



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD JUNE 6, 2023, ONLINE**

PRESENT

Chair Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Christine Fraser	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Wayne Carson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Charlie Hodge	Regional District Central Okanagan
Alt. Director Adrienne Fedrigo	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C.
Director Jeremy Fyke	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)

REGRETS

Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)
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GUESTS

Markus Schrott	BDO Canada
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STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
James Littley	Deputy Administrator
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Kellie Garcia	Policy and Planning Director
Sandra Schira	Climate Indicators Intern

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

6.1.2 OBWB Budget 2024 Written Submission to B.C. Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 6, 2023 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of May 2, 2023, held at Manteo Resort.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on May 2, 2023, held at Manteo Resort, be approved."

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

- 5.1 Markus Schrott, BDO Canada on the OBWB's 2023 Audited Financial Statements

Dr. Sears introduced Mr. Schrott who noted that the audit came back with no issues reported.

Mr. Schrott responded to questions from directors and said that the OBWB benefits from having a robust finance team at RDCO which ensures appropriate controls and processes are in place.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- 6.1 Executive Director Report

The board was asked to accept the 2023 audited financial statements as presented.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the 2023 Audited Financial Statements as presented."

CARRIED

Dr. Sears spoke to the B.C. government's recent release of its report on the Potential Economic Impact of Zebra and Quagga Mussels in B.C. and annual cost estimates ranging from \$64 to \$129 million.

The board discussed sending a response to the province and putting out a news release. Directors also discussed the possibility of talking with B.C. Premier David Eby, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship Nathan Cullen and Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy George Heyman, and their staff, at the Union of B.C. Municipalities conference in September. In addition to the economic report, Ms. Jackson noted that provincial staff have released inspection station information stating that there has been a decrease in inspectors and stations from pre-COVID levels due to hiring challenges. Mr. Littlely added that he would be attending an upcoming Pacific Northwest Economic Region conference where invasive mussels would be discussed and that the information could help inform a response from the OBWB.

"THAT staff send a letter to B.C. Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship Nathan Cullen and Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy George Heyman regarding concerns about the province's Potential Economic Impact of Zebra and Quagga Mussels in B.C. report, and send a media release."

CARRIED

After further discussion, Dir. Cumming suggested that the OBWB organize a meeting between the B.C. premier and Okanagan mayors, chairs and chiefs regarding invasive mussel concerns.

"THAT OBWB organize a meeting between B.C. Premier David Eby and Okanagan mayors, chairs and chiefs regarding invasive mussel concerns."

CARRIED

Dr. Sears provided the board with the OBWB's draft submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services: Budget 2024 Consultation. Only three recommendations can be made, she said, adding that the submission calls for increased funding to address invasive mussels, the Okanagan Lake Regulation System review and update, and the Watershed Security Fund.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated May 31, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Dr. Jatel provided the board an update on council activities and noted that the June guest speaker is Pete Millard, General Manager of Science at Manaaki Wheuna Landcare Research. Dr. Millard oversees science delivery and excellence in biodiversity, biosecurity, climate change, and sustainable land use research and will be presenting on "Waiti: How Aotearoa New Zealand is Dealing with Water Quality and Other Environmental Issues."

The board was told that staff held the OBWB's annual Water Supply Webinar on May 9. At the time, there were concerns around low groundwater levels in the South Okanagan. While that seems to be rebounding as of early June, there are concerns about a hot, dry summer with the potential for drought this summer.

The Okanagan Hydrometric Monitoring program is looking at using new drone-boat technology to measure high streamflow levels which has the potential to offer more efficient and precise data collection.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated May 31, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.3 Policy and Planning Director Report

Ms. Garcia updated the board on the May 17 spring kick-off meeting of the Thompson Okanagan Regional Drought Response Team. Most recent well data indicates South Okanagan groundwater levels are doing better than they were in early May, but that levels in the North Okanagan are a concern. The rapid snow melt in spring means that rainfall will be important. There are already concerns about water temperatures in some South Okanagan streams with low-flows.

"THAT the Policy and Planning Director's Report, dated May 30, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.4 Climate Indicators Intern Report

Ms. Schira introduced some of the work she is doing looking at climate change indicators in the Okanagan. The project is using historical climate and hydrological data throughout the Okanagan to create indicators to see what is happening to heatwaves, extreme precipitation events, freshwater resources, droughts, snowpacks, and more. The goal is to present these indicators in a manner that will inform the residents of the Okanagan and help decision-makers understand the current effects of climate change. She then shared some of her early findings, including that in Kelowna, Vernon, and Penticton, data between 1905 and 2022 indicates that almost all summers have been warmer since 2000 with 2021 being the warmest. As well, almost all seasons are warmer than normal in Vernon.

"THAT the Climate Indicators Intern's Report, dated May 31, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.5 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson gave an update on the OBWB-Okanagan WaterWise's two outreach and education campaigns, Make Water Work (MWW) and Don't Move a Mussel (DMM). With the early onset of warm temperatures and a heavy freshet, some Okanagan local governments have reported that they are dealing with flooding while also being taxed by increased irrigation demand. As such, staff are ramping up WaterWise messaging on social media, while working on the roll-out of the MWW campaign, using billboards, social media ads and more. Staff are also working with Global TV to create a new PSA to have ready and available should drought become a concern. Ms. Jackson told the board that the formal launch of the campaign, and the announcement of two new garden centre partners was held May 18, attended by chiefs, mayors and councillors from each Okanagan region. A contract is also now in place with the Okanagan Xeriscape Association to help with the delivery of the MWW campaign.

Ms. Jackson also reported that work is underway to develop updated creative messaging and designs for the DMM campaign. Updates are being made to the DMM website and ads will be placed on billboards, social media, radio and more. A contract is also in place with the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society to extend the reach of the DMM message.

"THAT the Communications Director's Report, dated May 31, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.6 Deputy Administrator Report

Mr. Littley presented on an amphibious harvester that the OBWB is looking to purchase following an extensive RFP process. The Germany-sourced machine will be able to remove invasive milfoil at 1.7 metres deep, slightly deeper than the current 1.5 metres, and hold 5.5 m3 compared to the current 2-3 m3. In addition, the new machine is less noisy, has greater capacity so fewer trips are required to offload cut milfoil, and the engine is cleaner and more efficient. Mr. Littley advised the board of the terms to purchase the machine, including the payment schedule and details about international money transfers and exchange-rate planning. Pending board approval, the amphibious harvester would be delivered in June 2024.

"THAT the board authorize the Executive Director to execute the contract with Berky GMBH for the supply of an Amphibious Milfoil Harvester for the price of €466,912.24 (Approx. \$700,000 CAD) AND THAT the Milfoil Control Program Asset Replacement Plan 2023 be amended to defer other capital purchases in order to purchase the amphibious milfoil harvester for delivery in summer 2024."

CARRIED

Mr. Littley also reported that staff have sent a letter to Okanagan local governments with an update on the Sewerage Facilities Assistance Grants Program review.

"THAT the Deputy Administrator's Report, dated May 24, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

7. IN-CAMERA

7.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(c) of the Community Charter
Move to in-camera at 11:59 a.m.

Come out of in-camera at 12:30 p.m.

8. RISE & REPORT FROM IN-CAMERA

"THAT we acknowledge the excellent work of the OBWB Executive Director, and support a lift in salary to \$155,000 per year, beginning April 1, 2023; AND THAT the Chair and Vice-Chair of OBWB conduct a Performance Review of the OBWB Executive Director prior to the end of the year- 2023."

CARRIED

9. NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2023 at 10 a.m. at Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream, B.C.

10. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 6, 2023 be adjourned at 12 p.m."

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director