



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 5, 2024, ONLINE
OKANAGAN, B.C.**

PRESENT

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| Chair Blair Ireland | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Vice-chair Doug Holmes | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| 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 |
| Director Rick Knodel | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Director Sue McKortoff | 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) |

GUESTS

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| Lisa Scott | Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society |
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STAFF

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| Anna Warwick Sears | Executive Director |
| Nelson Jatel | Water Stewardship Director |
| James Littlely | Deputy Administrator |
| Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo | Office and Grants Manager |
| Corinne Jackson | Communications Director |
| Amanda Burnett | Communications Coordinator |
| Sandra Schira | Water Science Specialist |

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

He respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

5.1 Lisa Scott, Executive Director of Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society presenting on invasive mussel outreach and monitoring efforts in 2023

8.1 Letter from Columbia Shuswap Regional District re: invasive mussels

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb.6, 2024 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 6, 2023, held online.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Feb. 6, 2023, held online, be approved."

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

- 5.1 Presentation by Lisa Scott, Executive Director of Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society on invasive mussel outreach and monitoring efforts in 2023

Ms. Scott provided an overview of OASISS' aquatic invasive species prevention program, noting that core funding comes from OBWB, allowing it to provide a much more extensive boater outreach program than elsewhere in B.C.

The society also works on invasive plants in the Similkameen and lake monitoring for invasive mussels and clams, she added. Additional funding partners include RDOS, Government of Canada's Summer Jobs, and federal/provincial funding through Habitat Conservation Trust Fund for lake monitoring.

Last year, OASISS had a program supervisor from April to November, as well as three aquatic program staff in the summer. Staff interacted with about 3,360 people and distributed Don't Move A Mussel materials to 178 water recreation-related businesses. They also attended 15 events and presented to 139 youth, and surveyed 1,237 people with watercraft at 18 launches, including those with kayaks, and seadoos.

In addition, OASISS developed outreach materials regarding invasive fish, providing materials to pet stores and conducting outreach at Penticton's Canadian Tire. Staff also did biweekly water sampling June to September. They collected 131 samples from five lakes and surveyed 12 substrate monitor sites. Testing of the samples came back from the lab indicating no invasive mussels detected. Nineteen residents also volunteered to put substrate monitors on their private docks. These also came back negative for the presence of mussels.

In conducting boat launch surveys, 89% of watercraft were coming from within B.C., 11% were out-of-province. Of those from out of B.C. 19% did not stop at a watercraft inspection station.

Board directors noted the importance of their call for pull-the-plug legislation and perhaps an increase in the fine for not stopping at inspection stations.

Dir. Fyke noted the federal government's recognition of the Fraser River as a 'waterbody of national significance' and its connection to the Shuswap. The Okanagan is only about an hour's drive to the Shuswap, he added, noting that protecting the Okanagan would help protect the Fraser.

Ms. Scott was thanked for her presentation and OASISS' work, and she exited the meeting.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- 6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears updated the board on the annual audit, noting it is in progress and will be brought to the board in June. Planning is also underway for the joint board-Okanagan Water Stewardship

Council meeting in May, and staff are beginning to work on updating the OBWB Strategic Plan which ends in December 2024. The start of a staff service recognition program is also being reviewed.

The board also received an update on the water supply. It's still possible that the Okanagan will receive spring rains, but the forecast is for warmer and drier-than-normal conditions through the summer and water-related staff are preparing for another potential drought. The province's dam manager is holding back water on Okanagan Lake as much as he can while releasing as necessary for downstream needs, Dr. Sears added.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated Feb. 28, 2024, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Deputy Administrator Report

Mr. Littley noted the upcoming meeting of the Okanagan-Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group on Friday, including a presentation from B.C. province staff on the Invasive Mussel Defence Program. The board was also provided with an updated map indicating Okanagan waterways most at risk if invasive mussels arrived. The map will help authorities target resources to at-risk areas if needed.

Milfoil rototilling is being done in Wood and Osoyoos Lakes, but drought conditions have made such efforts difficult along some portions of Kal Beach, the board was told. The milfoil crew will be launching the rototiller in Osoyoos Lake in the coming days, and the new harvester should be arriving in a couple of weeks.

"THAT the Deputy Administrator Report, dated Feb. 28, 2024, be received."
CARRIED

6.3 Water Stewardship Director Report

Dr. Jatel reported that the last council meeting had presentations on watershed security planning and the OBWB's climate indicators project. Dir. Fyke added that one of the council's committees is researching funding opportunities for water quality stations.

The board was also told that plans for the upcoming Environmental Flows conference, March 13 to 15, are going well.

The Okanagan Hydrometric Program's technical committee, made up of representatives from OBWB, Okanagan Nation Alliance, and Environment and Climate Change Canada had its semi-annual meeting in February and discussions are now underway to work with Okanagan Indian Band to install three stream flow monitoring stations.

Finally, Dr. Jatel noted that he is continuing to work with UBC Okanagan and Mitacs on a collaborative project to hire a post-doc student to do an economic analysis of irrigated lands in the Okanagan.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated Feb. 27, 2024, be received."
CARRIED

6.4 Office and Grants Manager Report

Ms. Restrepo Tamayo explained that the call for proposals to the board's Water Conservation and

Quality Improvement Grant Program closed Feb. 23. Staff received 23 applications with a total ask of \$631,726. A review of the proposals will begin soon and the board will funding receive recommendations in April.

Directors were provided a rundown of options to attend the upcoming Environmental Flow conference and invited to contact Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo if planning to attend.

“THAT the Office and Grants Manager’s Report, dated Feb. 28, 2024, be received.”

CARRIED

6.5 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson provided an overview of the 2023 Make Water Work campaign, noting new partners and new advertising efforts. In all, the campaign delivered 6.7 million impressions, with people seeing and hearing the water conservation message on billboards, radio, on social media, on wrapped vehicles, at garden centres, local government and utility offices, and at community events. With local governments and utilities contributing between \$1,500 and \$3,500, matched by the OBWB’s Okanagan WaterWise program, the campaign cost \$52,670. This was leveraged to attract another \$25,200 in in-kind support, delivering a campaign valued at \$77,867. The offer of matching funds for 2024 has been sent to partners, Ms. Jackson added.

The board was also updated on various communication efforts, including support to the EF conference and invasive mussel projects.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated Feb. 28, 2024, be received.”

CARRIED

7. IN-CAMERA

6.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(k) and 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter)

The board exited the in-camera session at 12:11 p.m. to rise and report.

8. RISE AND REPORT

“THAT the board approve in principle the recommended changes to the SFA program terms of reference as provided, and that staff be directed to follow the process for continuing the SFA review as outlined above.

“AND THAT the board rise and report including the contents of this memo and the adopted resolution.”

CARRIED

9. CORRESPONDENCE

“THAT the letters regarding invasive mussel concerns from Westbank First Nations, District of Sicamous, Shuswap Watershed Council, Columbia Shuswap Regional District, and Thompson-Okanagan chambers to senior governments and cc’d to OBWB, and the letter from District of Invermere to OBWB, and the resolutions to SILGA from City of Kelowna and District of Sicamous, cc’d to OBWB, be received.”

CARRIED

10. NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Tuesday, April 2, 2024

at 10 a.m. at the Regional District of North Okanagan in Coldstream.

11. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 5, 2024 be adjourned at 12:14 p.m."

CARRIED

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| Certified Correct: | | |
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| Chair | | Executive Director |