



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD JULY 7, 2020, 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 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

REGRETS

Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
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
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	AquaHacking 2020 – BC Challenge Coordinator

TECHNICAL OBSERVER

Tessa Terbasket	Okanagan Nation Alliance
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GUESTS

Olivier Liberge	Ozero
Maxime	Ozero
Christophe Morin	Ozero
Markus Schrott	BDO

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McKortoff called the meeting to order at 10:02 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

8.2 Letters from MP Mel Arnold to Province of B.C. and Government of Canada re: invasive mussels

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 7, 2020 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2020 held online.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on June 2, 2020 held online be approved.”

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

5.1 Ozero – top place B.C. AquaHacking Challenge team

Christophe Morin, Olivier Liberge and Maxime Guay presented on their team’s ballast washing system to prevent the spread of invasive mussels, explaining that it uses a hot pressure wash. The team has attained some funding for the system through sponsorships and grants. They have also spoken to 37 Quebec municipalities about their product and most are interested, he added, noting that the team will be working with several municipalities over the summer.

Each wash station sells for \$35,000 and will be sold with a 10-year maintenance plan.

In responding to questions from the board it was noted that communities that are interested in a system may choose to have them at centralized launches to mitigate costs.

Dr. Sears noted that, although the OBWB is pushing for pull-the-plug legislation in B.C. to help with draining and drying watercraft before they are transported, this type of wash system would be beneficial for watercraft where this is more difficult, e.g. wake boats. Mr. Liberge added that it would be good for live wells in fishing boats.

The system uses water at 45C for two minutes and testing has found it to be effective, the team added. When asked about the Province of B.C.’s approach of using water at 60C for less time, Mr. Liberge said that this was possible for their system to also be heated to 60C and used on the outside of watercraft.

Dir. Derickson added that COVID-19 has shown that we can stop airplanes from flying and require people to wear masks and asked why governments are still allowing recreational boats into the region. Staff noted that they have heard the same concerns from the public.

The board thanked the team for their work and wished them success.

6. INVASIVE MUSSEL DISCUSSION

6.1 Memo re: next steps in invasive mussel prevention & MP Arnold correspondence

The board was provided an overview of responses from the province and federal government regarding the OBWB’s latest calls for action. Mr. Littley noted the province has said it will continue to review “pull the plug” legislation and stated that it is looking to renew its public-private partnership to ensure ongoing inspection program funding. As for the OBWB’s recommendation to expand the partnership to ensure all watercraft are inspected before

launching in B.C., the province has not responded. The province has said that they want to do an annual review before introducing pull-the-plug legislation. It's unclear why, since other jurisdictions already have it, Mr. Littlely added.

There was some discussion about an effort to increase awareness for the OBWB's calls for action and request for public support. There was also discussion about having a workshop with MLAs and MPs to discuss the calls for action and build support.

“THAT OBWB requests support from Okanagan MLAs, Okanagan Local Governments and other partners to call on the province to initiate the legislative process for introducing a “pull-the-plug” law as soon as possible. AND THAT the call to action for pull the plug legislation be made public through a news release and on social media. AND THAT the OBWB support a “Contact your MLA” or “Contact the Minister” campaign to call for immediate pull the plug legislation.”

CARRIED

As for federal calls for action, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Bernadette Jordan sent a letter explaining they are continuing to work with Canada Border Services Agency along the Canada-U.S. border and is working to delineate responsibility for amphibious aircraft. She added that there is support for the expansion of aquatic invasive species education materials, and that there has been an increase in fisheries officers in Quebec, the Arctic, and in prairie provinces, helping ensure protection to B.C.

The OBWB and Shuswap Watershed Council recommended inspection stations in Banff and Jasper National Parks. There was no such commitment made, but the minister noted they have, in the past, closed water bodies, expanded mandatory self-inspection and registration of watercraft, and conduct water quality monitoring for invasives in flowing waters. The minister also stated that DFO is looking to develop a national database, to track and share information about invasive species introductions and spread, by March 31, 2022.

The board was told that questions still remain, for example about self-inspections, amphibious aircraft, and the lengthy timeline for the database.

It was noted that new education materials are now available through the Canadian Council on Invasive Species. Staff are in the process of accessing and posting these to the OBWB-OkWaterWise's DontMoveAMussel.ca website and distributing to water-recreation partners with support from the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society.

THAT staff contact the National Manager for Aquatic Invasive Species, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as suggested by the Minister, and inquire about outstanding items from the response letter, and report back to the board with further information.

CARRIED

Dir. Derickson exited the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

7. STAFF REPORT

7.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears noted that the next board meeting will be Sept. 4 and will include the release of our Annual Report. Staff are looking at organizing a separate online evening event to celebrate the OBWB's 50th anniversary, with a keynote speaker, helping encourage greater public participation.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated June 30, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

7.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel provided an overview of the previous Water Stewardship Council meeting which included an update on the Environmental Flow Needs project, flood mapping, and the Okanagan Hydrology Raven Model project.

The OBWB has been invited to participate in an international water governance study to benchmark watersheds in North America and Europe. The project should be completed in spring 2021.

Dir. Cumming noted that Kalamalka Lake has high water issues and the Raven model suggests this will continue under the current management system. He suggested it may be time to look at how to manage the lake differently.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated June 27, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

7.3 Operations and Grants Manager Report

Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo provided an overview of the B.C. AquaHacking Challenge final, noting all five finalists received seed-funding for their projects, with the ability to receive additional funding through Mitacs.

Dir. Hrasko exited the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Mr. Littley provided an update on milfoil control, explaining that harvesting would be starting soon. Staff are also preparing a request for quotes for a new trailer and crane.

Dir. Cumming said he would appreciate having provincial staff come back to the OBWB board or Vernon council to provide an update on the milfoil control issue.

“THAT “the Operations and Grants Manager Report, dated July 2, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

7.4 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson provided an update on the “Make Water Work” campaign, encouraging residential outdoor water conservation. Due to COVID-19, the OBWB did not hire an outreach person and has been focussing its efforts on reaching the public through its garden centre and other business partners, local government partners, through digital advertising (e.g. Castanet), social media engagement, and traditional advertising on radio, billboards, buses, etc. Pledges to Make Water Work are up 21% over the same time last year, showing some indication of success in getting the word out, she said.

The same outreach issues have resulted in changes to the Don’t Move A Mussel campaign this year, Ms. Jackson added. Some new creative has been developed this year, including a radio ad that encourages those who purchase – or have people visiting with –watercraft from infested regions to make sure they are inspected. Several downloadable resources have also been added to the website and are being promoted. Traffic to the website is up 219% over this time

last year, she noted.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated July 2, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

7.5 Policy and Planning Specialist

Ms. Garcia gave an update on the Source Water Protection Toolkit Project, explaining a 2nd meeting of the technical advisory committee was held June 29. A draft is expected by early September with the goal of completion about one month later. The toolkit will be available as a PDF as well as online.

Work on several other projects are also proceeding including on the Agricultural Water Supply Communication Project, Okanagan Lake Responsibility Planning Initiative, and more.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Specialist’s Report, dated June 29, 2020, be received.”

CARRIED

8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8.1 Review and Approval of 2020 Audited Financial Statements

Mr. Schrott presented the audited financial statements. Directors had a few general questions which Mr. Schrott answered.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the 2020 Audited Financial Statements as presented.”

CARRIED

8.2 Contract for Hydrometric Network Support Services

Mr. Jatel presented a memo and recommendation for a contract for hydrometric monitoring station maintenance and data collection, representing Phase 2 of a project, already budgeted for in the 2020 budget.

“THAT the OBWB award a single source contract to the Okanagan Nation Alliance in the amount of \$50,115 to provide hydrometric monitoring station maintenance and data collection for 2020.”

CARRIED

8.3 Request to comment on ALR exclusion proposal for Vaseux Lake

Dr. Sears presented the memo, noting that the OBWB was asked by a Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen director to respond to a proposal to exclude a portion of ALR land at Vaseux Lake for a camping/RV park. She noted concern regarding potential septic pollution into Vaseux Lake. The proposal is also within a floodplain, she added. Should the area flood and vehicles are in the area, this could cause issues with source pollution.

Dir. Knodel added his concern that it is a sensitive habitat with a bird preserve, no motor boats are allowed on the lake and there is already a sewage treatment plant in area.

After further discussion, directors asked that staff forward a letter to the RDOS noting the board’s concerns.

“THAT staff write a letter back to Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen noting the concerns regarding potential water pollution.”

CARRIED

9. CORRESPONDENCE

“THAT the following correspondence related to invasive mussels: from MP Richard Cannings to Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Minister Bernadette Jordan; from Min. Jordan to OBWB; from Vernon Chamber of Commerce to the Province of B.C.; and from MP Arnold to Province of B.C. and Government of Canada, be received.”

CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held on Fri. Sept. 4, 2020 at 10 a.m. at location TBD.

11. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 22, 2020 be adjourned at 12:18 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director