



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 3, 2020, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, 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
Alt. Director Amanda Shatzko	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
Director Rick Knodel	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC
Director Denise Neilsen	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

ABSENT

Director Christopher Derickson	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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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

TECHNICAL OBSERVER

Tessa Terbasket	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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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. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

- 8.3 Letter from OBWB to B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change (MoE) re: draft Source Drinking Water Quality Guidelines
- 6.5.1 Memo re: contract source protection toolkit
- 7.2.1 Draft letter from OBWB to B.C. MoE re: legislative changes to prevent invasive mussels

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 3, 2020 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 4, 2020 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

Changes were suggested regarding the discussion with provincial staff around milfoil control and Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussels.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Feb. 4, 2020 at Regional District of Central Okanagan be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

- 5.1 Presentation by Lisa Scott, Executive Director of Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS), on 2019 invasive mussel monitoring and outreach

Ms. Scott provided an overview of last summer’s mussel outreach, funded in part through the OBWB with its Don’t Move A Mussel program.

A video, created by OASISS staff as an outreach tool regarding the threat of invasive mussels, was shown and the board provided feedback.

Ms. Scott noted the importance of partnerships in OASISS’s outreach and education efforts, with OBWB staff, as well as regional districts, the province, the federal Summer Jobs program, and RCMP volunteers who have further extended outreach efforts at boat launches in Vernon and West Kelowna, marinas and other businesses.

Funding for OASISS’s mussel efforts in 2019 came from OBWB, HCTF, Canada Summer Jobs and Canada Green Corps.

Last year, substrate monitors were deployed in 16 locations in Okanagan lakes, checking for adult mussels, and the plan is to put out more in 2020. Also, 123 water samples were taken by OASISS and the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society to test for the mussels at the microscopic veliger stage. These were among 900 samples taken province-wide and funded by B.C. MoE and administered through Habitat Conservation Trust Fund. This year, the grant will only fund water sampling, not substrates.

OASISS also started a citizen science project in early August and recruited 13 private dock owners, from Osoyoos to Kalamalka Lake, to drop substrate monitors off their docks. Staff are hoping to expand this effort in 2020.

A training session was held with marina and boat companies with staff from the province’s Conservation Office and mussel inspection program. Staff also attended an international aquatic invasive species conference in Montreal.

Don’t Move A Mussel and other invasive mussel outreach materials were distributed to 400 locations in the valley. Staff interacted with about 6,700 people (almost 4,000 at boat launches and at 25 events, including various youth events and campgrounds).

Some of the ongoing concerns include: limited funding for invasive mussel efforts, the provincial priority on mussels means there is less attention to other aquatic invasive species (e.g. Asian clams have been found in Shuswap Lake and on the U.S. side of Osoyoos Lake), and the need to still reach non-motorized watercraft owners to stop for inspection. OASISS staff are looking to expand their financial partners.

There was some discussion about funding for prevention efforts. Dr. Sears noted the OBWB has set aside funding in this year's budget for OASISS and can review this again in October in the next budget cycle. Ms. Zoe Kirk, OASISS chair and RDOS staff, noted that her regional district, like others in the province, is updating its noxious weed bylaw to an invasive species bylaw to help address funding concerns.

The question of a sticker registration program for watercraft owners to help fund prevention efforts was raised. It was noted that some jurisdictions use this as an income source but there has been little discussion in recent years about expanding this to B.C.

Ms. Jackson added that the OBWB reviews its DMM program each year with a view to improving it and strengthening efforts with partners, including OASISS. A meeting is planned in the coming days and will include ways to assist with the citizen science effort and other outreach.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears noted that staff have been discussing Coronavirus and how to respond. Chair McKortoff and Vice-Chair Fortin responded that they appreciated the seriousness being taken.

The company contracted to do the LiDAR data has been working with a company in China. The final data was being processed when the factory shut down. The material is still expected by the end of this month.

OBWB staff are working with UBCO on a gap analysis on flood planning and a grant application is being prepared. A meeting is planned for April 1 with local government staff to review a new flood mapping website, one of the deliverables of the flood mapping project. Dir. Cumming noted that City of Vernon has hired a drainage engineer and is already using the data and heard a presentation on the updated flood maps.

The board was told that some OBWB staff attended the recent Adaptation 2020 conference, presenting on local solutions to address climate change impacts on water, and learning about what other parts of Canada are doing to respond to flooding.

B.C.'s Climate Adaptation Strategy will include public consultation and a final strategy is expected to be released in Fall 2020. The director of the BC Climate Adaptation Team has been invited to present at the joint OBWB Board-Council meeting in May.

Dr. Sears added that the U.S. Okanogan has determined that it is currently in moderate drought, but on the Canadian side of the border, we are dealing with expected high water levels.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated Feb. 26, 2020, be received."

CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported on the February council meeting and a presentation by Gillian Aubie Vines on the Okanagan Climate Projections Report, funded in part with an OBWB grant. Next month's meeting will include an update on the Okanagan wetlands project. Plans are underway for the joint board-council meeting in May, with updates from each of the council committee chairs.

There was some discussion about the climate report and concern that some might think that a longer Okanagan growing season is positive. There are negative consequences, Dir. Neilsen said, adding that plants need dormancy to grow strong. The loss of cold temperatures could affect tree fruits that require chilling, and higher temperatures can also affect quality, she added. Ms. Jackson noted she is aware of the narrative being presented in local media and that OBWB messaging on the report has been more tempered.

The board was updated on a Water Quality Database, still in a beta version, on the OBWB site that can show trends in Okanagan water quality, including chloride levels from road salts and water softeners.

Mr. Jatel gave an update on the state of hydrometric monitoring in the basin, providing various options to improve the network. It was noted that a report was done in 2011 with recommendations which was never acted on. It was agreed that staff should continue to work on this file.

Work is continuing on the flood mapping website. The site is being developed with input from local government staff and electeds. Dr. Sears added that the site will include climate projections, with 2017 flood levels being the “design flood” water levels local governments should be developing bylaws around.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Feb. 25, 2020, be received.”
CARRIED

6.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley updated the board on the milfoil control program, noting a meeting with the province about upcoming research on milfoil and native Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussels and discussion by provincial staff about possibly moving mussels to allow OBWB to rototill. Mr. Littley added that he feels the researcher is well-qualified to do the study.

There was discussion regarding concerns about milfoil at Kin Beach this summer. The board agreed that Dir. Cumming and the Vernon city council should ask the province to address these concerns. Dir. Knodel added that it may be helpful for other boards and councils to write letters of support.

The AquaHacking semi-final is being held on March 21. There are 158 participants and 26 teams that have signed up.

The Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program received 21 applications for \$450,000 this year. Recommendations for funding will be brought to an in-camera meeting next month.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager Report, dated Feb. 25, 2020, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on the relaunch of the Make Water Work (MWW) and Don’t Move A Mussel (DMM) campaigns. It was noted that a request for proposals went out three years ago for marketing services to help with the campaigns. At that time, OBWB entered into a contract with Hiilite with the option to renew for two additional years on condition that the Water Board was

pleased with the work. A resolution to extend the contract for a third year was provided to the board.

“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

Plans are underway to screen “Brave Blue World” and have a follow-up panel discussion on March 19 as part of Canada Water Work festivities. The film was chosen since it aligns nicely with OBWB’s hosting of the B.C. AquaHacking Challenge semi-final two days later, on March 21. Both the film and the challenge look at technological solutions to some of our most pressing water issues. Tickets for the film are now available on EventBrite.

Staff have also been working with RDCO’s Waste Reduction Office, partnering on a composter-rain barrel sale. There has also been communications support to the Okanagan flood map website, reviewing content and working with local government communication partners. Additional support has been provided to the Aqua-Hacking Challenge, with articles and communications for the semi-final event, and for the “Building Community Resilience in a Changing Climate” event with Sheila Watt-Cloutier and the public launch of the *Okanagan Climate Projections Report*.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Feb. 25, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

6.5 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia reported on an Okanagan Lake source protection planning meeting held Feb. 7 with a number of utilities and Interior Health. There was discussion around the barriers to protecting the water and collaborative opportunities. Solutions discussed include a public outreach campaign to raise awareness and help protect water quality, and a source protection workshop at the BC Water and Wastewater Association’s fall conference using the Source Water Protection Toolkit that is being developed.

Staff also attended a B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development – range and water meeting regarding source protection with representatives from forestry and ranching. It was noted that mining and recreation was missing from the meeting, but that they may have been invited and were unable to attend. Some board directors suggested that if there is an opportunity to provide feedback to the province, that it be stated that these sectors are an important part of this conversation.

Ms. Garcia noted that an RFP went out for the development of a Source Water Protection Toolkit for water suppliers. The proposals were reviewed by a committee, including staff, IHA and the WSC’s source protection committee chair. The board was asked to approve a contract.

“THAT the OBWB approves a contract with Larratt Aquatic Consulting Ltd. to prepare the Source Water Protection Toolkit for Water Suppliers with a budget not to exceed \$35,000.”

CARRIED

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist Report, dated Feb. 25, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 OBWB Draft Strategic Planning Tracking Measures Memo

Dr. Sears introduced the draft Strategic Plan and tracking measures. There was some discussion about the tracking measures. Some additional changes will be made and the board will be provided an updated version for the next board meeting.

“THAT the Draft Strategic Plan 2020-2024 Planning Tracking Measures Memo, dated Feb. 26, be received.”

CARRIED

7.2 Invasive Mussel Update Memo

Mr. Littley provided an update to the memo with a draft letter to the province. There was discussion and a number of suggestions were made, in particular to improve B.C.’s inspection system and CBSA’s front-line support at the Canada-U.S. border.

Staff will work on an updated letter based on feedback.

“THAT the Invasive Zebra & Quagga Mussel Update Memo be received.”

CARRIED

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Township of Spallumcheen letter to Federal Fisheries Minister Jordan regarding Prevention of Invasive Mussels

8.2 Letter from Earle Anthony and Glenn Sinclair re: strategic OBWB initiatives

8.3 Letter from OBWB to B.C. Min. of Environment and Climate Change Strategy regarding source drinking water quality guidelines

“THAT the correspondence to the Okanagan Basin Water Board be received.”

CARRIED

9. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held on Tues. April 7, 2020 at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

10. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 3, 2020 be adjourned at 1:43 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director