



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD DECEMBER 3, 2019, AT 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
Director Toni Boot	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC

ABSENT

Director Denise Neilsen	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Christopher Derickson	Okanagan Nation Alliance

STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littley	Operations and Grants Manager
Kellie Garcia	Policy and Planning Specialist

GUESTS

Tessa Terbasket	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Krista Derrickson	Westbank First Nation

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

Chair McKortoff respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

2. LATE ITEMS

8.1 Letter to OBWB from Shuswap Watershed Council re: invasive mussel letter to federal government

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 3, 2019 be approved.”

CARRIED**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 5, 2019 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Nov. 5, 2019 at Regional District of Central Okanagan be approved.”

CARRIED**5. DELEGATION**

- 4.1 Wayne Wilson of the Central Okanagan Land Trust (COLT), presenting on the trust's wetland management process, funded by OBWB grants

COLT was established in 1990 and is membership driven, explained Mr. Wilson. The non-profit acquires natural lands and wildlife habitat through purchase, donation, and conservation covenants, and partners with local governments and conservation groups to steward these lands to support healthy biodiversity in the region.

The trust holds more than 800 acres, the largest parcel near Chute Lake, known as the Johns Family Nature Conservancy, which is operated by Regional District of Central Okanagan but owned by the trust.

Another example is the Munson Pond Naturalization Project, funded by the OBWB's Water Conservation & Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program. This was an old gravel pit in the 1960s. The project's goals included planting native species, invasive plant management, trail construction, development of viewing platforms, installation of interpretive signage and community engagement. Additional funders included EcoAction, the City of Kelowna, the Pritchard Foundation, and more. There were also many community partners over the three years of the project, including Kelowna Christian School which backs onto the pond and which now uses the space for science project on ecosystems. In all, some 150 bird species have been identified at the pond.

Ms. Derrickson entered the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Another COLT project, funded by the OBWB, is the Mission Creek Restoration Initiative (MCRI). Again, there have been several additional partners including the province, City of Kelowna, Kelowna Fish and Game Club, Trout Unlimited, Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, Okanagan Nation Alliance, Westbank First Nation, and Central Okanagan Naturalists. Funding from OBWB and other local partners was key when requesting funds from outside the region, added Mr. Wilson.

The MCRI project was necessary to address flooding and included pushing the dike back from the creek, restoration of fish habitat and creating new channels for fish.

Funding partners are increasingly interested in Wetland Management Plans. A plan has been developed for the Johns Family property. Another is in development for Black Mountain and the land trust is raising funds to do others and to create a template to be used by others in the valley.

In response to questions, Mr. Wilson noted that COLT has accepted land donations of 1.7 acres and larger. The board is made up of 12 directors which include a lawyer, chartered accountant, biologists, a physician, and long-time Kelowna residents.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears reported on a Sylix flood-debris flow steering committee meeting she attended and its fit with OBWB efforts, including understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, and investing in and enhancing preparedness for disaster resilience.

Ms. Terbasket noted that there has been discussion about how to communicate these risks better with the public and share flood maps for current and potentially new residents. Dr. Sears added a flood story map project, currently underway for the Okanagan, is intended to respond to this need and hopes to complement the Sylix work.

OBWB staff are also looking at conducting a gap analysis on flood policies in local government.

Dir. Basran exited the meeting 11 a.m.

Directors were told that ONA has now appointed Chief Chris Derickson to the OBWB board and Chief Chad Eneas as the alternate. Although the director and his alternate were unable to attend the meeting on such short notice, the board welcomes Tessa Terbasket, appointed the board as a technical representative for ONA.

The Union of BC Municipalities has opened the call for Community Emergency Preparedness Fund grants. Dr. Sears added that she is willing to assist local governments interested in applying.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Nov. 27, 2019, be received.”
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported on the results of last month’s Water Stewardship Council elections and the re-election of Dir. Denise Neilsen as chair and Scott Boswell as vice-chair, and a presentation by the Fraser Basin Council on climate change-related projects. This month’s meeting, he added, would include a presentation on weather and climate by the council’s Environment Canada representatives.

Work is continuing on developing hydrologic modeling of 19 Okanagan sub-basins, considering the inflow of precipitation, and how it runs along the landscape. It will also look at changes with population growth and flow under various climate scenarios. This will be useful for local planning decisions, e.g. how volume impacts infrastructure such as bridges. The work should be completed by the end of December.

Okanagan Mainstem Lake Flood Modeling is also continuing and includes Mission Creek and other large tributaries. The models will look at the 1 in 200 year flood, that same flood with wave action, up to a 500 year inundation level. A website will be built out that includes the maps, helping create better understanding of potential flood risks and how to prepare.

Ms. Terbasket noted the importance of also communicating the benefits of flooding, e.g. on fish habitat.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Nov. 26, 2019, be received.”
CARRIED

11:15 a.m. Basran re-entered the meeting

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littlely spoke to two Vernon applications for funding to the Sewage Facilities Assistance Grant.

“THAT the SFA application for the City of Vernon Peters Road project 5776 and Okanagan Landing 5777 project be approved as outlined above.”

CARRIED

The board was given an update on the B.C. AquaHacking Challenge. Some 45 contestants are now entered and include participants from B.C., Ontario, and Quebec.

Dir. Baker exited meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Winter rototilling of milfoil is continuing. Environmental consultant Ecoscape is updating maps for the Vernon arm of Okanagan Lake to ensure operators are working within provincial guidelines. Provincial staff have also been invited to the February board meeting to discuss the new guidelines.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager Report, dated Nov. 25, 2019, be received.”

CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on the Community Water Forum held in partnership with UBCO and ONA, discussing “Forests, Freshwater and People” and using traditional knowledge and restoration as solutions to address wildfires.

The board was presented with final reports for “Make Water Work” (MWW) and “Don’t Move a Mussel” (DMM). The DMM campaign was able to leverage \$49,800 to deliver a campaign worth over \$74,000 thanks to in-kind support from local media partners. Results included 5.5 million billboard impressions, over 2,500 face-to-face interactions, and 4,199 unique visitors to DontMoveAMussel.ca. For MWW, the OBWB-OkWaterWise provides matching funds to local government and utility partners. With a \$56,500 investment from OBWB and partners and in-kind support, this year’s campaign was worth over \$80,000. Highlights include three new garden centre partners promoting the MWW Plant Collection, 5.7 million billboard and bus impressions, and 10,120 unique visits to MakeWaterWork.ca.

There was some discussion about the campaigns’ effectiveness. Dir. Fleming said that, as someone in the landscape business, he notices an increase in the number of requests for low-water landscapes.

Communities are encouraging this in new developments, it was noted. Dir. Cumming suggested aerial photos could probably help show what’s happening.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Nov. 26, 2019, be received.”

CARRIED

6.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia provided an update on the development of a Source Water Protection Toolkit and a presentation made at the Water Supply Association of BC conference to collect feedback. The greatest threats identified to water supplies were fire, contamination and legislation. The greatest barriers to source water protection were funding, resources, no authority and legislation. Public outreach and education was the number one topic suppliers wanted included in a toolkit. A contractor will be hired in the new year to begin writing the toolkit which will include sample bylaws.

Ms. Garcia presented on the OBWB's Okanagan Agricultural Water Supply Communication Project at the B.C. Agricultural Climate Adaptation Research workshop. Work is also proceeding on an Okanagan Lake Responsibility Plan. The plan is being co-led by ONA, the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, and the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program. The goal is to identify ways to improve policy and planning processes that protect and enhance environmental, cultural and economic values of the lake. A workshop is planned for Dec. 4 with Syilx knowledge keepers, ONA fisheries and natural resource staff, local government planners, provincial and federal staff, and UBCO researchers.

"THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist Report, dated Nov. 26, 2019, be received."
CARRIED

Dirs. Hrasko and Baker exited the meeting.

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy 2.0

Ms. Garcia presented the SWS 2.0 to the board and provided an overview of the process and the final document. The strategy includes input from more than 70 people including the Water Stewardship Council, an editorial board, and external contributors.

It builds on the 2008 Action Plan 1.0, expanding on topics such as climate change, acknowledges the B.C. Water Sustainability Act (adopted in 2016) and includes new issues such as the threat of invasive mussels. The updated strategy reports on progress made and insights gained over the last decade and showcases recent projects and case studies. It also includes 50 action items designed to protect water at its source, restore aquatic and riparian ecosystems, manage water demand and allocate water in a transparent and responsible manner, collect and share data, ensure community waters are resilient to climate change with up-to-date response plans for flooding and drought, and efforts to encourage collaboration and active public engagement

Dr. Sears added that the SWS is a council and partnership document, designed to guide the work of the council over the next several years.

"THAT the Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy Action Plan 2.0 be received."
CARRIED

8. LATE ITEM

8.1 Letter to OBWB from Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) re: invasive mussel letter to federal government

The board was presented with a letter from the SWC, inviting the OBWB to send a joint letter to the new federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans regarding the threat of invasive mussels to B.C. The board agreed to the invitation, noting the importance of adding Okanagan context to the issue.

“THAT OBWB staff work with the Shuswap Watershed Council to prepare and send a letter to the new Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Bernadette Jordan, to raise awareness around invasive zebra and quagga mussels.”

CARRIED

9. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held on Tues. Feb. 4, 2020 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 Dec. 3, 2019 be adjourned at 1:55 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director