



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD TUESDAY, NOV. 4, 2025 ONLINE.**

PRESENT

Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice Chair Doug Holmes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Alternate Director Kevin Kraft	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Wayne Carson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sheena Spencer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C.
Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance

STAFF

Melissa Tesche	Executive Director
James Littley	Chief Operating Officer
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Carolina Restrepo Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Carmen Weld	Communications Manager
Christina White	Water Quality Project Manager
Sandra Schira	Water Science Specialist
Amanda Burnett	Communications Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m.

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

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

No late items.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1** Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 7, 2025 held

at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen at 101 Martin St., Penticton, B.C.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Oct. 7, 2025, held at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, be approved.”

CARRIED

5. **BOARD CHAIR REMARKS**

No chair remarks.

6. **DELEGATION/PRESENTATION**

No delegation.

7. **STAFF REPORTS**

7.1 **Executive Director Report – Melissa Tesche**

Ms. Tesche updated the Board about the ongoing strategic planning process, highlighting the ongoing one-on-one interviews with Directors and confirming the in-person strategic planning session scheduled for Dec. 2, 2025 at the Kelowna Yacht Club.

Ms. Tesche, on behalf of Chief Operating Officer James Littley, provided an update on the upcoming second annual Okanagan-Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group meeting. The meeting will be cohosted by OBWB and Okanagan Nation Alliance. The session will bring together key partners and interested groups to build consensus on mandatory watercraft inspections and explore prevention strategies used in other jurisdictions.

Ms. Tesche also briefed the Board on the BC Watershed Security Coalition’s recent report, *Modernizing Industrial Water Rates in BC*, noting the report proposes a new provincial revenue stream that could be used to fund water and watershed projects in the province. Directors discussed the report’s findings.

Finally, Ms. Tesche reported on her recent attendance at an informal meeting of involved International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control meeting, alongside retired OBWB Executive Director and current IOLBOC member, Dr. Anna Warwick Sears.

“THAT the Executive Director’s Report, dated Oct. 30, 2025, be received.”

CARRIED

7.2 **Water Stewardship Director Report – Dr. Nelson Jatel**

Dr. Jatel provided an update to the Board about the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC), including a recent presentation on remote sensing technologies. Dr. Jatel also shared the news of a \$200K federal Environment and Climate Change Canada EcoAction Stream 2 grant awarded to the City of Kelowna. The funds will support a project to improve regional monitoring of harmful blue-green algal blooms, and both OBWB and Westbank First Nation are partners on the project. This project is important to ongoing efforts to monitor drinking water quality in the Okanagan, as some Okanagan local governments have been reporting blue-green algae blooms outside of expected seasons.

Dr. Jatel noted that the project partners would be presenting on the project at the upcoming OWSC meeting, to be held on Nov. 13, 2025.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Oct. 28, 2025, be received.”

CARRIED.

7.3 Communications Manager Report – Carmen Weld

Ms. Weld reported on the successful conclusion of the Make Water Work campaign, noting that individual prize winners were now being contacted. Ms. Weld also shared outreach results from the Don't Move a Mussel program and previewed upcoming winter social media initiatives focused on water education and engagement. Ms. Weld discussed the final Drought Bulletins of the season and highlighted Mr. Littley's recent interviews on AM1150 and CBC.

"THAT the Communication Manager's Report, dated Oct. 27, 2025, be received."
CARRIED.

7.4 Water Science Specialist Report – Sandra Schira

Ms. Schira presented to the Board about fall weather and hydrology conditions in the Okanagan, noting cool October temperatures, below-average precipitation, and continued low streamflows as the region heads into winter. She reported on forecasted La Niña conditions and there was discussion on the potential impact to winter water supply.

"THAT the Water Science Specialist's Report, dated Oct. 27, 2025, be received."
CARRIED.

7.5 Office and Grant Manager Report – Carolina Restrepo Tamayo

Ms. Restrepo Tamayo updated the Board on preparations for the 2026–27 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement grant cycle, presenting the proposed scoring criteria and annual theme of "Innovation in Water Supply, Quality, and Quantity" for board approval.

Director Tim Lezard entered the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

"THAT the process and scoring criteria for the grant competition be approved as outlined;

And

THAT for the 2026-2027 WCQI grant competition, up to 10 bonus points will be awarded for projects in any category related to Innovation in Water Supply, Quality, and Quantity."
CARRIED

"THAT the Water Science Specialist's Report, dated Oct. 28, 2025, be received."
CARRIED.

8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**8.1 Draft Budget for Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2027**

8.1.1 DRAFT Regional District Provisional Assessments

8.1.2 DRAFT OBWB Segmented Budget for the Year Ending March 31, 2027

The Board was presented with the draft 2026–27 budget for review. Ms. Tesche noted differences in presentation between this year's budget and previous year's budget. The Board Directors discussed the proposed budget.

"THAT the OBWB adopt the 2026-27 budget as presented."
CARRIED.

8.2 DRAFT 2026 Meeting Schedule

The Board was presented with the proposed 2026 meeting schedule, which was built to accommodate the 20th anniversary celebration of the OBWB’s Water Management Program in June and the upcoming municipal election in October. The Board requested a tentative December 2026 meeting be added to the schedule, noting the meeting would only proceed if all three regional districts have determined their OBWB appointees before that date.

“THAT the OBWB adopt the 2026-27 Meeting Schedule as amended.”

CARRIED

9. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence.

10. IN-CAMERA

No in-camera session held.

11. NEXT MEETING

11.1 The regular December meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board has been cancelled in lieu of the Strategic Planning workshop to be held on Dec. 2, 2025, at the Kelowna Yacht Club, 1370 Water St., Kelowna, B.C.

11.2 The next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2026, and will be held online.

12. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 4, 2025 be adjourned at 12:14 p.m.”

CARRIED

**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 for further details.*

Original signed by:

Original signed by:

Blair Ireland, OBWB Chairperson

Melissa Tesche, OBWB Executive Director