



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: November 6, 2020

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

Sue McKortoff - Chair,
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Cindy Fortin - Vice-Chair,
Regional District of Central Okanagan

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District of North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Bob Fleming, Regional District
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District of Central Okanagan

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Toni Boot, Regional District of
Okanagan-Similkameen

Rick Knodel, Regional District
of Okanagan-Similkameen

Chris Derickson, Okanagan
Nation Alliance

Bob Hrasko, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Denise Neilsen, Okanagan
Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of
the OBWB will be 10 a.m.
Tues. Dec. 1, 2020.
Location to be determined.

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Directors approve partnership with Province to address lake levels: The board approved a partnership between the OBWB and the Province of B.C. to do a gap analysis of studies as a preliminary step in working towards an updated Okanagan Lake Regulation System. The District of Peachland, impacted by flooding in recent years, recently raised the issue of lake level management to the OBWB. The Regional District of the Central Okanagan board echoed the concerns and asked OBWB to work with member communities to advocate to the province and expedite the necessary studies to update the lake management regulations. The OBWB board agreed to the request at this week's board meeting.

Water grant theme announced, intake opens: The board announced 'water security' as the theme of this year's Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program. As applications are reviewed, additional consideration will be given to those that address the theme, reducing water pollution, protecting or restoring natural assets that provide water quality or quantity benefits, or reducing drinking water advisories. A total \$350,000 is available. Applicants that meet the program criteria can receive between \$3,000 and \$30,000. Eligible applicants include Okanagan local governments and First Nations, irrigation districts and non-profit organizations. This year's application deadline is Feb. 26, 2021, 4 p.m. More information is available at www.OBWB.ca/wcqi.

Board hears presentation on Laurel Square project: City of Kelowna's Andrew Gibbs and Kelowna Museum's Linda Digby provided a virtual tour of a project outside the Laurel Packinghouse funded in part through an OBWB-WCQI grant last year. The project combines the history of the packinghouse and the historic importance of water to the region. Several interactive elements have been developed, including an irrigation flume that children can use to direct water, and a garden with Indigenous plants, helping promote plants suitable to the Okanagan's climate.

Water Board's 50th anniversary celebration continues with speaker series: As part of its 50th anniversary, the OBWB is holding the 2nd in a two-part online speaker series on Nov. 12 with Seth M. Siegel. The New York Times bestselling author, and Senior Fellow at the University of Wisconsin's Center for Water Policy, will reflect on the state of water management in the U.S. and globally, and provide lessons for the future of water management and governance, including in the Okanagan. This is a free event, but registration is necessary at <https://obwb-50.sethsiegel.eventbrite.ca>. An online speaker event was held Oct. 22 with Bob Sandford, Global Water Futures Chair in Water & Climate Security at the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health. A recording of the event is available at <https://youtu.be/MT1XfVHyQ2k>.

OBWB 2021-22 budget approved: Directors approved a \$3.6 million budget. The budget includes funds for the new hydrometric monitoring service for flood forecasting and response, the Milfoil Control Program, Sewerage Facilities Assistance Grants Program, and the Water Management Program (which includes the Water Stewardship Council, Water Research, WCQI grants, and Communications and Outreach).

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca