIM, as well as the development of an Aquatic Habitat Index (i.e. what ecosystems are there and sensitivities) and Shoreline Management Guidelines developed by various agencies – government and others – to determine how do we work together so everyone is working with the same rules, he added.

The mapping, done by boat, was done in the Central Okanagan portion of the lake in 2004, 2010, and then 2016 when milfoil mapping was also done.

Estimates can be done to try and determine what the foreshore looked like in the 1900s to understand how different types of land use impacts the shoreline (e.g. industrial, commercial, forestry, residential).

Dir. Lisa Wilson entered the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Mr. Schleppe noted the 2016 FIM objective was to provide a framework for managing the shoreline areas, using data to understand if current policies are achieving their objectives and identify and establish new ones where necessary.

In response to questions it was noted that a multiagency approach is important to ensure decisions meet each agencies' needs before work by any party proceeds (e.g. developer, local government, senior government, etc). Also, as regulatory oversight has been cut, there is more attention to high-risk rather than low-risk situations, making guidelines all the more important.

Dir. Cunningham suggested that cumulative effects from changes to the foreshore should be considered and that a management framework for the entire Okanagan Lake may be difficult but would be worth pursuing, bringing all local governments and partners to the table.

In 2010, FIM results indicated only 43 per cent of the shoreline (125 km of 289 km total) remained in a natural state and that up to two percent of the Central Okanagan shoreline is being changed each year. Mr. Schleppe noted that new mapping will show new hotspots.

Mr. Schleppe noted that there is still some work to be done to compile all of the information but it should be available soon.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Dr. Sears introduced new Board Dir. Wilson, representing ONA.

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 4, 2016 at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 4, 2016 at the Regional District of North Okanagan be approved.”

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears provided the board with a report based on a survey of 18 water purveyors in the Okanagan. The survey looked at issues including the status of water metering and floodplain mapping.

Directors were given a list of proposed meeting dates for 2017.

“THAT the OBWB adopt the 2017 meeting schedule as provided.”

CARRIED

The board was informed that Regional District of Central Okanagan, which provides auditing as part of its financial services to the OBWB, has recommended that BDO be hired for the next five years.

“THAT the board appoint BDO Canada LLP as the OBWB’s auditor for a period of 5 years, commencing with the year ending March 31, 2017.”

CARRIED

Dr. Sears noted that the OBWB has received a \$50,000 grant from Environment Canada to continue its research into the groundwater/surface water connection on Kelowna’s Mission Creek. B.C. Ministry of Environment (MoE)’s groundwater staff are very interested since new provincial legislation requires licencing of groundwater and little is known about the impact of aquifer pumping, she added.

B.C. MoE is also keeping the Water Board updated on ongoing Hullcar aquifer studies. An update has been posted to the OBWB website’s water quality page.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated October 26, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Report

Mr. Jatel noted that the Water Stewardship Council (WSC)’s latest 18-month term is coming to an end and an election will be held at the next meeting, Nov. 10, to choose a new chair and vice-chair. The council will also be helping develop a work plan for this term.

A meeting was held in Victoria to discuss updates to the BC Water Use Reporting Centre and the potential for it to be used more widely in the province.

There was some discussion about B.C.’s new Water Sustainability Act and licencing requirements for groundwater extraction. Dr. Sears noted that although licences won’t be required in all instances (e.g. small domestic use), it may be prudent to licence wells to register them and protect them. In the case of severe drought, if the province imposes First-in-time, First-in-right (FITFIR), those with the oldest licences will be given priority for use, added Dir. Pike.

Mr. Jatel provided an update on the Okanagan Environmental Flow Needs project, noting that ONA has been contracted to do an assessment of Mission Creek to indicate habitat types along 21 km of the study area. ONA also received \$50,000 from Environment Canada to research 11 more streams and look at stream invertebrates, looking at the food for fish, which will help inform the EFN work on water flow conditions in the creek. A meeting is also set for Nov. 28 to review this year’s effort and possible improvements for 2017.

Directors were told that the WSC is interested in bringing various policies to the board, including a wetlands policy statement. Mr. Jatel introduced the policy, noting that 85% of Okanagan wetlands are lost, and yet they hold much value including helping address climate change. Such a policy can be used to promote projects being done in the valley and would preempt release of an OBWB Okanagan wetland strategy.

Following some discussion, Dir. Wilson noted she would like to take the policy to Chief and Council for input.

“THAT the motion to adopt an OBWB Policy Promoting Wetland Protect and Conservation in the Okanagan be deferred until February.”

CARRIED.

The board was presented with a draft letter to the province with recommendations to improve BC Water Sustainability Act regulations, including better funding to support water science, improved communication on groundwater licencing, implementation of the BCWURC province-wide to support better decision making, and improved legislative support to protect wetlands.

There was a suggestion that perhaps there could be local communication efforts around groundwater licencing. Staff agreed to look at the issue.

A couple of small amendments to the letter were suggested.

“THAT the board approve the letter with minor amendments and send the letter with both board and council signatures.”

CARRIED

“THAT staff develop a communication plan to deal with groundwater licencing in the valley.”

CARRIED

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated October 26, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

5.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley presented staff recommendations for the 2017-18 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program Call for Applications.

“THAT for the 2017-18 WCQI grant competition annual theme, the OBWB seeks projects focused on drought and flood preparedness, water flow monitoring, groundwater studies, restoration and water quality; and THAT applications in these categories are prioritized for funding during staff review with the awarding of up to ten extra points toward the total score; and THAT the process and scoring criteria for the grant competition be maintained as outlined.”

CARRIED

Milfoil rototilling is now underway. However, with Osoyoos Lake so low, operators have pulled the machine out of this lake to work instead in Skaha and then Okanagan Lake at West Kelowna. The plan is to return to Osoyoos in April and May.

In response to a request from Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, staff submitted an application to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) to launch a milfoil machine in Vaseux Lake to address the invasive weed there. In following up, CWS has said they are waiting to hear from the province before issuing approval. In the meantime, Water Board staff have contacted RDOS about potential launch sites.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated October 25, 2016, be received.”

CARRIED

5.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson provided an update on this summer's Don't Move A Mussel (DMM) efforts of its partner, the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS), including distribution of materials to 362 locations, and outreach at 31 events/locations and 20 board launches.

A survey was conducted of those they spoke with at boat launches, finding a drop in the number of Alberta boaters (from 98% in 2015 to 87%), but an increase in Manitoba boaters where invasive mussels exist (from none in 2015 to 5%). There is a notable increase in awareness of invasives and Clean-Drain-Dry, from 48 to 76% in 2016. The highest reported sources of information are boat launch signs (18%), highway inspections (17%), radio (13%) and billboards (13%).

The board was also given an update on various water education and outreach initiatives receiving communications support, including: the "Social Life of Water," a multi-media exhibit on display at Okanagan Heritage Museum into the new year; a soon-to-be-released BCWF Conservation App to assist reporting of environmental infractions; a European documentary film on wine and civilizations; and a Nov. 29 workshop, "Flow 'n Grow," co-presented with the Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC and the Irrigation Industry Assoc. of BC, and featuring CBC'S Bob McDonald, Lower Nicola Indian Band's Chief Aaron Sam, UN University's Water and Climate Chair Bob Sandford and others.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated October 25, 2016, be received."
CARRIED

5.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia updated the board on local drought planning, noting that Greater Vernon Water (GVW), West Kelowna, Penticton, Oliver and RDOS are all updating plans and she is assisting to ensure consistent approaches. Glenmore Ellison Irrigation District and Lake Country updated their plans in the summer and she is looking to follow up with them. Some of these plans were funded through a WCQI grant, she noted, adding that with a new call for applications she hopes some will consider applying for funds to help get this work done.

In response to questions, it was noted that a Drought Plan is more than a Water Conservation Program or bylaw, and includes drought triggers and other responses beyond water restrictions.

Staff are preparing to present proposed drought trigger guidelines on Okanagan mainstem lakes and river for discussion at a workshop on Nov. 16.

Work is moving ahead on the Agricultural Drought Status Outreach Project, with consultants having met with pilot water purveyors (GVW, Penticton and RDOS) and now preparing to meet with ag water users. The purpose is to help identify best practices for utilities to deliver water supply information to ag users and how to respond in times of drought.

Work is also underway to look at how best to promote use of OBWB and other Bylaw Toolkits in local government. A committee is helping guide the project and create a survey for planners, consultants and elected officials.

"THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist's Report, dated October 25, 2016, be received."

CARRIED

6. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Budget features 2017-18 Memo

Dr. Sears presented a budget memo containing a 0.2 percent net increase over 2016-17, assisting with milfoil equipment replacement.

There was a suggestion that staff consider planning a five-year budget to help forecast budget requirements. Dr. Sears noted this is done with the milfoil program and should be possible with the Water Management Program.

“THAT the OBWB receive the budget as presented.”
CARRIED

7. CORREPENDENCE

9.1 Letter from Environment Canada re: Mission Creek Groundwater Modeling project funding

“THAT the letter from Environment Canada to OBWB re: Mission Creek Groundwater Modelling funding be received.”
CARRIED

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton at 10 a.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 1, 2016 be adjourned at 1:18 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director