

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD  
HELD MARCH 4, 2025, ONLINE**

---

**PRESENT**

Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Wayne Carson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt-Director Matt Taylor	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt-Director Kevin Kraft	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Jeremy Fyke	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C

**REGRETS**

Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance
---------------------	--------------------------

**STAFF**

Dr. Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
James Littley	Deputy Administrator
Dr. Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Carmen Weld	Communications Manager
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Sandra Schira	Water Science Specialist
Amanda Burnett	Communications Coordinator

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

He respectfully acknowledged that we work on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded tm̓x̌wúlaʔx̌w (land) of the syilx (Okanagan) people who have resided here since time immemorial. We honour and respect this land and the siwl̓k (water) which flows through the valley and connects us all.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

Due to time constraints, the Board has postponed the original scheduled delegation for a later date.

An in-camera session was announced by Dr. Sears and added as item number 9, which is reflected in the minutes.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***“ THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 4, 2025 be approved.”***

***CARRIED***

#### 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 4, 2025, held online.

***"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on February 4, 2025, held online, be approved."***

**CARRIED**

#### 5. DELEGATION

Due to time constraints, the Board has postponed the original scheduled delegation for a later date.

#### 6. STAFF REPORTS

##### 6.1 Executive Director Report – Dr. Anna Warwick Sears

Dr. Sears briefly introduced Carmen Weld, OBWB's new Communications Manager.

Dr. Sears presented the Board with a resolution regarding the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides in Okanagan waters.

*"For over 50 years, the Okanagan Basin Water Board has played a crucial role in safeguarding water quality, ensuring access to clean drinking water, supporting healthy agriculture, and maintaining thriving aquatic ecosystems and advocating for source protection. Okanagan communities deeply value and depend on their water, not only drinking water, but for clean, safe water for the environment, recreation and tourism. Our communities strongly oppose the use of chemical pesticides and aquatic herbicides in our lakes, streams, and reservoirs. The Okanagan Basin Water Board stands firmly against the application of these and any other chemicals in Okanagan waters."*

***"That the OBWB adopts the Statement Against the Application of Chemical Pesticides and Herbicides in Okanagan Waters as presented by staff."***

**CARRIED**

The Board received Dr. Sears' Executive Director Report.

***"THAT the Executive Director's report, dated February 25, 2025, be received."***

**CARRIED**

##### 6.2 Communications Manager Report – Carmen Weld

The Board received the Carmen Weld's Communications Manager Report.

***"THAT the Communication Director's report, dated February 24, 2025 be received."***

**CARRIED**

##### 6.3 Deputy Administrator Report – James Littlely

Mr. Littlely presented the Board with the Recommendation concerning the Regional District of the Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) request for clarification on the Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) program Terms of Reference, paragraph 4.8.5, pertaining to the allowance of accessory dwellings on lots below 1.0 Ha.

While paragraph 4.8.5 allows for an exclusion for "the creation of new lots," it doesn't explicitly

include accessory dwellings that connect to systems under the Municipal Wastewater Regulation. he recommended amending paragraph 4.8.5 to make this exclusion explicit:

*“4.8.5 OBWB discourages the creation of new private wastewater systems to serve as community sewer. However, the creation of lots below 1.0 Ha, and/or the allowance of accessory dwellings on lots below 1.0 Ha that connect to systems created and managed in accordance with the Municipal Wastewater Regulation will not affect a local government’s eligibility for SFA grants.”*

***“THAT the Board approve the amendment to paragraph 4.8.5 of the SFA program Terms of Reference as outlined above and that staff communicate the change to all eligible local governments.”***

**CARRIED**

The Board received Mr. Littley’s Deputy Administrator Report.

***“THAT the Deputy Administrator’s report, dated February 25, 2025 be received.”***

**CARRIED.**

#### 6.4 Water Stewardship Director Report – Dr. Nelson Jatel

Dr. Jatel presented the Board with a Recommendation to approve the members of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC), for the upcoming new term. The OWSC is made up of member organizations, which are invited to participate in the OWSC by designating a primary representative and an alternate. These organizations serve two-year terms on the OWSC. The Water Board Directors are asked to approve the participating organizations for the years 2025 – 2027. Unchanged from the previous term, these organizations are as follows:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada                                | 18. Ministry of Forests                            |
| 2. Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC | 19. Ministry of Land, Water & Resource Stewardship |
| 3. BC Agriculture Council  | 20. Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program    |
| 4. BC Fruit Growers Association                                  | 21. Okanagan College                               |
| 5. BC Groundwater Association                                    | 22. Okanagan Nation Alliance                       |
| 6. BC Water Supply Association                                   | 23. Osoyoos Indian Band                            |
| 7. BCWF - Okanagan region 8                                      | 24. Penticton Indian Band                          |
| 8. Canadian Water Resources Association                          | 25. Regional District of Central Okanagan          |
| 9. City of Kelowna   | 26. Regional District of North Okanagan            |
| 10. City of Penticton  | 27. Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen      |
| 11. City of Vernon   | 28. Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association          |
| 12. Denise Neilsen, Emerita                                      | 29. University of British Columbia Okanagan        |
| 13. Environment Canada - Pacific and Yukon Region                | 30. Westbank First Nation                          |
| 14. Fisheries and Oceans Canada                                  | 31. Okanagan Indian Band                           |
| 15. Interior Health Authority                                    | 32. Kelowna Chamber of Commerce                    |
| 16. Ministry of Agriculture                                      |  |
| 17. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy          |  |

Directors asked questions about OWSC membership participation, noting some missing local Chambers of Commerce, and why other local governments (for example, Lake Country) are not represented on the board. Dr. Jatel informed the Board that invitations were extended to all Okanagan Chambers, and those organizations expressing interest in participation are included on the OWSC. With respect to local governments, municipalities who wish to be formally represented should reach out to Dr. Jatel.

***“THAT the OBWB approve the 2025-2027 Water Stewardship Council membership list***

*consisting of the above organizations.”*

**CARRIED.**

The Board received Dr. Jatel's Water Stewardship Report included in the March Agenda Package.

*“THAT the Water Stewardship Director's report, dated February 24, 2025 be received.”*

**CARRIED.**

#### 6.5 Water Science Specialist Report – Sandra Schira

Ms. Schira provided the Board with a brief report on the lower-than-normal snowpacks. The Board received Ms. Schira's full Water Science Specialist Report.

*“THAT the Water Science Specialist's report, dated February 24, 2025 be received.”*

**CARRIED.**

#### 6.6 Office and Grants Manager Report – Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo

The Board received Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo's Office and Grants Manager Report.

*“THAT the Office and Grants Manager report, dated February 26, 2025 be received.”*

**CARRIED.**

### 7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No new or unfinished business.

### 8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Following the Board's letter to Hon. Minister Randene Neill, Minister of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship, the following individuals and organizations have sent the OBWB their letters of support for our updated calls to action sent in February to the Okanagan Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group:

- Boundary-Similkameen MLA, Donegal Wilson
- Health Officer's Council of B.C., Chair, Dr. Mark Lysyshyn
- District of Coldstream, Mayor and Council
- District of Lake Country, Mayor and Council
- Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce, President Jordan Knox and Executive Director Michael Magnusson
- City of Kelowna, Mayor Tom Dyas
- Tourism Revelstoke, Taniell Hamilton, Destination & Sustainability Manager
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, CEO Ellen Walker-Matthews

8.2 Letter from Christopher Garrish, Senior Manager of Planning Services at the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen regarding clarification of Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants Program Terms of Reference “1.0 Ha Policy” – Accessory Dwellings.

*“THAT the correspondence to the OBWB outlined above be received.”*

**CARRIED**

### 9. IN CAMERA

The Board entered an in-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(a) and 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter) at 10:18 a.m.

*“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board enter into an in-camera session.”*

**CARRIED.**

The board exited the in-camera session at 10:40 a.m.

Following the in-camera session, the board rose and reported the following motion.

***“THAT the board establish the position of Chief Operating Officer, reporting to the Executive Director, with responsibilities outlined in the attached job description;***

***AND THAT Mr. Littley be promoted to Chief Operating Officer consistent with Sections 151 and 152 of the Local Government Act, and consistent with the intention of the officer position established in the OBWB Governance Manual.”***

**CARRIED**

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., at the Regional District of North Okanagan office 9848 Aberdeen Road, Coldstream.

**NOTE:** Meetings of the Okanagan Basin Water Board are open to the public, and only closed for in-camera sessions as set out in the B.C. Community Charter. From time-to-time, the board will be holding its meeting online. If you are interested in attending an online meeting, please contact [communications@obwb.ca](mailto:communications@obwb.ca) for further details.

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director