



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD OCTOBER 3, 2017, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, 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
Alt. Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	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 Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Brian Guy	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

REGRETS

Director Lisa Wilson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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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 10 a.m.

Chair Gray respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of Okanagan Nation.

2. INTRODUCTIONS OF LATE ITEMS

7.1.1 Verbal discussion re: financial budget hearings

3. DELEGATIONS

3.1 Jennifer Miles, Greater Vernon Water (GVW)'s Water Sustainability Coordinator on Water Supply Communication Efforts with Agricultural Customers

Ms. Miles provided an overview of GVW's agricultural water program, noting there are about 600 agricultural customers who use 52% of the system's water supply. All of these customers have been metered as of 2012, and effective communication has been critical for managing large volumes of water within a complex system, she explained.

In an effort to address over-consumption in this sector, GVW set allocations based on crop and climate. Fees were then introduced for water used beyond the allocation. These are rarely charged, however, suggesting that the allocations are meeting farm needs, added Ms. Miles.

Farmers can apply for over-allocation based on crop type and need, but a small number just pay the extra fee.

In addition, GVW sends letters to property owners that indicate their allocation, volume used and how to track water use. As of 2014, the utility has been using their AgConnect program to communicate, encouraging best practices, irrigation planning – including information to connect to professionals who will make a site visit to help with planning.

Alt. Dir. Baker entered the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

In 2015, GVW introduced remote radio reading to improve meter reading, reduce operation costs, improve frequency of customer communication, and allow the utility to notify of potential leaks.

And, in 2017, GVW became a partner in OBWB's Ag Water Supply Status Outreach pilot project, along with the City of Penticton. The project is intended to improve communication between water providers and farmers regarding water supply, especially important in times of drought.

Responding to questions, it was noted that water demand was high this past summer due to hot, dry conditions and because the Duteau Cr. Reservoir is dependent on rain, the utility went to Stage 1 restrictions. Staff use a decision tree to make these calls, which includes reservoir levels, precipitation, and demand.

Ms. Garcia added that the Water Supply Outreach pilot includes \$8,000 from OBWB and \$42,000 from BC Climate Action Initiative. The project began with the province meeting with producers and developing an adaptation strategy. Once the pilot is completed, the communication tools will be provided to other utilities. The Water Board will be the hub for the software and will house the alerts, but each utility will be able to customize its messages.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended to include a re-ordering of staff reports and the addition of a revised letter from Dir. Guy on Water Stewardship Council nominations.

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 3, 2017 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

5.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 8, 2017 at Westbank Lions Community Centre in West Kelowna.

A small change was noted.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 8, 2017 at Westbank Lions Community Centre in West Kelowna be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

6. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Gray reported on the recent Union of BC Municipalities convention and meetings with B.C. Environment Minister George Heyman regarding invasive mussels and thanked those who attended, including Vice Chair Cunningham, Dirs. Findlater and McKortoff, and Dr. Sears.

The meeting was 45 minutes and the minister seemed well-informed on the matter and wanted to discuss recommendations. He also requested a ranked list of recommendation from the OBWB and noted that he would be interested in doing a video for social media next time he was in the Okanagan.

Dir. Findlater noted that mussel-sniffing dog Kilo was also at UBCM with his handler Staff Sgt. Major Josh Lockwood which helped raise the profile of the issue for those who were unaware.

Dir. Cunningham noted that the concept of a self-funded sticker program, as they have in some U.S. states, has not been discussed for some time by the Water Board but suggested that it be reviewed again as a way to help the province pay for its inspection program.

Dr. Sears added that in addition to the OBWB meeting, additional 15-minute meetings regarding the mussels were held between the minister and the Southern Interior Local Government Assn., the Regional District of North Okanagan, and then the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Sicamous and Spltasin First Nation. They want to work with the OBWB to push this forward, she added.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.1 Executive Director Report

Preparing the 2018-2019 Budget

Dr. Sears noted that budget planning is underway for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, looking at building the milfoil equipment reserve and following the asset replacement schedule and continuing the Water Management Program at about the same level. The budget must be adopted by December.

Union of BC Municipalities – Grants & Invasive Mussels

The board was told that federal floodplain mapping funds are available to local governments. Applications are due by Oct. 27.

International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC) Meeting and River Film Premier

Directors were told of the annual IOLBC meeting on Oct. 17 at the Sonora Centre in Osoyoos. The meeting will include the premiere of “A River Film” which showcases the Okana(o)gan River system and the management of competing interests for water in this transboundary watershed.

A second screening is planned at the Oliver Theatre on Oct. 25.

Weather Report

Seasonal forecasts suggest a 55-60% chance for La Nina conditions in the Pacific this winter which has the potential for wetter than normal conditions.

***“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Sept. 27, 2017, be received.”
CARRIED***

7.2 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on the wrap up of the Make Water Work, outdoor water conservation campaign and announcement of Kelowna’s Laurie Weisgarber as the grand prize winner of a \$6,000 WaterWise yard upgrade. A photo op was held with prize partners Ken’s Horticultural Services, Bylands Nurseries, and ProSource Irrigation. Eco Turf was unavailable. All prizing is provided in-kind.

The board was also updated on Don't Move A Mussel outreach. Ms. Jackson noted there have been an increasing number of calls from water-related event organizers wanting outreach at events. There have also been a number of calls from the public asking questions about what to do when leaving the region with their watercraft, and what to do when coming back or buying watercraft from mussel-infested areas. The www.DontMoveAMussel.ca website will be updated to provide some of this information.

There was discussion about the need for greater awareness in other regions and a suggestion that the OBWB continue to message for the need for expanded education and support for this by the provincial and federal governments. One idea was to promote this with the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment meeting. The meeting is set for Nov. 3 in Vancouver.

Ms. Jackson reported she has started gathering feedback to promote best practices to prevent the spread of invasive mussels among environmental professions in B.C. and beyond. This is in response to the joint board-council discussion in June and then followed up at council.

The board was reminded that the Kelowna Chamber asked for the Water Board's assistance in preparing a resolution to the Canadian Chamber to press the federal government for stronger action on the mussels. Ms. Jackson reported that the resolution passed Sept. 26.

On Sept. 19, Ms. Jackson attended the Okanagan Valley Destination Development planning session with Destination BC and the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. The session looked at the future of tourism in the Okanagan. The OBWB was invited to participate and provide a water perspective. Topics included this year's flooding, foreshore development and boat launches, invasive mussels, increasing water demand with population growth, and the challenges of climate change.

The board was provided a copy of a final report from Ms. Bougie, the Communications and Outreach Coordinator from February to late-September. In part, the report notes her attendance at 37 events and interaction with 2,301 people, as well as outreach in eight classrooms with 472 children and two public presentations.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated Sept. 26, 2017, be received."
CARRIED

7.3 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel told the board about a presentation that was given at the September council meeting by Rob Schweitzer from the BC Wildfire Service who talked about the historic scale and impact of the 2017 fire season. A progress report was also presented by the Environmental Flow Needs project team, Elinor McGrath (Okanagan Nation Alliance), Natasha Neumann (OBWB contractor), and Drew Lejbak (Associated Environmental). A significant amount of stream flow data has been collected over the past two seasons and is being analyzed.

Mr. Jatel and Dir. Guy presented recommendations from the Water Stewardship Council regarding inviting individuals who are unaffiliated with a water-related organization to sit on the council. Currently, council members are appointed by organizations. The recommendations are aimed at engaging those who are retiring (emeritus) and young people who may not be part of an organization. The council struck a Nominating Committee to consider the advantages and disadvantages of expanding council membership to include unaligned individuals and provide recommendations.

Mr. Jatel explained that the council mandate, and the number of people sitting on council at any one time, will not change. Council membership will continue to be reviewed every 18 months and the OBWB directors will have final say on membership.

“That the Council Nomination Committee report dated August 31, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

“That Section 7.2 of Appendix III of the OBWB Governance Manual will be modified to read as follows: “7.2. The Okanagan Basin Water Board will invite selected emeritus members, and selected organizations and jurisdictions to designate a representative to the Council – subject to Board ratification; AND FURTHER:

“That the appointment of Emeritus members be guided by the following principles recommended by the Council Nomination Committee:

- 1. That the OBWB make it possible to approve up to three unaligned members for Council membership;***
- 2. Membership for proposed unaligned members will be considered only after all other possible means have been considered for these individuals to contribute to Council;***
- 3. That Council composition not exceed 10% unaligned individuals;***
- 4. That unaligned members be former members of Council;***
- 5. That unaligned membership will be approved only for individuals in a position to contribute to Council broadly, substantively, and in a leadership capacity; and***
- 6. That the Nominating Committee be changed from an ad hoc committee to a Standing Committee, with Terms of Reference which reflect a mandate to offer advice and guidance to OBWB on recommending Council membership on an ongoing basis.”***

CARRIED

Lastly, Mr. Jatel spoke of the Okanagan historic settler fishing survey project – a collaborative initiative between the OBWB and the Okanagan Nation Alliance fisheries department. The project’s public engagement process captured a small segment of the Okanagan fishing history with information that dates back to the 1880’s. The ONA is also currently working with their community members and knowledge keepers to document important fishing histories, cultural and environmental values, and community narratives.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s report, dated Sept. 27, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

7.4 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley updated the directors on the issues and concerns around starting a milfoil control program in Vaseux Lake. He provided information on the required permits, the lack of a boat launch large enough to accommodate the machines, First Nations fisheries and cultural/archeological considerations, and potential contaminants that could be released from the sediment by rototilling previously undisturbed areas.

Several directors voiced their agreement that more study needs to be done before deciding whether or not to go ahead with a milfoil control program in Vaseux Lake.

There was discussion as to whether harvesting could be used. Mr. Littley explained that harvesting would not have a great enough impact on the milfoil because only one cut per year could be completed with our current resources and the short timeframe available to harvest. In addition, the operators would need a transfer site along the shoreline, and environmental

permitting would be required to ensure the harvested milfoil left on the shoreline didn't impact sensitive species.

Dir. Findlater asked if adding Vaseux Lake to the milfoil program would result in significant increased costs. Mr. Littley explained that the cost increase would be minimal in the long-term, once a program was up and running, but there would be short-term costs associated with the scientific studies and the permitting required before the program begins, and a cost to the RDOS for the infrastructure needed to get equipment in and out of the lake.

Mr. Littley also updated the directors on recent communications around invasive mussels. He prepared a briefing note and backgrounder for ministerial meetings at UBCM. As directed at the September board meeting, Mr. Littley is preparing open letters from the board to the federal and provincial governments. The letters will contain a comprehensive, prioritized list of requested actions and estimated costs.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated Sept. 27, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

7.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia updated the directors on the mainstem drought triggers project. The second draft of the guidelines is finished, and the OBWB will be hosting a workshop on November 6 to gather feedback from water suppliers.

Dir. Pike noted that the challenge with the mainstem lakes is that they are a large common resource. Water restriction responses by water suppliers that draw from mainstem lakes are generally driven by public relations rather than technical information. This project gives everyone the opportunity to use a sound technical base to move between stages, and takes the guess work and public relations aspects out of it.

Ms. Garcia told the directors that the OBWB has partnered with CivicInfo BC to create a database of bylaw toolkits and planning guides. The searchable database will hold approximately 60 documents to begin with and new guides will be added as they are published.

Ms. Garcia updated the directors on the Sustainable Water Strategy Action Plan 2.0, and noted that the editorial board will be meeting on November 2 to review a draft annotated outline for the strategy.

Lastly, Ms. Garcia told the board that the pilot water purveyors involved in the agriculture water supply communications project sent out three text/email alerts over the past few months. The purveyors will now be providing feedback on all aspects of the project, including the usefulness of the communications materials and alert system, and producer response to the messages. The project deliverables will be compiled into a report and offered to other Okanagan water purveyors in early 2018.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated Sept. 26, 2017, be received.”

CARRIED

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

9. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 3, 2017 be adjourned at 1:15 pm.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director