



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD DECEMBER 7, 2021, ONLINE
OKANAGAN, 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 Doug Holmes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rick Knodel	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C.
Alt. Director Jeremy Fyke	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)

REGRETS

Director Christopher Derickson	Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)
Caitlyn Glasser	ONA Technical Staff

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
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	Special Projects Coordinator

GUESTS

Lisa Scott	Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society
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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McKortoff called the meeting to order at 10 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

No late items were brought forward.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 7, 2021 be approved.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of November 2, 2021

held online.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on November 2, 2021 held online be approved.”

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

Lisa Scott, Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society on invasive mussel outreach

Ms. Scott provided the board with an update on OASISS summer outreach, including those activities covered with funding through OBWB’s OkWaterWise program.

Once again, the society offered a modified program during the second year of the pandemic. Three summer staff were hired to work on aquatic invasive species (AIS), which included lake monitoring, digital outreach and boat launch surveys, and citizen science. The digital outreach included educational videos posted on YouTube and Instagram, social media posts, and news releases. OkWaterWise’s Don’t Move A Mussel (DMM) campaign also supplied digital resources (e.g. boat checklist, posters, social media posts). Some 204 Okanagan water-recreation related businesses were offered the resources for use and distribution; 101 accepted.

In all, 150 water samples were taken from five lakes. Substrate monitors, to check for adult mussels, were deployed in 14 locations in partnership with yacht clubs, marinas, local governments and others. All samples have come back negative.

There were fewer boat launch surveys this past summer, however, results show awareness of “Clean, Drain, Dry” and AIS is strong with top sources of information being outreach including provincial inspections, Internet, boat launch signs and highway billboards. The number of people reporting that they stopped at an inspection station went up from about 66% last year to 80% this year. Awareness of DMM is also up significantly this year.

Citizen science efforts included recruiting 13 volunteers to do invasive mussel monitoring off their private docks on five Okanagan lakes, and six more to do shoreline surveys for invasive clams in Osoyoos.

In response to questions, Ms. Scott noted that finding core funding is always a challenge and project funding is easier. Dir. Baker noted the importance of pushing for stronger federal support. Ms. Scott added that invasive clams are currently on Vancouver Island, in Washington state and in the Shuswap and should be considered more of a concern to the province than it seems to be.

Dir. Basran joined the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Chair McKortoff thanked Ms. Scott for the presentation.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson provided an update on the province’s mussel outreach efforts, noting 17 mussel-infested watercraft were intercepted coming into B.C., mid-May to October, with eight headed to the Okanagan. In response to questions from the board it was noted that it is unclear how many watercraft came into B.C. outside of inspection hours. As for the mussel-fouled watercraft that were intercepted, it is unknown if the animals were viable since the province is unable to test for this on site.

The board was provided with wrap up reports for the Don't Move A Mussel (DMM) and Make Water Work (MWW) campaigns. This year included website updates to both sites and new creative used on billboards, social media and digital ads. DMM promotional materials included sandwich boards, postcards and 'mussel' shirts. With a \$50,450 investment from OBWB-OkWaterWise and in-kind support, this year's campaign was valued at \$61,250. Website traffic was the highest since the campaign began in 2013, with 20,935 visits, May 1 to Oct. 15 (three times more than the same period in 2020).

The MWW website had 16,163 visits, May 1 to Oct. 15, and again the greatest number since the valley-wide campaign began in 2011. The creative was replicated on bus shelters, benches, and sandwich boards. Advertising included TV, Castanet, digital and social media. Promotional materials were provided to partners from local governments, water utilities, garden centre and irrigation businesses. There was also a contest for a \$750 WaterWise yard upgrade. Thanks to in-kind support from media partners, the campaign leveraged \$55,263 to deliver a campaign worth \$100,873.

The board was also told that based on positive discussions with school districts in the Okanagan, copies of the three-guide series *"Our Relationship with Water in the Okanagan"* are being distributed to each school.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated December 1, 2021, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears presented an amendment to the signing authority.

"THAT the Signing Authority Resolution be approved as presented."
CARRIED

The board was told that provincial staff have said a letter will be sent soon, acknowledging that the OBWB can update its Supplementary Letters Patent regarding voting powers, allowing discussions to revise the process to move forward. In response to a question from Dir. Holmes, Dr. Sears added that if the letter is not received by the end of December she may begin discussions with regional districts "pending the letter."

Dr. Sears noted Okanagan flood concerns in light of recent severe flooding in parts of B.C. and the importance of ensuring senior governments understand the need for proactive measures, not just recovery. Recent flood mapping and bathymetry work puts the valley in a good position to plan and act now, she added.

Osoyoos Lake Board of Control had its regular meeting and noted that although the Okanagan had low precipitation in fall, the Similkameen (which influences Osoyoos Lake levels) and Tulameen had significant rainfall which caused problems in those areas.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated December 1, 2021, be received."
CARRIED

11:39 a.m. Dir. Cumming exited the meeting.

6.3 Special Projects Coordinator Report

Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo reported that November was busy planning for the Osoyoos Lake Water

Science Forum. Fundraising for the budget, the program and logistics are all coming together. A call for posters went out, inviting those conducting water research in the area to apply to present their work on poster boards to be displayed at the event. The Waterways exhibit, funded in part through the OBWB's Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant program and currently on display at Kelowna Museum, will also be showcased at the forum. Registration is almost ready to open, she added.

"THAT the Specialist Projects Coordinator's Report, dated November 30, 2021, be received."

CARRIED

6.4 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia updated the board on the Source Water Protection toolkit, noting a series of nine webinars held weekly, Nov. 3 to Dec. 15, focusing on each tool within the kit and with an additional one in the works for possibly January. An offer was made to local governments to present on the toolkit and how it can help them with source protection. A number of communities have taken Ms. Garcia up on the offer and presentations are now being scheduled.

The board was also told a final report is being prepared for senior government funders of the Agriculture Water Supply Communications Project. The project is intended to help water suppliers communicate supply issues with their ag customers so that they can best prepare, especially in times of drought. Results will be presented to the board in February.

Provincial leaders of the Thompson Okanagan Regional Drought Response Team held a debrief meeting earlier this month to discuss what worked and what didn't in addressing this summer's drought. A report is now being prepared and highlights will be shared with the board once its available.

"THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist's Report, dated November 30, 2021, be received."

CARRIED

6.5 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley presented the board with a Sewerage Facilities Assistance Grant Program proposal from City of Vernon for sewer extensions, noting it's a two-part application process with the first part being a cost estimate. If approved in principle by the board, the city is expected to present a formal grant application in the new year.

Dir. Cumming re-entered meeting at 11:47 a.m.

"THAT the SFA grant for the City of Vernon - Okanagan Landing 2021 sewer extensions project be approved in principle, pending a formal application with final project budget numbers."

CARRIED

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) recently released a draft report with results of a study that looked at the impact of milfoil control on Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussels. DFO staff will be sending OBWB a plan of study in the new year with recommendations for additional research to determine if changes are needed to reduce sediment disturbance. This will help inform future operations and permit applications.

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager Report, dated November 30, 2021, be received.”

CARRIED

6.6 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel gave an update on the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and discussion on watershed indicators to support better water management. The Dec. 9 meeting will include a presentation on new mapping techniques to improve understanding of landscape (including water) changes from wildfire.

The Okanagan Flood Risk Mapping Project team will be meeting in January to review draft maps, expected to be finalized and released in March to support flood planning and adaptation.

A number of hydrometric stations were brought online this spring and summer. Partners at the Okanagan Nation Alliance and Environment and Climate Change Canada are now reviewing the data, making sure its ready to be shared and uploaded onto the provincial database.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated December 1, 2021, be received.”

CARRIED

7 **CORRESPONDENCE**

- 7.1 Letter to the City of Vernon from B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, re: lake level management
- 7.2 Letter to Hon. Joyce Murray, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, from the Shuswap Watershed Council, re: invasive mussel prevention

“THAT the correspondence to City of Vernon from B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, re: lake level management and letter to Hon. Joyce Murray, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, from the Shuswap Watershed Council, re: invasive mussel prevention, be received.”

CARRIED



8 **NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 10 a.m. Location to be determined.

9 **ADJOURNMENT**

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 7, 2021 be adjourned at 12:07 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
		
Chair		Executive Director