



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD DECEMBER 12, 2018, AT THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
1450 KLO RD., KELOWNA, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Cindy Fortin	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Colin Basran	Regional District Central Okanagan
Alt. Director Doug Holmes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Lisa Wilson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Denise Neilsen	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

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

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

Dr. Sears respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of Okanagan Nation.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Board Appointments and Elections for 2018

Regional District of North Okanagan

Director Victor Cumming
Director Rick Fairbairn
Director Bob Fleming
Alternates – Christine Fraser, Amanda Shatzko, Shirley Fowler

Regional District of Central Okanagan

Director James Baker
Director Colin Basran
Director Cindy Fortin
Alternates – Mark Bartyik, Gail Given, Stephen Johnson

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Director Toni Boot

Director Rick Knodel
Director Sue McKortoff
Alternates – Mark Pendergraft, Subrina Monteith, Doug Holmes

Water Management Appointments

Okanagan Nation Alliance

Director Lisa Wilson

Water Supply Association of BC

Director Bob Hrasko

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

Director Denise Neilsen

Alternate Scott Boswell

Dr. Sears requested nominations for chair. Alt. Dir. Holmes nominated Dir. McKortoff. Dir. McKortoff accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. McKortoff was elected chair.

Chair McKortoff requested nominations for vice-chair. Alt. Dir. Holmes nominated Dir. Fortin. Dir. Fortin accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. Fortin was elected vice-chair.

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

9.1.4 OBWB letter to Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans re: aquatic invasive study and invasive mussels

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 12, 2018 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

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

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

5.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 2, 2018 at the Regional District of North Okanagan

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 2, 2018 at the Regional District of North Okanagan be approved.”

CARRIED

Dir. Wilson entered the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

6. BOARD ROUNDTABLE

6.1 OBWB Directors - top water issues in their area for 2019

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

Chair McKortoff: First elected to Osoyoos council in 2011 and serving a second term as mayor. Member of Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society and on International Joint Commission's International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control, working on transboundary water issues. Retired school teacher. Four years on OBWB.

Dir. Basran: First elected to Kelowna council in 2011. Serving a second term as mayor. Issues include flood mitigation, the potential for invasive mussels and impact on in-lake infrastructure, and integration of water systems in the city. Provincial and federal grants have been submitted for flood mitigation work.

Alt. Dir. Monteith: Newly elected in a new area, Area D divided and represent Twin Lakes area. Attending as an alternate on the OBWB board.

Alt. Dir. Holmes: Attending as an alternate for Dir. Toni Boot. Second time on Summerland council, first term on RDOS board. Flooding a concern for the municipality e.g at Aeneas Creek. In this case it went through private property which created additional issues. There have since been discussions with the province, including about water licensing approvals and how it can affect neighbours. Metering also an issue in Summerland, especially for some farmers who feel their water rates are unfair. The municipality has been looking into this.

Dir. Wilson: Priorities include protecting water rights and title. Top issues are flood, drought and fire.

Dir. Cumming: Have been involved in water issues off and on for many years, including as a post-secondary student on the 1975 Okanagan Basin Study when my father was co-chair of the study committee. Have previously worked as consultant to OBWB and worked with the Penticton, Okanagan and Lower Similkameen Indian Bands. Elected to council for the first time in November as mayor. Current issues include freshet-caused creek siltation and water filtration on upper Duteau Creek and Kalamalka Lake. Okanagan Indian Band and RDNO are working together to address flooding, beach management, and other water issues.

Vice-chair Fortin: A Peachland citizen survey a couple years ago found water was number one issue. The district approved a new water treatment plant for \$18.2 million, but the cost has increased \$5 mill. with various issues including U.S. tariffs and contractor availability. The municipality has received some grants to help with the cost. Continue to chair the Peachland Mayor's Task Force on Climate Change. There are continued concerns regarding mining activities in the shared Peachland-Summerland watershed and a meeting is being planned with the Mayor of Summerland.

Dir. Neilsen: Have been a member of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (WSC) for several years, initially as a scientific researcher at the Summerland Research Station representing Ag Canada. Recently retired and now sit as an emeritus member and is currently chair. Issues from WSC include new groundwater regulations. Council committees include: Irrigation, Dams and Reservoirs, Policy, Flood Protection, and the Sustainable Water Strategy,

Dir. Fleming: OBWB Director for about five years and then took a two year hiatus to be RDNO chair. A new chair has been appointed, and so Dir. Fleming reappointed to Water Board. A Swan Lake study found that human influence was having a detrimental effect on water quality. The RDNO has applied for grant funding for a sewage treatment plant, hoping that this helps. A couple of tributaries into Kalamalka Lake are also being studied, in the Commonage area and Cosens Bay, suggesting the need to do some work in these areas as well.

Dir. Fairbairn: Elected to RDNO in 2002 and appointed to the OBWB in 2004 until appointed as the RDNO Chair for a time. Happy to be back on the OBWB board. Issues include boating impacts on Shuswap River and elsewhere. RDNO has been working with B.C. Conservation Officer Service to help address.

Dir. Baker: This is fifth term as Lake Country mayor and had previously been a councillor before

the district was incorporated. During this time he has been on and off the Water Board. Issues include source water protection in multiuse watersheds and around reservoirs with cabins, and the sale of fee-simple lots. Long-term planning in development is important and try to raise awareness for the importance of natural capital.

Dir. Hrasko: The Water Supply Association of BC (WSABC) has about 50 members and began in 1923 as an association of irrigation districts. Members are mostly local government utilities now. Have been on the WSC since 2006 and worked on the Sustainable Water Strategy. Climate change is biggest challenge we have with drought, fire and flooding. The storm of May 9, 2018 resulted in the highest flows seen in Mission Creek, but also other creeks and rivers in the province. The moisture in the air was also something we haven't seen before. How we build resiliency, protect residents, and work with the province is important. Provincial staff cutbacks and retirements has resulted in capacity issues. The OBWB can have great influence in how to address these issues. Trying to balance fair agricultural water prices is another challenge.

7. BOARD ORIENTATION

7.1 Presentations by Executive Director, Water Stewardship Director, and Operations and Grants Manager

It was noted that the Communications Director and Policy and Planning Specialist will present at next meeting in February.

Dr. Sears provided an overview of OBWB structure and governance. The 2003 drought and forest fires, she noted, prompted the board in 2006 to include three external directors who would bring important perspectives to the table. This included a representative from ONA, the WSABC, and the chair of the WSC. In the 1970s, the OBWB's liaison committee dissolved. The province transferred its milfoil control program to the Water Board, and there were sewage issues, which both took over OBWB attention and other water issues were set aside. When the board came back in 2006 to its original mandate, it reestablished the liaison committee (WSC) which is required within its mandate as a core function.

The reason the water board works is its structure and the ability to receive and provide funding, creating a platform for joint initiatives.

The OBWB includes three programs: the Sewage Facilities Assistance Program, Watermilfoil Control Program, and Water Management Program. A strategic plan was developed for 2015-2019. The Water Board's priorities include invasive mussel outreach and advocacy, groundwater regulations, Environmental Flow Needs and hydrology modeling.

Challenges include system changes (weather, population, need for infrastructure upgrades), legislative changes, lack of capacity within ONA and in senior and local government departments.

Mr. Jatel joined OBWB in 2007. He grew up in Naramata where his parents have a vineyard. His studies have included a Masters degree looking at social networks and water governance, and currently he is working towards his doctorate, looking at how OBWB and the Okanagan historically responded to flood conditions.

The WSC is the technical advisory body to the board which meets monthly and is made up of representatives from various agencies, including agriculture, academia, local and senior government, including ONA. The impacts of climate and its impact on hydrology and ecosystems are often discussed at council. Research models are showing a shift in the Okanagan's hydrology, including floods and droughts in the same year.

One of the projects Mr. Jatel is manages is the Mission Creek Groundwater-Surface Water Interaction Study, which also includes South East Kelowna Irrigation District (now City of Kelowna), Black Mountain ID and Rutland WaterWorks District. The purpose is to look at what areas of Mission Creek are gaining or losing water, and potentially impacted by groundwater extraction.

The Environmental Flow Needs (EFN) Project, now in its fourth year, is being conducted in partnership with the ONA and the province. The project is now looking at 19 tributaries in the Okanagan to see how much water is needed for fish and ecosystem function to help ensure proper water licencing by the province and to better understand how to manage these systems in times of drought and flooding. The Water Board hosted an international EFN conference in October with the Canadian Water Resources Association to share knowledge.

The Okanagan Hydrology modeling project looks at stream flows in the tributaries to inform infrastructure, fisheries management and water allocation. It will, along with the Okanagan flood mapping project (which includes the LiDAR project work) will help Okanagan communities make science-based decisions.

Mr. Littley noted he has been with the board for since 2012. He was a reservist for 14 years, born and raised in Kelowna. He has a degree in political science and did his masters thesis on sustainable planning in B.C. As Operations and Grants Manager, he manages the SFA grant program which is funded through tax requisition. Some \$65 million has been paid out since the late 70s.

The board's Milfoil Control Program was initially a provincial function that began in the 1960s and was handed off to the OBWB in the 70s. In addition to invasive milfoil there is a local milfoil and several other local plants. The invasive milfoil robs oxygen from the bottom of the water causing issues for aquatic life, can promote algae blooms, outcompete native plants, is harmful to native fish, has recreational impacts, and reduces property values. The program costs between \$600,000 and \$800,000 per year and is subject to environmental permits. The program involves harvesting (mowing and weed removal) in summer, and rototilling in winter. Challenges include decreased ability to access launches to move equipment in and out of water and weed transfer sites. Equipment maintenance is done in-house.

Responding to questions, Mr. Littley explained that SFA grants and the resulting decrease in nutrients in the lake has helped control milfoil growth. As for alternate control methods, Dr. Sears added that it is illegal to use herbicides in the north end of Okanagan Lake.

The OBWB has five-year work permits because of the endangered Rocky Mountain ridged mussel and requires an environmental plan before staff can work in an area. Dir, Wilson noted that ONA had done a study on bivalves and may be able to assist.

The Water Conservation & Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program started in 2006. Since then, 250 projects have been granted a total of \$ 4.1 mill. so far. Some \$300,000 is available each year. New this year is that grants will no longer be divided between regions, but be awarded based on valley-wide benefit. Also, applications no longer require a resolution of support from a local board or council where the project is proposed to take place. Instead, a letter of support by a local government officer, mayor or chair, of the area will do.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley presented a recommendation for annual theme for the WCQI program.

“THAT for the 2019-20 WCQI grant competition annual theme, the OBWB seeks projects in any category that are intended to address climate change adaptation related to water conservation or water quality improvement, AND THAT applications in these categories are prioritized for funding during staff review with the awarding of up to 10 extra points toward the total score; and THAT the process and scoring criteria for the grant competition be approved as outlined.”

CARRIED

The board was updated on an audit process for the SFA Grant Program.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated December 4, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

8.2 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia provided a brief overview of projects she is working on. A draft of the updated Sustainable Water Strategy will be presented to council in March for adoption and then it will be brought to the board to receive.

Additional projects recently have included participation in an Okanagan Lake Protection Initiative led by the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated December 3, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

8.3 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson gave an overview of recent communication efforts including news releases for various projects including the EFN conference, 2019 WCQI grant intake, OBWB request to province for stronger invasive mussel response, and more.

The board was updated on a new “Climate Change and Water in the Okanagan” infographic that was developed as an outreach and education piece, as well as another award for “A River Film,” this time for Documentary Feature at the Oregon International Film Awards.

Final reports for the Make Water Work (valley-wide outdoor water conservation) and Don’t Move A Mussel (invasive mussel awareness) campaigns will be provided to the board in February. In the meantime, staff are working with a research company to hold focus groups in January to review the campaigns and adjust as necessary.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated December 4, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

8.4 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears noted the meeting schedule for 2019.

The board was provided a brief overview and update of the LiDAR floodplain mapping project and the various issues that have resulted in delays in receiving data, including the plane accident, fire smoke and fog.

Dirs. Cumming, Fairbairn, Fleming and Baker left the meeting at 1 p.m.

Additional mapping is being done, including hydrological analysis of the mainstem lakes and river system, and a bathymetric survey of the Okanagan River channel. In response to questions, Dr. Sears added that the contractor hopes to recover the missing 20% of the data off the hard drive damaged in the plane incident. If it can't recover the rest, they will re-fly missing areas in June.

The City of Kelowna, RDNO, RDCO, RDOS, Armstrong and Penticton are doing some additional flood mapping. The LiDAR data will be available to all local governments in the Okanagan.

Dir. Wilson added that ONA is holding a flood risk assessment meeting at the Cove Resort next week and the OBWB is invited to attend.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated December 4, 2018, be received."

CARRIED

8.5 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel provided an update on the November council meeting with a presentation from RDOS and Penticton Indian Band regarding lessons learned from the 2018 flood. The next meeting is Dec. 13.

A final report is being developed for the October EFN conference and will be posted to the OBWB website (www.OBWB.ca).

A brief update was provided on the Okanagan Hydrology Model Project, determining surface and groundwater flows on 16 to 19 tributaries into Okanagan lakes and looking at water demands. This project builds on the OBWB's 2010 basin-wide Water Supply and Demand Study. In response to questions, Mr. Jatel noted that more streams can be added in time.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's report, dated December 4, 2018, be received."

CARRIED

9. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

9.1 Policy Letters to Government

Dr. Sears provided an update on letters sent from the OBWB during the interregnum period. The letters include a letter to the province repeating a call for legislation that requires all watercraft coming into B.C. to be inspected for invasive mussels before launching.

Alt. Dir. Holmes & Chair McKortoff suggested that the OBWB reach out to the Southern Interior Local Government Association and get the mussel issue on their conference agenda, and then take it to the Union of BC Municipalities conference to garner support for stronger provincial action. There was general agreement by the board.

A second letter was sent to the province regarding extending the deadline on groundwater licensing. About 15 per cent of groundwater users have applied for a license as required under the new Water Sustainability Act in the past three years. Of these, approximately two per cent

have been approved because of a backlog. Unless the other 85 per cent have licenses approved, they will be drawing water illegally which requires punitive measures (eg. fines, loss of water rights). The Water Board’s letter recommends greater outreach to ensure licensing done. A third, more detailed letter was sent to staff who are overseeing groundwater licensing.

Finally, Shuswap MP Mel Arnold asked for a letter of support for a study to look at how Federal Aquatic Invasive Species funding is spent. Currently, about 80-90% of the funding goes to two invasives in the Great Lakes. Mr. Arnold is part of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, and while the committee approved the study there was concern that time was running out to address this.

“THAT the Policy Letters to Government Report, dated December 4, 2018, be received.”
CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 10 a.m. at Regional District of Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

10. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 12, 2018 be adjourned at 1:27 p.m.”
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director