



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD  
HELD APRIL 4, 2017, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN  
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, B.C.**

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**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 Ron Hovanes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
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 Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

**REGRETS**

Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Cindy Fortin	Regional District Central Okanagan

**OBWB STAFF**

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
James Littlely	Operations and Grants Manager
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
Kellie Garcia	Policy and Planning Specialist
Alyssa Bougie	Communications & Outreach Coordinator

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

- 9.2 Letter from Federal Ministry of Environment to OBWB re: invasive mussels
- 9.3 Letter from B.C. Ministry of Community, Sports & Cultural Development to OBWB re: wetlands guidebook grant

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of April 4, 2017 be approved as amended."***

**CARRIED**

**4. DELEGATIONS**

Harmony Bjarnson - B.C. Agriculture and Climate Change Action Initiative and Current Okanagan Projects

Ms. Bjarnson told directors the Initiative has an advisory committee made up of producers as well as local, provincial and federal government staff. The purpose is to develop tools and resources to enhance the BC agriculture sector's ability to adapt to climate change and build

resiliency. There are two programs: Regional Adaptation Enhancement and Farm Adaptation Innovator, funded through the provincial and federal Growing Forward 2 program. Regional plans have been developed, including one for the Okanagan, informed through consultation with ag sector producers and other stakeholders, and government.

Drs. Hovanes and Wilson entered the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

The Okanagan working group includes the BC Fruit Growers Assoc., BC Grape Growers, OBWB, and others.

Climate change in the Okanagan will result in warmer and drier summers. We are already seeing an increase of 1.4 degrees, added Ms. Bjarnson, as well as lower river flows in summer, reduced water availability and increased demand. Elsewhere, in the Lower Mainland, we expect an increase in annual precipitation and more extreme rainfall events.

Some of the other issues expected include changes in pests and pollinators, such as increasing winter survival rates and number of reproduction cycles per year, changes in range and distribution of pests, diseases, and the introduction of new pests. At the same time, there will be wildfire risk and an increased risk of drought. The Initiative has developed plans for these impacts.

Dir. Waterman entered the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Ms. Bjarnson provided information on some of those plans including the Okanagan Agricultural Water Supply Status Outreach Project being conducted with the Water Board. Action items include improving communication to growers about drought, and creating a consistent system for disseminating source-specific water supply information. The team is working with City of Penticton and Greater Vernon Water on a pilot project that includes developing an e-alert system to communicate water supply status.

Another Okanagan initiative is a Vineyard Water Use Efficiency project that will support the sharing of existing water management best practices.

Dir. Waterman noted there have been a number of tools developed over the years to increase water efficiency and the need to promote uptake of those tools. Ms. Bjarnson responded that this is being looked at. One of the concepts is to make a toolkit available to farmers, which includes a survey, and then a follow-up visit from a farm agent to address issues specific to the farmer. Some pilot projects with Okanagan farmers are planned and then it would be rolled into Environmental Farm Plan process, she added.

In response to questions, it was noted that the work of the group has not included riparian restoration, in part due to the project needing to be completed by March 2018. However, this may be possible in future years.

Ms. Bjarnson also spoke to a few other projects including extension of a project out of Washington state that links real-time weather data to pest control efforts, a Wildfire Impact Reduction Pilot Project in Central and South Okanagan, and a centralized website for the Okanagan on invasive species.

## 5. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

5.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 7, 2017 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton.

***“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 7, 2017 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen be approved.”***

**CARRIED**

**6. CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Gray spoke to the March 30 provincial invasive mussel announcement and the reported effectiveness of the OBWB's last letter to the province, outlining concerns and suggested solutions. She added she is still looking at how OBWB directors can meet with MPs and other federal officials on this issue in June while at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in Ottawa.

Funding from the province to build on the Okanagan wetlands project and create a local government guidebook to build additional wetlands was also welcomed.

**7. STAFF REPORTS**

**7.1 Executive Director Report**

Dr. Sears provided an update on a discussion with RDCO about an internal service review of the OBWB. Following some conversation, it was suggested that a formal letter be sent asking for more information.

***“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to Regional District of Central Okanagan requesting for more information on the service review.”***

**CARRIED**

Staff are waiting to hear from RDCO on the milfoil equipment transfer to RDOS. Once feedback is received, it will be forwarded to RDNO for approval.

Dr. Sears noted that the Water Board has been granted a two month extension of its UN Assoc. of Canada grant for its Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator position. Alyssa Bougie will be working with us until early September.

The OBWB is working with federal and provincial agriculture ministries, as well as BC Assessment, to update the Okanagan Water Demand model, looking at where our water is used and how much.

The board was updated on a recent conference call with the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC). It is unlikely that a drought will be declared on Osoyoos Lake this summer. Also, the International Joint Commission and IOLBC is looking at objectives and how climate change may affect these. The OBWB has offered to help them access related research done in the Okanagan.

Staff have been assisting the three Okanagan regional districts to create water indicators for a “State of the Basin” report. The report, the first of its kind in B.C., will include topics ranging from transportation and housing, to community health and water resources and is aimed at measuring changes over time and recognizes the interconnectedness of the region.

Planning for the annual joint Board/Council meeting in June is underway. Each year the Water Board focuses on an emerging water theme of interest to board and council members. This year staff are looking at a presentation on planning and response to invasive mussels.

Dr. Sears noted that recent rainfall has added water to the snowpack. At this time, the Okanagan is on track for an average water year as long as it doesn't melt too fast.

***“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated March 28, 2017, be received.”***  
**CARRIED**

#### 7.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel provided an update on presentations at the last council meeting by the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program and the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program and possibilities to work together with the council on issues. Members also heard on the Kelowna Integrated Water Supply Plan. Next week’s meeting will include a presentation on biosolids and its impact on water quality.

Work on the Mission Creek Groundwater-Surface Water Interaction project continues. Partners include the province, several Kelowna-area water utilities including Black Mountain Irrigation District and Rutland Waterworks, Okanagan Nation Alliance and UBC Okanagan. The purpose is to meet several objectives including the collection of information to better understand the water supply, infrastructure planning needs of water suppliers, assist the province in licencing decisions, understanding the environmental flow needs of fish and aquatic life. Currently, the technical committee is analyzing data in the area to determine types of sediments to better understand the characteristics of the aquifers and the reliability of the aquifers to recharge.

***“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated March 28, 2017, be received.”***  
**CARRIED**

#### 7.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley told the board that the milfoil rototilling season is coming to a close for the season with many of the areas closed as of April 1 due to environmental considerations. Milfoil maps are being developed and will assist with the OBWB’s five-year permit application starting in 2018, he added.

There was some discussion about the program and questions some directors receive from the public. It was suggested that the board be provided with a one-page information sheet.

Directors were updated on the province’s mussel announcement, including the expansion of inspection hours, two additional stations, the Golden station moving to 24-hours a day, a doubling of inspectors to 68 in June, additional signage and funding for mussel monitoring in waterways. There was discussion about additional items that were mentioned, but not in the written announcement. It was suggested that more clarification was needed.

***“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated March 28, 2017, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

#### 7.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson updated the board on Canada Water Week events including the panel discussion “Why WASTE Water,” a sold-out screening of RiverBlue at the Grand 10, and the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge for youth. The contest runs until April 28 and encourages young people, five-17 years of age, to complete two to three challenges that encourage youth to get active in and around water, and build awareness for the need to look after it. Challenges include creek clean-ups, fixing leaks, and more. Prizes include a two-hour boat cruise on Okanagan Lake for a private class lesson on Okanagan water, presented by the Okanagan Science Centre, as well as

pizza parties and pool passes. Winners will be announced during BC Water Week (May 7-13). There are individual and class-entry contest categories. More info is at [www.OkWaterWise.ca](http://www.OkWaterWise.ca).

There was some discussion about ways to improve attendance at the panel, including the possibility of holding a weekend event.

Ms. Jackson reminded the board that the monthly Board Report is provided to Okanagan local government councils and boards to be included in agendas to help keep them apprised of board work. It is also intended to assist Water Board directors in providing monthly updates to their board/council. A couple suggestions were provided to ensure the report was received by the right people. Staff will follow up.

Staff have been providing communications support to a few projects including: an Historic Fishing Survey that supports the work of the OBWB's Environment Flow Needs project; a foreshore clean-up effort on April 8 from Kelowna's Heritage Museum and being done in partnership with the Vancouver Aquarium; a "Don't Move A Mussel" public event on April 25 in Penticton with OASISS and featuring presentations by Stephanie Hester with Montana's Invasive Species Council and Alberta's Cindy Sawchuk, along with her mussel sniffing dog, and a follow-up event with RDOS on April 26 for local government officials.

***"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated March 27, 2017, be received."***  
**CARRIED**

#### 7.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia spoke to the Mainstem Drought Triggers Project and the incorporation of feedback from water suppliers. The updated guidelines consider a number of factors including lake levels and in flows. The project team is looking to have the guidelines ready by end of April.

Work is also underway on an update to the Sustainable Water Strategy. An editorial committee has been struck and a survey has been sent out requesting feedback, including a look at the last edition's 45 actions – what should be revised, added, removed – and what else should be considered in this newest version.

The Agricultural Water Supply Communications Project team, aimed at assisting Okanagan water suppliers better inform ag water users about water supplies in times of drought and otherwise, is building on existing communication channels (e.g. websites) and testing new ones, including a mass notification system. These tools are being test piloted this summer.

Ms. Garcia added that she will be presenting on the Okanagan's 2015 drought response and lessons learned as part of a Fraser Basin Council webinar on April 6, and then on being drought-ready to the Water Supply Assoc. workshop April 7.

***"THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist's Report, dated March 27, 2017, be received."***  
**CARRIED**

## 8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 8.1 New Banking Authority Memo

Dr. Sears introduced a revised banking authority memo.

***"THAT the Signing Authority Resolution be approved as presented."***  
**CARRIED**

8.2 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grants 2017 Memo

Mr. Littley presented WCQI recommendations for 2017.

There were some questions about process. Mr. Littley explained that late submissions are not accepted, the only exception is on the resolution of support from local government. If staff are made aware before the grant deadline that the resolution process is underway it will accept the resolution once it is passed. Applications are graded based on criteria set by the board (e.g. valley-wide benefit). Recommendations also consider viability of a project based on WCQI grant funds available.

Dr. Sears added that the board discusses the process each year before the call for applications goes out and suggested that this be done again, later in 2017, for the 2018 program.

***“THAT the Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grants 2017 recommendations be approved as presented.”***

**CARRIED**

**9. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 9.1 Letter from Town of Oliver to B.C. Ministry of Environment re: invasive mussels
- 9.2 Letter from Federal Ministry of Environment to OBWB re: invasive mussels
- 9.3 Letter from B.C. Ministry of Community, Sports & Cultural Development to OBWB re: wetlands guidebook grant

***“THAT the letters to the Okanagan Basin Water Board be received.”***

**CARRIED**

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna at 10 a.m.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

***“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of April 4, 2017 be adjourned at 1:44 p.m.”***

**CARRIED**

Certified Correct:		
<b>Chair</b>		<b>Executive Director</b>