



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 1, 2022, 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.
Director Scott Boswell	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

Jody Good	Rutland Waterworks
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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

5.3.1 Letter from OBWB to B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy re: invasive mussel prevention

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 1, 2022 be approved.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 1, 2022 held online.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on February 1, 2022 held online be approved.”

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears provided an update on growing the OBWB’s relationship with ONA and noted the regional districts’ approval for the ONA representative having equivalent voting privileges to the regional district representatives. She discussed the OBWB’s commitment to setting up a working group to implement the spirit of UNDRIP and Syilx rights and responsibilities into the OBWB’s efforts. It was suggested that this work begin with the development of a terms of reference.

The OBWB’s Water Management Program, which includes communications efforts like ‘Make Water Work’, flood mapping, the hydrometric program and more, is reviewed every four years in line with the municipal election cycle. Dr. Sears said presentations to the three regional district (RD) boards are set for June and July, ahead of the October elections. Also, although the annual budget usually needs approval by December, budget approval must come earlier during municipal election years. The five-year asset management plan is also due for renewal and requires approval from RDs. This will be done at same time, she added.

New flood maps, shared at the last board meeting, are based on current provincial operating orders. The maps released in 2020 are based on future regulations. Communicating how to read and use the maps is complex. As such, staff will be working with the project’s contractor to update the OkanaganFloodStory.ca website with the new maps and how to make the site easier to understand and use. A number of directors noted their support, with Chair McKortoff adding that Osoyoos is budgeting for wave impact modeling during flood conditions and will be applying for government grants for the work. Dr. Sears responded that recently announced provincial funding for floodplain mapping and Community Emergency Preparedness are welcomed and should help such efforts.

The province is holding a two-day workshop on its proposed new B.C. Watershed Security Strategy and Fund. Dr. Sears and Water Stewardship Council former chair and policy committee member Denise Neilsen will attend. A joint OBWB/OWSC formal letter will then be developed and submitted in response. Dr. Sears also noted the province’s one-year, \$30 mill. extension of the Healthy Watersheds Initiative (HWI). In 2020, the HWI provided \$27 mill. to provincial organizations to conduct mostly watershed restoration projects.

The current Okanagan snowpack is about 82% of normal for this time of year. Yesterday’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report was clear about the need for adaptation and the important role communities play, for example in limiting vulnerability through development patterns and building codes.

10:38 a.m. Dir. Basran entered the meeting.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated February 23, 2022, be received.”

CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported on Feb. 10 council meeting and a presentation by Tamsin Lyle looking at historic B.C. flooding and a shift in responsibility for flood infrastructure from federal to provincial and then to local governments which led to increased flood risk. City of Grand Forks' Graham Watt presented on a buy-back program to move people out of the floodplain.

The council has five committees looking at alluvial fans, wetlands, ag water and irrigation, water quality, and source protection. The committees will provide an update at the April 5 joint board-council meeting. Board members will also be invited to present what water issues are important to their community and what they would like the council to look at in the coming year. The March 10 meeting will include a review of the B.C. budget as it relates to water.

Work is continuing on the new flood maps, looking at flood risk vs. inundation and how current and future lake regulation operations can affect flooding on mainstem lakes and streams. The work should be useful to many including policy makers, emergency personnel, homebuyers and homeowners.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated February 23, 2022, be received."
CARRIED

5.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Mr. Littley introduced a grant application from City of Vernon for the extension of sewer in the Okanagan Landing area.

"THAT the SFA grant for the City of Vernon - Okanagan Landing 2022 sewer extensions project be approved in principle, pending a formal application with final project budget numbers."

CARRIED

The board was told that milfoil rototilling operations have wrapped up in Kalamalka and Okanagan Lakes, and staff are waiting for conditions to change to complete the de-rooting in Wood Lake and Osoyoos Lake. Staff are also beginning a review of the Water Board's five-year capital asset management plan.

5.3.1 Letter from OBWB to B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy re: invasive mussel prevention

Directors received updated recommendations for invasive mussel prevention in the province, including a request for annual funding with adjustments for inflation, pull-the-plug legislation, an update to B.C.'s Early Detection, Rapid Response Plan, and more. The board, looking at inspection numbers and the number of infested watercraft coming into B.C., agreed to send a letter to the province with the updated calls for action and revised to include a recommendation for legislation requiring all out-of-province watercraft to be inspected prior to being launched in B.C. waters.

Dir. Baker exited the meeting at 11:17 a.m.

Dr. Sears added that if an Okanagan local government wishes to go to the Union of BC Municipalities with a resolution regarding invasive mussel prevention, staff would be happy to assist.

"THAT OBWB staff send a revised letter to the board for approval, including calls to action to address invasive mussel prevention, and then send to the B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy."

CARRIED

“THAT the Operations and Grants Manager Report, dated February 22, 2022, be received.”

CARRIED

5.4 Policy and Planning Specialist Report

Ms. Garcia updated the board on Source Water Protection (SWP) work which has included presentations on the SWP toolkit to councils and boards, and an outreach piece for the *k'əmcnitkw* floodplain re-engagement project site in Penticton.

The Agricultural Water Communications pilot project has wrapped up and the e-alert system that was developed with local government partners is transitioning to Voyent Alert, meeting the needs of partners and allowing them to continue with their e-alert outreach.

Ms. Garcia added that she recently worked on a flood risk mapping workshop with Mr. Jatel, will be assisting RDCO and City of Kelowna on a species at risk and critical habitat inventory, considering natural asset management, and will be working with Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo on a boating impact workshop. The workshop will include water suppliers and regulators, and others, to look at impacts on water and possible solutions.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist's Report, dated February 23, 2022, be received.”

CARRIED

5.5 Special Projects Coordinator Report

Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo noted that the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum will be held in October. Federal government staff are still unable to travel and others are still uncomfortable with large gatherings. Organizers are hoping that postponing the event will allow enough time to address COVID concerns and allow an in-person event.

The board was provided an update on AquaHacking 2020 and 2021 winners, including 2020 1st place winner Ozero which last summer hauled their boat washing station to various locations around Quebec to combat invasive mussels. The 2021 winners are now busy in business incubators, moving their water solutions forward. Both Chair McKortoff and Dir. Fleming applauded the program for moving projects from ideas to action.

“THAT the Specialist Projects Coordinator's Report, dated February 22, 2022, be received.”

CARRIED

5.6 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson gave an update on various projects including a news release regarding ONA voting rights being expanded, and work on a re-launch of the annual 'Make Water Work' campaign for Mother's Day and 'Don't Move A Mussel' campaign for the May long-weekend.

The board was updated on education projects, including the signing of a partnership agreement with Okanagan Nation Alliance to develop a “*Sylx siw'k'w (Water) Knowledge and Perspectives*” guide as fourth in the series of the “*Our Relationship with Water in the Okanagan*” education guides. Work is also continuing on a source water protection poster at the site of the *k'əmcnitkw* floodplain project, illustrating the threats to water quality and how to protect water sources. Ms.

Jackson added that the poster will also be posted on the OkWaterWise website as an educational resource.

The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program is also hosting an online screening of CBC The Fifth Estate's documentary "Come Hell... B.C. Under Water," followed by a panel discussion on March 16, 7-9 p.m. The film and discussion will look at what lessons can be learned from last fall's floods and other extreme weather events we have been experiencing, how the Okanagan is responding, and provided attendees with information on what they can do to protect their home and help their community. The panel will feature those working for urban utilities, in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and on regional water management.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated February 23, 2022, be received."
CARRIED

6. NEXT MEETING

7.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 10 a.m. Location to be determined.

7. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 1, 2022 be adjourned at 11:59 a.m."
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director