



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD FEBRUARY 5, 2019, 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 James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Colin Basran	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Tony Boot	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

REGRETS

Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
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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
Stephanie Wenker	Water Demand Model Specialist

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Fortin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Vice-Chair Fortin respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of Okanagan Nation.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

7.3 Contract award for Okanagan naturalized flow calculations

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 5, 2019 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 12, 2018 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 12, 2018 at the Regional District of Central Okanagan be approved.”

CARRIED**5. BOARD ORIENTATION****5.1 Presentations by Communications Director, Policy and Planning Specialist and Water Demand Model Specialist**

Communications Director Corinne Jackson noted her degree in Political Science and interest in social issues led her to a career in journalism. After 10 years as a reporter covering such issues she moved into communications, working with a local non-profit. In 2009, she joined the OBWB.

The board was provided an overview of OBWB communication efforts, internal and external. There was discussion about the Communications Protocol for board and staff, and a separate protocol for the Water Stewardship Council.

In addition to the Board Agenda and Minutes, communication tools include: a monthly Board Report with highlights of the monthly board meeting that has wide-distribution, the Annual Report and Annual Meeting, Drought Bulletins (as necessary), news releases and news conferences, websites (including www.OBWB.ca, www.OkWaterWise.ca). Okanagan WaterWise (OkWW) is the OBWB's outreach and education program, created in response to the board's wish for greater external communication on local water issues. In addition to the OkWW website, OkWW is active on social media, on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). (There is also a [LinkedIn](#) page for OBWB.)

OkWW has created outreach materials for use by residents, businesses, teachers and students. The Communications Director is also asked to review water-related materials by partners. Staff attend outreach events by others and OkWW holds its own events as well. It also conducts presentations in the community.

In addition, there are two campaigns launched through OkWW, one aimed at tackling outdoor residential water use ([Make Water Work](#)) and another aimed at raising awareness and protecting Okanagan waters from invasive mussels ([Don't Move A Mussel](#)).

There was some discussion by some of the directors about communication efforts and how they believe it has helped better inform the public on water issues.

"THAT the Communications Director's presentation be received."

CARRIED

Dir. Boot entered the meeting via webinar/conference call.

Policy and Planning Specialist Kellie Garcia noted that she was first hired as a consultant to the OBWB in 2007 and has been working in the valley for 12 years. She was hired by the OBWB in 2016 to increase the capacity of the organization to work more directly with local and provincial government staff on water supply challenges, including flood and drought response. The position includes researching and writing, facilitating discussions, and connecting technical information and science with those developing and implementing policy.

Some of the projects have included coordinating, promoting and building capacity for the uptake of water and climate-related guides and toolkits. Work is well underway on a rewrite of the 2008 Sustainable Water Strategy. Following the 2015 drought, the need for greater coordination between the province and local utilities prompted the creation of the Okanagan Drought Response Strategy. In response, the OBWB now participates in bi-weekly provincial drought response calls, April to October, to provide an Okanagan voice. Significant progress has been

made to develop drought stage triggers for purveyors drawing off the valley's mainstem lakes that are scientifically defensible and easy to understand and use.

A pilot project, helping water utilities communicate with their agricultural customers about water supply, is being expanded.

And, the board was told about a couple new initiatives that are just getting underway, including , the Okanagan Lake protection strategy, and an Okanagan Source Protection toolkit.

"THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist's presentation be received."

CARRIED

Water Demand Model Specialist Stefanie Wenker noted she has an Earth Sciences degree and GIS diploma, and was hired in May 2018 to update the Water Demand Model.

The model included a look at agricultural water demand (done in 2006 and updated in 2014-15) and residential outdoor water use. Efforts are now underway to update and refine these two areas, for example, identifying irrigation types on site, if it's used and crop type. This may change year-to-year, Ms. Wenker added.

Other data being looked at includes soil type, groundwater recharge, and climate (historic temperatures and precipitation).

For indoor water uses we are looking at water meter data. BC Assessment and Land Use Inventory is also used but there are some anomalies with the data that need to be worked out.

The water model can be used for determining current demand and potential changes in the future, how much water could be reclaimed (e.g. as is done with some Okanagan golf courses), agricultural planning, Regional Growth Strategies, protecting environmental flows.

There is a Local Government User Guide and data sharing agreements available, Ms. Wenker added, inviting local governments to contact her with their data requests.

"THAT the Water Demand Model Specialist's presentation be received."

CARRIED

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears told directors that she is scheduled to present at SILGA on flood threats and solutions. She has also joined ONA's Flood Risk Assessment steering committee, which includes a diverse group of elected officials and senior staff from local government and Syilx communities. The purpose is to incorporate scientific and traditional knowledge in flood mapping and planning processes. The LiDAR project is also ongoing. Some of the data should be available in mid-February, additional data in mid-March. Missing portions of the watershed lost in the plane crash will be acquired in June and ready for use in Fall 2019.

Staff are advising City of Kelowna and RDCO with a Water Management Plan for the watershed above Mission Creek, specifically advising on watershed protection and fish flow management. Watershed planning is a new priority for the city with the adoption of the South East Kelowna Irrigation District.

There was some discussion about the urgency to get ahead of the issues facing the region. Dir. Cumming noted the wildfires and the loss of forest cover and resulting flooding, and the impact on water quality. Dr. Sears noted some of the work being done by Greater Vernon Water, District of Lake Country and ONA regarding forest management and its relation to these other issues.

The board was provided a copy of a sustainable land-use report by the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. which also touches on the importance of water to B.C. residents.

Current weather data suggests that the Okanagan is drier than normal but this could change.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated January 30, 2019, be received.”
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported on the January Water Stewardship Council (WSC) meeting and a presentation from Kathy Eichenberger on the Columbia River Treaty. Next meeting will include an update from Ms. Garcia on the new Sustainable Water Strategy and an opportunity to provide input.

The Environmental Flow Needs project team is finalizing water flow data, including provincial data available since 1970s and traditional knowledge through ONA.

Bathymetric surveys are being done on Okanagan River, looking at channel characteristics and capacity, updating data from the 1980s. Modeling is also being done along flooding zones on Okanagan mainstem (valley-bottom) lakes, and 18 significant streams. This work is intended to help local governments adapt and mitigate flooding.

It was noted that Rick Simpson, an avid conservationist who regularly attended council meetings as a BCWF representative, and who attended many other OBWB functions, passed away. The BCWF is looking at creating an award in his honour.

CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley presented a proposal to review the OBWB’s Sewerage Facilities Grant Program, including its 1 ha. bylaw policy required to receive funding, to ensure the program is still meeting its objectives. The review would also look at how many areas of the valley remains eligible for SFA grants (i.e., still require community sewer).

The 1 ha. policy was brought in several years ago to mirror provincial policy and to address septic failures on small lot subdivisions. Several directors noted advances in technology and new science, and agreed that a review would be beneficial.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager’s Report, dated January 30, 2019, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson presented final reports for the 2018 Make Water Work (MWW) and the 2018 Don’t Move A Mussel (DMM) campaigns. Both campaigns are delivered through the OBWB’s outreach and education program Okanagan WaterWise. MWW, aimed at outdoor residential conservation

in summer, provides matching funds to Okanagan local governments and utilities and leverages this for in-kind dollars. With over \$52,000 in funding and over \$30,000 in in-kind support from contest and media partners, the 2018 campaign is valued at almost \$83,000. There was a 63% increase in web traffic and 43% increase in pledges by residents to conserve. DMM, aimed at raising awareness regarding invasive mussels, spent \$59,000 and received almost \$36,000 in-kind for a campaign worth \$95,000. Web traffic was up 25% with almost all visitors being first-time visitors.

Focus groups were held on Jan. 28 to review the two campaigns to see where some tweaks may be needed. Results should be available by the end of February, in time for the build-out of a spring 2019 re-launch.

Ms. Jackson noted that after completing an RFP process, the OBWB entered into a contract with Hiilite Marketing to assist with the MWW and DMM campaigns in 2018, with an option to extend for an additional two years. Based on results, the board was asked to renew the contract for another year without going to RFP.

“THAT the Board approve an extension of the existing contract at \$50,000 for ‘Make Water Work’ and \$50,000 for ‘Don’t Move A Mussel’ for one year without further competition.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Wilson, Hrasko and Neilsen abstained

The board was provided an update on provincial mussel outreach efforts and inspections. There was some concern raised about non-compliance, especially among those with non-motorized watercraft who don't know that the mandatory inspections apply to them as well. Ms. Jackson noted that the province is aware of this and is looking at ways to address this as well as other identified gaps. It was noted that provincial inspection program staff have presented to the board in the past and perhaps an invitation to come again would be of benefit.

In advance of Canada Water Week celebrations, OBWB-OkWaterWise is presenting a screening of “Beyond Climate” on March 7. The documentary looks at the effects of climate change in B.C., including the Okanagan, and features a number of local residents/experts, including Dr. Sears, former OBWB Chair Doug Findlater, WSC member Ted van der Gulik, and others. It was directed by Ian Mauro and narrated by David Suzuki. We are also sponsoring and assisting the ONA's Syilx Water Forum on March 22, UN World Water Day.

“THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated January 30, 2019, 2018, be received.”

CARRIED

6.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia updated the board on the Agricultural Water Supply Communication Project, helping utilities communicate with their farm customers on water supplies, helping farmers make appropriate water-use decisions. Ten of 15 utilities have committed to participating in 2019. Additional local government partners have indicated interest in participating in 2020. An early season forecast message will be first one to go out in April.

Work on the Sustainable Water Strategy is continuing with a 10-person editorial board. An additional 28 WSC members provided feedback. A workshop will be held with the council at their February meeting and the draft will then be brought to the board in April. Ms. Garcia then provided a brief overview of the strategy.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated January 29, 2019, be received.”

CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Trout Lake Discussion

Alt. Dir. Monteith provided the board with some background information regarding the degrading of water quality at Trout Lake (Lusk Lake). It was noted that the province moved the highway in the early 60s and put in a culvert to address outflow from the lake. In 2011, the highway was widened and it’s believed that the culvert was blocked. Residents report seeing the lake deteriorate since then. They are on septic and water levels have also been rising, flooding septic fields. A video was shown suggesting deterioration with a significant drop in aquatic life and Interior Health declaring the water undrinkable. Residents are now seeking legal advice but are wondering if there is a role for the Water Board. The board agreed to receive the information for follow up.

“THAT the OBWB receive the report for staff to follow up.”

CARRIED

7.2 Board Remuneration Memo

The board was presented with a report, noting that there has been a change to tax benefits which would mean an overall decrease in remuneration for directors. At the same time, there has been no change in director remuneration since 2007. The report recommended adjusting the remuneration to offset the tax changes and looking at an overall remuneration adjustment in 2021.

“THAT the OBWB adjust board remuneration by 14% to offset federal tax changes to meeting pay.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Wilson, Hrasko and Neilsen abstained

7.3 Contract

Mr. Jatel presented a memo to the board for a sole-source contract to conduct Okanagan natural flow calculations as part of the EFN project, as well the hydrology modeling of 18 streams. The project team has been working on the methodology framework since 2017 and is ready to proceed. This work is within the existing budget, he added.

Dr. Sears added that water in streams is changing due to climate change. This effort will allow for the technical work to be done to conduct better flood planning.

“THAT OBWB award a time and materials contract not to exceed \$108,000CDN to Associated Environmental Consultants of Vernon, B.C. for their proposal to deliver corrected naturalized flow data for 18 Okanagan basins.”

CARRIED

Dirs. Wilson, Hrasko and Neilsen abstained

8. CORREPENDENCE

8.1 Letter from Fisheries & Oceans Canada to OBWB re: invasive mussel funding

8.2 Letter from B.C. Ministry Environment to OBWB re: invasive mussel prevention

- 8.3 Letter from Township of Spallumcheen to OBWB re: aquatic invasives study
- 8.4 Letter from B.C. Ministry Environment to OBWB re: groundwater license deadline
- 8.5 Letter from B.C. Ministry Environment staff to OBWB re: groundwater license deadline

“THAT the correspondence from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, B.C Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and Township of Spallumcheen be received.”

CARRIED

9. NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 10 a.m. at Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen in Coldstream.

10. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 5, 2019 be adjourned at 1:50 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director