



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD  
HELD SEPTEMBER 8, 2017, AT THE WESTBANK LIONS COMMUNITY CENTRE  
2466 MAIN ST., WEST KELOWNA, B.C.**

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**PRESENT**

Chair Tracy Gray	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice-chair Juliette Cunningham	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Ron Hovanes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Cindy Fortin	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Peter Waterman	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Lisa Wilson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

**REGRETS**

Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
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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 Gray called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS OF LATE ITEMS**

- 6.1.2 Letter from MPs Arnold and Albas to federal Ministers re: invasive mussel prevention
- 6.1.3 OBWB introductory letter to new provincial government re: water issues

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 1, 2017 be approved as amended.”***

**CARRIED**

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 1, 2017 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

***“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of August 1, 2017 at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna be approved.”***

**CARRIED**

**5. CHAIR REPORT**

Ms. Gray noted the successful Annual Meeting. She also acknowledged the work of Alyssa Bougie, Okanagan WaterWise Communications and Outreach Coordinator, who conducted outreach on water issues, starting in February. This was Ms. Bougie's last board meeting. Her last day is Sept. 22.

**6. STAFF REPORTS****6.1 Executive Director Report**Flooding Update

Dr. Sears reported on flood recovery meetings held in Vernon. The meeting was organized by the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) with local consultants and provincial staff to look at the challenges this past spring and how best to address future flooding. A follow-up meeting was held with Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS). RD of Central Okanagan (RDCO) will be holding a similar one. The plan is to then hold one large meeting for the entire valley to share lessons and ensure better coordination for future events. There was also a residential meeting held in Oliver for those affected by flooding, she added.

Federal funding is available for local government for floodplain mapping and flood risk assessments. Staff assisted RDCO and RDOS with submissions. Okanagan Nation Alliance also submitted an application for areas not covered by the regional district proposals. All three applications were coordinated and cross-referenced.

Staff have also been talking with Emergency Management BC and B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development on the need for LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) flights in the fall to help predict what areas will flood at what lake elevations. This type of information is considered essential for accurate flood mapping. Approval of the project will be dependent on funding.

Dir. Findlater noted that this year's flooding and response suggests the need for a stronger coordinated Emergency Operations Centre response across the valley. Dr. Sears added that this is something that can be discussed further.

Osoyoos Lake Board of Control

The International Joint Commission (IJC)'s Osoyoos Lake Board of Control has its annual meeting on Oct. 17. In addition to its regular meeting there will be the premier of A River Film, produced by the Washington State Dept. of Ecology, funded by the IJC and OBWB. The film looks at the transboundary challenges of managing Okanagan River and Osoyoos Lake. A second red-carpet screening is planned for Oct. 25 at the Oliver Theatre.

Additional Items

ONA holds its annual Salmon Feast in Okanagan Falls Sept. 17.

The UBCO Water Research Chair advisory committee is looking to reorganize and expand to include a broader community spectrum.

The new B.C. government has requested an external review of the management of the Hullcar aquifer. Dr. Sears was asked and has agreed to provide the review committee any research the OBWB may have that would assist.

Staff were invited by City of Kelowna to submit a blog post to their Imagine Kelowna website on the importance of water conservation.

Staff attended a meeting in Vernon, organized by MP Mel Arnold, to discuss the invasive mussel issue. Dir. Findlater added that he also had a follow-up discussion with MP Terry Beech, Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries, Oceans (DFO) and the Canadian Coast Guard, whom he and other OBWB directors met with in Ottawa in June. During the recent federal Liberal caucus meeting in Kelowna, Dir. Findlater took the opportunity to discuss with MP Beech the possibility of federal allocations to address the mussels.

The board discussed the possibility of sending a follow-up letter to federal officials, including MP Beech, regarding funding for mussel prevention in Western Canada. It was noted that the letter should also acknowledge that DFO staff attended the recent meeting of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER), as recommended by the Water Board, and that the reporting of potential watercraft of concern by Canada Border Services Agency staff to the provincial inspection team is said to be improving.

Dr. Sears also noted the letter sent by the OBWB to the new B.C. government, introducing the agency and some of the top issues of concern.

***“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Aug. 30, 2017, be received.”***  
**CARRIED**

## 6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel spoke to the previous council meeting and a presentation on the Environmental Flow Needs project with ONA’s Elinor McGrath who is involved in the field work, consultant Drew Lejbak who is supplementing the ONA work with a desktop collection model and Natasha Neumann who is handling data collection.

There was also a presentation by Rob Schweitzer with B.C. Wildfire Service with an update on this year’s fire season, noting close to 200,000 hectares has burned with the largest fires still uncontained, and at a cost estimated to reach \$680 million.

Dr. Sears added that there was interesting discussion around the need for forest management and prescribed burns. Board directors voiced similar interest, with one noting a Black Mountain Irrigation District study that looked at forest management to protect water supply. Dir. Wilson said that ONA is working on some similar forest ecology projects that may be an opportunity to work together. Dr. Sears noted this may be a potential topic for a council committee.

***“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated August 29, 2017, be received.”***  
**CARRIED**

## 6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley told the board that the summer milfoil harvesting season is now complete and the crew is getting ready for winter rototilling. It was noted that the office has been contacted about a private harvester being used on the Westside. OBWB milfoil staff have offered to assist in training for operating safety. The machine will cover a private waterway treated by OBWB in the past on a cost-recovery basis.

There was further discussion regarding the letter from the OBWB to DFO regarding invasive mussels, following up on the June meeting in Ottawa and the correspondence that followed. It was suggested the letter thank DFO for sending a representative to PNWER, and acknowledge the apparent improvement with CBSA interviewing those hauling watercraft and contacting the province when it’s determined an inspection is required. It was also suggested that the letter

ask for clarification regarding regional Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) funding and ask for at least matching provincial funds for monitoring and inspections.

Ms. Jackson added it should be clear what is meant by matching provincial funds since the province provided \$2.45 million in 2017, matching the \$2 mill. provided by B.C. Hydro, Fortis BC, Columbia Power and Columbia Basin Trust for a total of \$4.45 mill. It was noted that research as to how much is required would be prudent.

There was discussion about the provincial program and gaps that still exist and the need to relay this to the new B.C. government (e.g. need for expanded hours, legislation requiring out-of-province watercraft to be inspected before launching in B.C. waters, and ongoing funding).

The success of the invasive mussel dog program was also noted. There were also questions about B.C. funding announced for the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation to assist local stewardship groups to conduct water monitoring and when these funds will be released, as well as the need for more boat launch signage and perhaps watercraft wash stations.

***“THAT the OBWB send a letter to federal officials acknowledging DFO attendance at PNWER in July and reported improvements in collaborative efforts between CBSA and B.C. COs, and request clarification regarding regional AIS funding and recommend at least matching provincial funds for monitoring and inspections.”***

**CARRIED**

There was also discussion about a follow-up letter to the new provincial government. It was decided to wait until after the upcoming Union of BC Municipalities convention since the issue was going to be raised at the conference and directly with ministers.

***“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated August 30, 2017, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

#### 6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on a call from a local resident with lakefront property in the Thompson Nicola Regional District who wanted the Don’t Move A Mussel (DMM) boat launch signs with the Clean-Drain-Dry information. Staff offered to speak directly with TNRD staff and share the design file. The response from TNRD was that they work with the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) on such water-related issues and this hasn’t been high on their radar. Staff have since contacted the FBC to elevate the issue.

In response to previous comments during the Executive Director’s report, Ms. Jackson added the need for more boat launch signage in the Okanagan has been noted in the past. She spoke with provincial staff in spring 2016 and offered to assist and had some interest, but the province did not follow through. The same boat launch signs have also been made available to Okanagan local governments and several have received them. Most recently, RDNO has inquired to purchase some.

It was acknowledged that the DMM message is reaching organizers of water-related events in our valley. The most recent example is the Mobility Cup, with competitors coming with sailboats from mussel-infested areas including Ontario and Quebec. Organizers contacted the OBWB looking to ensure their watercraft were inspected and OK to launch in Okanagan Lake. Staff initiated the call to the province to ensure appropriate inspections were lined up and are planning to conduct DMM outreach at the actual event.

The board was briefed on the Make Water Work (MWW) campaign. Although the contest ended Aug. 20 and a winner will be announced soon, Ms. Jackson added that the continued hot, dry weather has led to a change in the MWW messaging to address the current drought. Information has been posted on the [MakeWaterWork.ca](http://MakeWaterWork.ca) website, and radio ads are running. Outreach will also continue until the end of September.

***“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated August 29, 2017, be received.”  
CARRIED***

6.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia told the board that the Level 2 Drought declaration by the province for the Thompson-Okanagan triggered the OBWB’s Drought Response Strategy. The strategy was developed following the 2015 drought to ensure better communication between the province, local water managers and the public. There was some initial confusion with the Level 2 declaration since it included the Thompson and addressed streams of concern in the South Okanagan, but were not necessarily an issue at the time in the North and Central Okanagan. OBWB staff responded with the publication of a Drought Bulletin, sent to Okanagan local governments and water utilities, and the media, explaining the situation in our basin.

Dir. Pike noted it might be better if the province was more targeted in its communications to prevent confusion. Dir. Findlater questioned what would have happened this summer, considering how dry it was in winter and in summer, if we hadn’t had the spring rains, and whether communities are prepared.

Ms. Garcia also told directors about a grant application submitted to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to assist with the Water Board’s toolkits and guides project, helping build greater uptake by local governments in the various tools available to assist in building sustainable communities (e.g. the OBWB’s Topsoil Bylaws toolkit).

***“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated August 29, 2017, be received.”  
CARRIED***

7. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

***“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 8, 2017 be adjourned at 2:24 p.m.”  
CARRIED***

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director