

OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2009, AT THE BENVOLIN HERITAGE CHURCH, 2279 BENVOLIN ROAD, KELOWNA, BC

PRESENT

Council Members:

Bernie Bauer, Chair	UBC Okanagan
Ted van der Gulik, Vice Chair	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
Anna Page	Regional District North Okanagan
Bal Poonian	Urban Development Institute
Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of BC
Brian Guy	Canadian Water Resources Association
Bryn White	South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program
Chris Radford	Regional District Central Okanagan
Dan Millar	Environment Canada – Pacific & Yukon Region
Denise Neilsen	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Doug Edwards	Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
Doug Geller	BC Ground Water Association
Hans Buchler	BC Agriculture Council
Howie Wright	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Jillian Tamblyn	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Conrad Pryce (alternate)	Ministry of Environment, Water Stewardship
Kerry Rouck	Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association
Lee Hesketh	BC Cattlemen's Association
Lorne Davies	Oceola Fish and Game Club
Lorraine Bennest	BC Fruit Growers Association
Magnus Bein	Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program
Mark McKenney	Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society
Mark Watt	City of Kelowna
Rob Birtles	Interior Health Authority
Steve Matthews	Ministry of Environment, Environmental Stewardship

Staff:

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director, OBWB
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director, OBWB
Genevieve Dunbar	Office and Grants Administrator, OBWB
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator, OBWB

Others:

Bill Caswell	South East Kelowna Irrigation District
Doug Flintoff	Kelowna Fish and Game Club
Ehren Lee	Urban Systems
Graeme James	OBWB Board Member/City of Kelowna
John Janmaat	UBC Okanagan
Judie Steeves	Kelowna Capital News
Kellie Garcia	OWSC Communications and Outreach Committee member
Oleg Ivanov	OWSC Groundwater Protection Committee
Solvej Patschke	OWSC Source Protection Committee
Toby Pike	OBWB Board Member/Water Supply Association of BC
Tom Siddon	Past Chair of OWSC
Wenda Mason	Ministry of Environment, Water Stewardship Division

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME

Chair Bauer welcomed members and guests.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Jillian Tamblyn

Seconded by Anna Page

“That the agenda for the December 10, 2009 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held June 11, 2009, at the Okanagan Nation Alliance Offices, West Kelowna

Amendments:

Item 5, last point made by Oceola Fish and Game Club, Mr. Davies asked that reference to cabins be removed, and bullet needs to be reworded.

Page 5, reference to Home WaterWise Service should read 3 leaking “taps” rather than “tapes.”

Page 8, reference to Water Information Management Committee at top of page should read Groundwater Committee.

Moved by Dan Millar

Seconded by Bob Hrasko

“That the minutes from the June 11, 2009 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4.2 Minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held October 8, 2009, at the Penticton Trade and Convention Centre, Penticton

Amendment:

Item 1, called meeting to order at 10:19 a.m.

Moved by Jillian Tamblyn

Seconded by Anna Page

“That the minutes from the October 8, 2009 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

5. BOARD REPORT

Dr. Warwick Sears provided an update on topics covered at the November 3, 2009 OBWB meeting,

including an Environment Canada grant for its Spoke Project, updates to the Sewage Facilities Grants program, 2010/11 Budget process, adoption of the OBWB Education & Outreach Strategy and the development of a data sharing agreement for the Water Supply & Demand Project.

OBWB Governance Manual was adopted by the Board. It is the first time the OBWB has had such a manual in 40 years of existence. The manual will now be forwarded to all three regional districts for adoption.

Boundary-Similkameen MLA John Slater presented on the province's Water Act Modernization project.

OBWB members had a special meeting with and made a presentation to B.C. Environment Minister Barry Penner.

Dr. Bauer noted that OBWB directors have been encouraged to come to OWSC meetings and vice versa.

Director Graeme James has taken on the role previously held by Brian Givens as City of Kelowna's council representative on the board.

Director James noted that water is the most important issue we're facing. He appreciates the direction the OBWB is going in and said this type of council is what makes the difference.

6. ROUND TABLE – MEMBER UPDATES

Council members provided an update on their organization's activities.

- Dr. Bauer: AgriFlex draft proposal is finished. UBCO working on AgriFlex proposal for sustainable agriculture – has information about water allocation and impacts for an agricultural water reserve.
- Mr. Pryce: A successful two-day Drought Management Workshop with senior levels of government were held. Believes points raised in July's Okanagan workshop were answered in the government internal workshop and would like these sent out to the OBWB.
- Mr. Edwards: CWRA national conference will be held in Vancouver in June – Ag Can will be sponsoring. Mentioned analysis of Water Supply Program and he now has preliminary results for it. Will circulate or put on future agenda the preliminary information on Environmental Farm Plans, including information about funding levels for Okanagan.
- Mr. Jatel: Prepared a PowerPoint presentation that will be delivered later in meeting. Re: NASA project, went to Chelan, Wash. This is a joint project between Washington State Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) – which works in land and water use management – and the OBWB. The project will look at evaporation, evapotranspiration and snowpack. It is still in the early stages but will hopefully allow us to look at future S&D issues. Full proposal going to NASA soon. Mr. Millar asked to see the proposal first if appropriate.
- Mr. van der Gulik: Working on Agricultural Water Demand Model report for the Water Supply and Demand Project. Also looking to get funding through an AgriFlex Application to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands that will include evaporation strategies, climate data and health, and better climate networks. We are asking for \$10 million, part of \$30 million over four years.
- Dr. Warwick Sears: Re: CWRA, there will be a call for abstracts Jan. 31. Dr. Guy is coordinating the WS&D component of this.
- Dr. Mason: Will be talking to the Okanagan Supply and Demand study later in the meeting.
- Ms. Dunbar: Water Quality Improvement Grant Program should be posted next week online. Terms of reference and application will be available. The deadline is Feb. 19. Applicants require a resolution from their local government as part of the process. Examples of projects we are

interested in include drought response, education and outreach and we're open to other ideas. Projects that reference the Sustainable Water Strategy will be looked at favourably. Anyone wishing to discuss application ideas can contact Genevieve at the office.

- Mr. Rouck: Couple years ago received grant funds to put up fencing around Thirsk Lake to keep mudboggers out and project is now completed. Fire on the Westside this summer created problems with mud and hydrophobic soils. Licensees are coming together to look at Mission Creek Watershed and complete a hydrological assessment because of the Mountain Pine Beetle. They have numerous recommendations, including harvest plans.
- Mr. Birtles: Work is being done on Source Protection Plans for Lake Country and Peachland. Unsure what stage Lake Country is at. Peachland is on Stage 2 and it's gone to the public. Hope to have Step 7 and 8 completed by the end of the month.
- Mr. Ivanov: Province is working toward making the Okanagan a priority area for groundwater licensing system.
- Mr. Davies: OCEOLA Fish and Game Club is confused as to some messaging about events at Hydraulic Lake.
- Mr. Millar: Osoyoos Board of Control met Oct. 20. Osoyoos and Oroville folks happy to talk about water levels. Washington State is doing three lake studies on behalf of Board of Control. Shankers Dam proposal – presentation on the Okanagan PUD website.
- Mr. Watt: City of Kelowna is doing infrastructure strategic planning. Looking at updating the floodplain mapping; sewerage at Hall Road that could affect Mission Creek; and Mission Creek mitigation work along the banks. We're also working with the Mission Creek Restoration Group. Working on watershed source protection, and foreshore recreational issues – pollution and impact from facilities prevention on the lake.
- Ms. Page: Working on North Okanagan Regional District Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and recommendations will be coming forward. Also partnering on the Lower Shuswap Basin and Shuswap River. Shuswap will soon have FIM on the lower river.
- Ms. Tamblin: Okanagan-Similkameen Regional Growth Strategy went to a two-part public hearing. Strong public support for the RGS which contains significant sections on water conservation. We are looking at having water quality development permits for Rural Princeton, and are monitoring the potential dam in the US.
- Ms. Garcia: Full-time now with Insight Environmental Consulting. Will continue working with Communications and Outreach Committee.
- Dr. Janmaat: A study that was sponsored by Fraser Basin Council was highlighted which looks at agriculture in urban issues. Research has benefited from the Agriculture Water Use Study that OBWB funded a while back.
- Dr. Neilsen: SAGES will allow us to continue to develop a model that will improve the data set so we have Demand and Supply – Climate Data from weather stations, but also real-time downscaling.
- Mr. Radford: Stage three expansion of the Westbank water treatment plant for 42,000 population. Looking to access gas tax in 2010 to complete a universal metering program for the small water systems.
- Mr. Pike: Modernization of Water Act has our attention. SEKID cut demand by 20 per cent and ended 2009 with 24 per cent capacity in surface water; 2003 was 45 per cent. Hoping for snow. If we don't, like last year, we'll have to prioritize who gets water.
- Mr. McKenney: Working on an algae study, trying to quantify non-sewered sources. Algae collected will be looked at by University of Western Ontario. Study will give a benchmark for 10+years to see the affects of eutrophication.
- Mr. Hrasko: Okanagan Lake is much lower than seasonal averages. Water utilities are looking at Water Act and will need to pay attention in next six months. Black Mountain Irrigation District: Scotty Creek was taken off the BMID system as domestic and is solely an irrigation source now. It's a good trial project for line separation. Trail riders in Lambly Creek are going through the creek. An American company was used to provide consulting support to build the trail system without riparian setbacks. The process is broken because of bullshness of trailriders, Tourism and the US consultant. Need a strategic effort. Water supply association getting involved now and going to try

to work with the ministry. Ministry of Agriculture is not on the Memorandum of Understanding and should be. Dr. Bauer asked if it's something the Source Protection Committee should be looking at. Mr. Hrasko stated not right now, but perhaps at some point. He also noted the association may need to go straight to the Minister. Mr. Pike asked why people aren't being charged. According to Mr. Hrasko, they have a permit. Mr. Pike noted that Ministry of Tourism drafted a trails strategy that did not address water issues very well and maybe they should be rewritten.

- Mr. Matthews: Changes coming in Ministry of Environment, will be smaller and doing less with less. We're being told to be strategic with allocation of resources so partnerships like the OBWB will be even more important. Working on ecosystems and flow for fish. Drought management is a high priority. Pike asked what happened to the kokanee in Mission Creek. Matthews noted flows and temperature had an impact.
- Dr. Guy: In phase 2 of Water Supply and Demand Project and moving towards completion. The project will be producing some papers to present at the CWRA national meeting June 15 to 18 in Vancouver. There are big issues in Lambly Creek with ATVs. Dr. Bauer asked if this should be forwarded to Valerie Cameron with MoE's Water Stewardship Division. Dr. Sears assured Dr. Bauer that Ms. Cameron is aware.
- Mr. Buchler: Was in the Southern U.S. and looking at the effects of extended drought – thousands of acres of dead orchards. Incredible.

7. PRESENTATION

Panel: Brian Guy, Wenda Mason, Anna Sears

Water Supply and Demand Project

Dr. Mason provided start of presentation: Water issues in the Okanagan. The drought of 2003 - 2004 prompted this work. The last assessment of water was done in 1974. Since then, the population has increased. As the impacts of climate change increase we need a basin-wide approach to water management.

Many streams are fully allocated. We can only use what's replenished. Patchy shortages can affect the economy. The average person in the Okanagan uses the equivalent of 1,300 half-litre bottles of water a day. This creates great pressure on valley water.

The project plan has three phases. Phase 1 looked at can we do a S&D study. Phase 2 looked at evaluating current and future needs and evaluating future climate guide adaptation. Phase 3 includes tools to access information, make recommendations for policy changes and provide support for local area studies.

We know that the vast majority of water used is coming from surface sources.

As for distribution of water use in the Okanagan Basin, we know 85% is outdoor use with agricultural use accounting for 54% of this amount, domestic outdoor use being 24%, parks and open space is 2% and golf courses are 5%. The other 15% of water use is indoors, with institutions accounting for 1%, industrial 3%, commercial being 4%, and domestic use being 7%.

Ms. Tamblyn asked if all the reports that feed into the Water S&D study are available. And the answer is that some are available on the OBWB Website and others will be available soon.

Mr. Watt asked about the models – running the models takes a long time (sometimes a full day) and when people want to run a model scenario what do they do since that takes a lot of resources and computer time and is costly. Dr. Warwick Sears said that the details are being worked out but that the model will be housed on a server at RDCO. Cost-sharing agreements will need to be worked out, she added.

Mr. Davies asked about the state of large-lake evaporation data. Dr. Warwick Sears responded that there is no data right now, just a model.

Mr. Ivanov asked if Phase 3 will look at the collection of obvious next steps and understanding S&D. Yes it will likely be a part of that.

Dr. Siddon asked if the model will answer the “what ifs,” for example what happens if there’s an increase in temperature. Dr. Guy noted that the project team recognized the need for this as well and it will have the ability to answer such questions.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Jatel provided a PowerPoint presentation on the committees’ achievements for the year.

Water Information Management

Support was provided to the Water Supply and Demand Project.

Water Supply & Drought Management

Committee is looking at implementing a drought management index as used in other jurisdictions throughout North America. It is also looking at updating the Annual Water Use Report done by purveyors.

Source Protection

The committee worked on the Water Management Act review process, looking at water quality issues, riparian protection, and sharing best practices throughout the Okanagan. The Endocrine Disruptor project provided feedback for the committee. There has been lots of discussion on best management practices for source protection initiatives and stormwater quality.

Water Economics

The committee is looking at water utility pricing. A water pricing study is being developed based on a willingness to pay survey.

Water Information Management

The committee contributed to the Water Supply and Demand Project and the Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool Project.

Groundwater

The committee is working on the Local Government Groundwater Test Well Initiative to determine where there are limited groundwater sources. It could receive senior government funding to help if the project is done on a valley-wide scale. The Groundwater Bylaw Toolkit is being implemented in local government.

Communications & Outreach

Aim is to better communicate important water management issues with the public (e.g. WaterWise). Looking at who would be early-adopters: “amiables” (e.g. 25-35 year old women) who are relationship-driven and environmentally conscious. We’ll be having a focus group with amiables in the next week. The committee is in the process of developing a website and developing an external launch.

9. NEW & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1 Input to BC Government – Modernizing the Water Act

Dr. Mason: process has changed a little regarding public consultation and time lines set out in MLA John Slater's earlier report. The blog will be an online conversation with the public available through the Living WaterSmart website. There will be a soft launch with key stakeholders next week and it will go live in January. The public discussion paper, based on public meetings and input, will be available at the end of January 2010. There will be meetings with First Nations in the winter and spring of 2010, and about five to eight face-to-face stakeholder meetings between February and April. The results of the stakeholder meetings and summaries will be put up on the blog. There will be a period of a couple weeks for formal submissions. Legislative proposals will be made in June 2010 and the bill will be introduced to the legislature in spring 2011. We want to have this done before the next election.

Dr. Bauer asked if there would be an opportunity for further discussion once a draft of the legislation was created since it would give people a set of words and actions to respond to which can be easier than creating their own ideas. Dr. Mason said she would look into it.

Mr. Pike agreed that there should be public input after a draft legislative proposal comes out.

Regarding draft memo by staff on the Modernization of the Water Act, Mr. Millar said he doesn't have a problem with it being a memo to the Board, but thinks that there needs to be more work to get it as a document of recommendations for new legislation.

Dr. Bauer encouraged people to provide feedback to Mr. Jatel and asked if a working group would be helpful. Mr. Jatel agreed.

Dr. Bauer added that the OBWB and OWSC are seen as leaders in the province and should make sure to submit something rational and well thought out.

Mr. Pike suggested that maybe we can use some language and wording from the Sustainable Water Strategy as there are lots of recommendations that go with the revision of the Water Act.

Dr. Bauer added that maybe the suggestions can reinforce priority areas mentioned by Mr. Slater.

9.2 Proposed Activities – 2010 (Council and Committees)

Mr. Jatel proposed that some committees can merge and technology (e.g. Gotomeeting) could be used to hold meetings virtually. Certain technology would allow us to record meetings and put them up on the website. He also suggested holding 10 OWSC meetings a year, with a focus on relevant and interesting speakers.

Mr. Matthews thought we could try virtual meetings, but noted they aren't always the best. Mr. Buchler agreed, noting there can be technical glitches sometimes. Mr. McKenney said that depending on the topics of committees it might be worth trying and maybe there would be greater numbers participating. Mr. Van der Gulik suggested that each committee chair should decide if it's best to have a virtual meeting or a face-to-face, or any meeting at all. In other words, committees would meet as necessary. Dr. Bauer added that the committees allow for broader engagement than just OWSC so would like to see committees become advisory committees to projects. Mr. Buchler added that there are lots of action items in the Strategy that aren't being addressed; maybe the committees can be looking at ways to tackle the next round of action items. Dr. Bauer said that we don't want to overwhelm volunteers or staff so maybe there has to be ownership of projects. Mr. Pike agreed about not overwhelming people and added that the OWSC isn't as involved in the topics of the committees and to bring more to them might overwhelm its members.

Mr. Pryce asked about a five-year plan for the OWSC. Mr. Jatel suggested that priorities should be set through the Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy. Five years is a good window for the SWS to be active in its current format, he said. After that time, we should look at a second action plan to revise and update priorities.

9.3 OBWB Governance Manual

Dr. Warwick Sears said the manual has gone to the three Okanagan regional districts for feedback.

9.4 OK WaterWise – Public Education and Outreach Strategy

9.5 Correspondence

10. NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be held January 14, 2010 (location TBD).

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Moved by Daniel Millar

“That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of December 10, 2009 be adjourned.”

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chair

Executive Director