



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD FEBRUARY 7, 2017, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice-chair Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Cindy Fortin	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Ron Hovanes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Mark Pendergraft	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 Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

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
Alyssa Bougie	Communications & Outreach Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Dr. Sears called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Board Appointments and Elections for 2017

Regional District of North Okanagan

Director Juliette Cunningham
Director Doug Dirk
Director Rick Fairbairn
Alternates – Bob Fleming, Catherine Lord, Mike Macnabb

Regional District of Central Okanagan

Director Doug Findlater
Director Cindy Fortin
Director Tracy Gray
Alternates – James Baker, Wayne Carson, Patty Hanson

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Director Sue McKortoff
Director Ron Hovanes
Director Peter Waterman

Alternates – Mark Pendergraft, Tom Siddon, Toni Boot

Okanagan Nation Alliance

Director – Lisa Wilson

Water Supply Association of BC

Director Toby Pike

Alternate – Bob Hrasko

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

Director Brian Guy

Alternate – Denise Neilsen

Dir. Fairbairn nominated Dir. Cunningham. Dir. Findlater nominated Dir. Gray. Dir. Cunningham declined citing other commitments. Dir. Gray accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. Gray was elected Chair.

Dir. Fortin entered the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Chair Gray requested nominations for vice-chair. Dir. Fairbairn nominated Dir. Cunningham, who accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. Cunningham was declared Vice-Chair by acclamation.

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

8.1 Signing Authority Memo

9.1 Federal correspondence on mussels

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 7, 2017 be approved.”

CARRIED

5. BOARD ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Dir. Wilson entered the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Directors were invited to speak to the top water issues in their areas.

Dir. Findlater – As West Kelowna incorporated it brought in the various area irrigation districts. The focus has been on water quality issues, including algae blooms, but also upper elevation storage. The district has identified capital and storage issues. It is hoping to bring in 83% in infrastructure money to expand upland sources.

Dir. Fairbairn – Electoral area directors attended a forum last week where they received an update on B.C.’s new Water Sustainability Act (WSA). It seems there are still issues that need to be fleshed out, including around groundwater well registering and licencing.

Alt. Dir. Pendergraft – There are questions around well registering in the rural Osoyoos area, as well as concerns about development interfering with milfoil harvesting.

Dir. Hovaness – Oliver's irrigation canal was damaged last summer, and will be costly to repair. The municipality will be applying for BC infrastructure grant funding.

Dir. Guy – The Water Stewardship Council conducted a survey of its member organizations last fall and a follow-up workshop in November to discuss council priorities. Six priorities were identified: consistent valley-wide drought and flood planning; source water protection including wetlands; response to emerging governance issues and the need to be more proactive (e.g. with upcoming federal and provincial regulations); strengthen internal communication efforts and extend external efforts; extend Environmental Flow Needs work to assist B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations on a process to improve water allocation decisions; and to update the Water Supply and Demand Study from Phase 2 in 2010. There has also been discussion about irrigation management and work on efficiencies in agricultural use, as well as an update to the Sustainable Water Strategy over the next 18 months.

Dir. Fortin – Peachland is looking to consolidate its water sources. The district began universal water metering in 2010 which led to a 30% decline in use. The municipality has also been reviewing what type of infrastructure upgrades and plant it needs. The district has been saving funds in reserves to pay for this infrastructure, and is also looking to borrowing and provincial grant funding. Peachland has had some issues with the province's 4-3-2-1-0 drinking water treatment policy. A recent landslide on Highway 97 appears to have been caused by subsurface water flow. Work is underway to get the area fixed.

Dir. Pike – A new policy under the B.C. Drinking Water Protection Act requires new operators to have Level 2 certification which Water Supply Assoc. of BC (WSABC) members are saying is costly. Perhaps this should be offered as a post-secondary program, Dir. Pike suggested. Also, water suppliers have long been required to assess risks, but now they're being told to create plans to mitigate these risks with no additional resources, he added. There also seems to be a need for more provincial staff support to assist with the new groundwater licencing regulations. This should be self-funded with the licences helping pay for staff, he noted. WSABC members are also concerned about the potential for invasive mussels and are thinking about preparing now and building protection efforts in at the beginning of a project.

Dir. Dirk – Coldstream is following up on issues identified as part of its Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping (SHIM) efforts.

Dir. Cunningham – Invasive mussels are a huge concern on Kalamalka Lake. In response, Greater Vernon Water has created a deeper intake. Mud bogging in Duteau Creek is also an issue so fencing was put up and it's hoped that this will deter this type of activity. Water rates have been an issue. A sustainable infrastructure plan is underway to look at mitigating leaking pipes.

Dir. Waterman: Summerland is proceeding with twinning its water systems, separating agricultural from domestic water use. An Asset Management Plan is also underway for the upgraded water system and its potential costs. The irrigation flume is open so there is concern about water quality and the possibility of tampering, he added.

Dir. Gray: Kelowna has 27 water purveyors with City of Kelowna responsible to 50% of city customers. There are four more large utilities and the rest are small. The province is looking to have the city take in some of these. The city wants consistent water for residents. The city has submitted a funding application to assist with this process. Sediment accumulating at the boat launch is a problem and the city wants to ensure, with ongoing development, that milfoil operators have continued access.

Dir. Wilson – Water is sacred and it's not being managed that way. It seems water is often looked at from an infrastructure perspective, but this attitude must change. There was discussion around the table about what various communities are doing to partner with local bands to address water quality issues. There was further discussion about the advocacy of the OBWB and council on provincial and federal water policy, and communication and governance issues related to the Okanagan Nation related to this advocacy. Dir. Findlater added that having technical staff from the ONA on the Council, an advisory body to the board, is valuable for technical matters, acknowledging that these staff aren't expected to represent the ONA on policy matters. Chair Gray acknowledged Dir. Wilson's concerns about the focus on infrastructure, and assured that although fellow directors were talking to specific issues, that the board is committed to water protection in all aspects. There was mutual agreement around the table on the value of water, and its extreme importance to all people, communities and the environment.

6. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

6.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 6, 2016 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton.

An amendment was noted. That 5.5 - the Agricultural Drought Outreach project is being piloted with RDNO-Greater Vernon Water and City of Penticton, not RDOS.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 6, 2016 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen be approved as amended."

CARRIED

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears told the board that the milfoil equipment title transfer to RDOS is moving ahead, with some minor potential revisions.

Staff have submitted an application to the province for a Constructed Wetlands Planning Grant application for \$10,000 matched by the OBWB's wetland project funding. The application requires a resolution of support from the board.

"THAT the OBWB supports the Infrastructure Planning Grant application, "Guidebook for establishing constructed wetlands in the Okanagan."

CARRIED

The board was told that the province has extended its waiving of fees to Dec. 31 for non-domestic groundwater users to get their wells licenced. There has been some confusion for residents who are on well water for domestic use. As such, staff have created a web page with information for residents regarding groundwater well registration. Dir. Dirk asked if local governments are on a referral list to give input to groundwater well licence applications. After some further discussion, Dr. Sears offered to ask the province about referring such applications to communities and First Nations for input. Dir. Gray added that water restrictions don't apply to groundwater but this needs to be looked at. Staff were asked to come back with more information at the next board meeting.

Dr. Sears noted an update on the Hullcar aquifer was provided by the province and included in the report to the board.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated February 1, 2017, be received.”
CARRIED

7.2 Water Stewardship Report

Mr. Jatel provided an update on the Dec. 8 council meeting, noting presentations by West Coast Environmental Law’s Linda Nowlan and Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Stewart Cohen, and discussion about council committees. The Feb. 9 meeting will include presentations by UBCO’s Lael Parrott and ONA’s Richard Bussanich.

Work on the wetland project is continuing and the guidebook will be launched as part of the OBWB’s AGM in September.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated January 31, 2017, be received.”
CARRIED

7.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley explained that milfoil operators are rototilling in the Central Okanagan until ice break-up. A five-year asset replacement plan has been approved by all three Okanagan regional districts so an RFP has now gone out for a harvester and rototiller, he added.

Staff reviewed the cost of purchasing two shop trucks, rather than paying mileage and recommended the purchase.

“THAT the OBWB authorize the anticipated 2017 and 2020 shop truck purchases to be made in the current fiscal year, to a maximum price of \$30,000 per unit.”
CARRIED

The OBWB received an application for new grant funding from the City of Vernon to install a sewer line in the Smith Road Area. The board was told that the project passed provincial review, and meets all OBWB requirements.

“THAT the SFA application for the City of Vernon Smith Road project be approved as outlined above.”
CARRIED

There was discussion about next steps in addressing the invasive mussel issue, following discovery of the bivalve in Montana waters. The board was told that the province is looking to extend its hours and include some night inspection trials, but that depends on their budget.

The board discussed sending a letter to the province with a number of recommendations to address ongoing concerns around inspection hours, funding, and tightening legislation. It was suggested that the letter be sent soon, ahead of the provincial budget, and be released to media.

“THAT staff draft a letter to the Province of B.C. calling for: legislative changes to require all boats entering B.C. to report to an inspection station prior to launching in provincial waters; adding invasive infestations as a hazard under B.C.’s Emergency Program Management Regulation; and, immediately fund extended inspection hours, monitoring and education.”

CARRIED

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated February 1, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

7.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson introduced Alyssa Bougie, Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator, hired in part through a grant from the UN Assoc. of Canada and Social Development Canada’s Green Corps program. Ms. Bougie will be helping with various outreach efforts, including Canada Water Week, Make Water Work (MWW), Don’t Move a Mussel (DMM) and more.

The board was provided with final reports for MWW and DMM 2016 campaigns. Ms. Jackson noted that with a budget of \$48,000 for MWW (\$1-3,000 from local government and utility partners, matched by OBWB-Okanagan WaterWise), and more than \$32,000 provided in-kind by contest and media partners, the 2016 campaign was worth more than \$80,000. As for DMM, OBWB’s OkWaterWise spent a little over \$47,000, and with more than \$58,000 provided in-kind, the program was worth over \$105,000.

Efforts for 2017 are already underway, with 12 of the 14 MWW utility partners already confirming interest in matching funds. Discussions for DMM 2017 are also underway. New boat decals were created and sent to F1 tunnel boat racer Mike McLellan who was already promoting the DMM message at the Vancouver Boat Show in January.

Other communication initiatives include a partnership with RDCO’s Waste Reduction Office to sell rain barrels as part of their composter sale event.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated February 1, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

7.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia told the board she would be assisting the WSC with an update to its 2008 Sustainable Water Strategy, taking into account new water-related issues (e.g. mussels) and new regulations such as the Water Sustainability Act, and more.

Staff have been asked to assist with the development of a Farm Water Planning Toolkit for the Okanagan, funded through the Climate Action Initiative.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated January 30, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

8. SIGNING AUTHORITY MEMO

8.1 Dr. Sears noted that a new signing authority resolution was required with the election of a new board chair. An updated signing authority resolution was presented.

“THAT the Signing Authority Resolution be approved as presented.”

CARRIED

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Letter from PMO as federal Min. of Intergovernmental Affairs re: invasive mussels

9.2 Letter from Min. of Small Business and Tourism re: invasive mussels

There was discussion about next steps with the federal government including meetings with local MPs, and work with PNWER on a joint letter calling for action.

“THAT the letters from the Prime Minister’s Office, and Small Business and Tourism Canada, to the Okanagan Basin Water Board regarding invasive mussels be received.”

CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, March 7, 2017 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 February 7, 2017 be adjourned at 1:06 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director