

Council Meeting
September 13th 2023 • 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Zoom meeting

Record of Decisions and Action Items
Approved on December 13th 2023

Meeting objectives

1. Receive update from Columbia Shuswap Regional District re: referendum
2. Receive update from program managers
3. Discuss SWC Water Quality Grant Program

Present

Jay Simpson, Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area F
Natalya Melnychuk, Vice Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area G
Marty Gibbons – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area C
Rhona Martin – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area E
Tim Lavery – City of Salmon Arm (*alternate for Debbie Cannon, to 11:25 am*)
Reid Hamer-Jackson – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase (*from 10:17 am*)
Robyn Laubman – Splatsin te Secwepemc
Jim Johnson – Regional District of North Okanagan, Area E (*from 10:16 am*)
Kym Keogh – BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Lindsay Benbow – BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
Kelly Chiatto – BC Ministry of Forests (*from 11:20 am*)
Erik Kok – Community representative
Kimm Magill-Hofmann – Community representative
Phil Owen – Community representative
Dennis Einarson – Senior Scientific Advisor

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

Observers

Linda Franklin
Ian Rogalski
Clyde Mitchell
Barbra Fairclough
James Telford

Regrets

Dean Trumbley
Pam Beech
Howard Nordquist
Alyssa Hopkins

Call to Order

Chair Jay Simpson called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM

Chair Simpson acknowledged the traditional and historic lands of the Secwepemc and Syilx First Nations.

Adoption of meeting agenda

Moved/seconded by Councillor Lavery/Vice Chair Melychuk that:

The agenda for the September 13th 2023 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adopted.

Carried

Adoption of meeting summary

Moved/seconded by Mayor Hamer-Jackson/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:

The summary of the June 14th 2023 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adopted.

Carried

Correspondence

Moved/seconded by Erik Kok/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:

The correspondence be received for information (letter from Anna Warwick-Sears, Executive Director of the Okanagan Basin Water Board to three Provincial Ministers regarding calls to action to protect BC from invasive mussels, dated August 15th 2023, copied to the Shuswap Watershed Council).

Carried

Old business

None

Report from Chair

The Chair reported briefly on the devastation caused by wildfires in the Shuswap region. The fires impacted the CSRD holding a referendum in August for the continuation of the Shuswap Watershed Council service; as such, the CSRD has postponed the referendum (due to Provincial Ministerial Order) to a later date not yet determined. In light of this, the financial contribution to the SWC from the CSRD which was set to expire on December 31st 2023 has been extended to December 31st 2024. Chair Simpson commented that therefore the Contribution Agreement between the Fraser Basin Council and the four funders will need to be amended to reflect the extension by the CSRD.

Moved/seconded by Chair Simpson/Councillor Lavery that:

Staff be directed to work with the administrators of the four funding organizations (CSRD, TNRD, City of Salmon Arm and Adams Lake Indian Band) to amend the Contribution Agreement by extending it by a year.

Carried (Director Gibbons opposed)

Chair Simpson also remarked that he is attending the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention next week in Vancouver and has meetings scheduled with Minister Cullen (Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship) about the SWC and Provincial support and involvement, Minister Alexis (Agriculture & Food) regarding the SWC's programs to support and encourage sustainable agriculture practices, and with BC Hydro regarding invasive mussels.

Erik Kok suggested that the Chair speak with the Minister of Agriculture & Food at UBCM about agricultural compliance and find out what enforcement actions are planned for the Salmon and Shuswap River valleys.

Director Johnson and Mayor Lepsoe entered the meeting at 10:17 am

Chair Simpson commented on the impacts that the 2023 wildfires will have on water quality in the Shuswap in the next few years. A roundtable discussion took place with many Council members expressing concerns about impacts to infrastructure, drinking water, and riparian ecosystems. Concerns about challenges of re-building homes in their former locations in proximity to riparian areas was also brought forward, given that riparian setbacks and rules have changed since some home were first built.

Report from Program Managers

Erin Vieira provided a financial report for the first quarter, April 1st – September 30th 2023:

Table 1. Revenue sources (unchanged from June SWC meeting)

Revenue sources	(\$)
2022-23 operational surplus	47,656
2023-23 funds allocated and carried forward to 2023-24 projects	53,004
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
CSRD Areas C, D, E, F, G and District of Sicamous	160,000
TNRD	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	40,000
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada Boating Safety Contribution Program	24,025
Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (confirmed)	0
Total revenue	379,585

Budget and expenses presented on the next page ...

**Report from
Program Managers**

Table 2. Budget and actual expenses to-date

Program	Annual budget (\$)			Q1 actual expenses (\$)		
	External expenses	Program mgmt. (labour)	Sub-total	External expenses	Program mgmt. (labour)	Sub-total
Water Quality Monitoring Program						
Shuswap Water Monitoring Group	0	7200	7200	0	600	600
Water monitoring expenses	21,900	2200	24,100	13,125	0	13,125
Annual Water Quality Report	7200	5800	13,000	3836.25	920	4756.25
Water Quality Protection Program						
Water Protection Advisory Committee	0	4200	4200	0	106.67	106.67
Water Quality Grant Program	108,464	9800	118,264	26,590.93	2880.00	29,470.93
Wetland Strategy	20,000	4000	24,000	0	3413.33	3413.33
Climate change impact study (with TRU)	3000	600	3600	3000.00	280.00	3280.00
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program						
Education and outreach campaigns	33,300	6600	39,900	30,306.86	2840.00	33,146.86
Safe Recreation Program						
Safety campaigns	20,000	10,000	30,000	6558.12	1240.00	7798.12
Communications, Public Engagement, & Advocacy						
Communications collateral	3250	6100	9350	2183.81	2400.00	4583.81
Public and media engagement	4150	16,800	20,950	1291.76	3800.00	5091.76
Advocacy	0	4200	4200	0	0	0
Administration						
Council meetings, work planning, staff liaise with Chair and Vice Chair	2600	20,800	23,400	578.88	5946.67	6525.55
Financial management and fund development	0	16,700	16,700	0	4586.67	4586.67
Sub-total expenses	223,864	115,000	338,864	87,471.59	29,013.33	116,484.92
Contribution to Operating Reserve			*40,721			
Total budget for 2023-24			379,585			

**Report from
Program Managers**

Erin Vieira provided a program operations update since the last Council meeting held in June:

- SWC members toured Crystal Lake Ranch and Gardom Lake wetland on June 14th to learn about projects completed there with SWC Water Quality Grant funding
- The 7th annual Shuswap Water Quality Summary Report was published in June, it presents data from the 2022 monitoring season and a variety of articles about water quality and stewardship. The report is available online and print copies are available at Shuswap libraries.
- Several communiques have been published since June including three media releases, an Annual Highlights Summary, and a series of FAQs. Staff also gave presentations about the SWC at community meetings in Sorrento and Sicamous in June and July.
- The Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program has progressed over the summer. Educational campaigns are being delivered during boating season, promoting 'Clean-Drain-Dry' and watercraft inspection for travellers. Early detection monitoring for invasive mussels is underway at 13 sites in the Shuswap by the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS); this work is funded by the SWC and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. SWC program manager participated in a CSISS monitoring day in August.
- The Safe Recreation Program has progressed over the summer and will continue until mid-October. Staff promoted national safety campaigns (e.g., Water Safety Week in June and Drowning Prevention Week in July) and promoted 8 tips for safety through rack cards, posters, advertising and social media.
- Staff are currently applying to Transport Canada for federal grant funding to support the SWC's Safe Recreation Program in 2024; Transport Canada will fund up to 75% of program costs.
- The Wetland Strategy is progressing. The ad hoc Wetland Committee met on June 19th and directed staff to hire a contractor to complete a GIS analysis and inventory of water and wetland features for the study area. The committee will meet again in October to discuss next steps. Staff are seeking external funding opportunities for the development and implementation of the Wetland Strategy.
- Staff have initiated a second letter to Interior Health to be jointly signed by local government partners regarding algal bloom response and responsibilities.
- Staff relayed another opportunity for a field tour to learn about agriculture and nutrient management.

Discussion

Robyn Laubman inquired if future Water Quality Summary Reports could include trends, demonstrating water quality differences over time. Ms. Vieira replied that the BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy recently released a detailed assessment report on Shuswap Lake that covers trends (report is available [here](#)); in addition, SWC staff are updating the 2020 Nutrient

Research Summary Report to include historical information about nutrient conditions in Mara Lake, as revealed in the sediment core study done by UBC-Okanagan.

Director Martin inquired if there is any water monitoring data to show the effectiveness of the new wetland built there.

Action item:

Alex de Chantal will follow up with the Gardom Lake Stewardship Society.

New business

Alex de Chantal explained the changes that staff are recommending to the Water Quality Grant Program: (1) adjust the way grant applications are reviewed and scored such that increased weight be given to the technical merit and scale and scope of proposals; and, (2) increase the grant program budget in recognition of increased demand for the program and inflation impacting project costs. Mr. de Chantal also announced that staff are streamlining the grant submission process this year and incorporating an online application. The grant program will open for applications on December 1st 2023 and close on January 31st 2024 (i.e., a two-month application window)

Kelly Chiatto entered the meeting at 11:20 am

Discussion

A roundtable discussion took place. Chair Simpson expressed his support for the recommendations. Other SWC members had comments and questions about the type of projects the grant program provides funding to. Comments were also made about the goals of the Wetland Strategy underway, which overlaps with the goals of the Water Quality Grant Program. Phil Owen and Erik Kok commented that the grant program could encourage and fund post-wildfire riparian restoration projects. The Chair requested that staff present the full Water Quality Grant Program guide at the December Council meeting for information.

Moved/seconded by Kimm Magill-Hofmann/Vice Chair Melnychuk:

That the recommended revision to the grant program scoring criteria be approved.

Carried

The Motion to increase the Water Quality Grant Program budget could not be made because there wasn't financial quorum in the meeting.

Action items:

Staff will discuss the grant program guidelines with the Water Protection Advisory Committee members at their next meeting (this Fall, date TBD).

Staff will include the Grant Program Guide in the agenda package for the December 13th Shuswap Watershed Council meeting, for information.

**Guest presentation:
Anna Warwick-
Sears, Okanagan
Basin Water Board**

Anna Warwick-Sears, Executive Director of the Okanagan Basin Water Board, presented an overview of the OBWB's history, governance, and programs. The OBWB was established 1968 as an Okanagan valley-wide partnership to identify and resolve critical water issues in the Okanagan watershed. There are 12 directors on the Board, nine of whom are appointed by the three Okanagan Regional Districts; there is also one representative each from the Okanagan Nation Alliance, the BC Water Supply Association, and the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (WSC). The WSC is a technical advisory committee of the OBWB with experts in the field of health, fisheries, agriculture, water utilities and more from across the valley. There are nine staff working for the OBWB.

The OBWB is funded by local taxation from three local government partners. Ms. Warwick-Sears explained that everyone in the Okanagan watershed – regardless of which regional district they live in – pays into the OBWB at the same rate. This funding model was established in the late 1960s, shortly after the regional districts were set up.

The OBWB's mandate is to define water problems, identify priorities, communicate and coordinate with various orders of government, present recommendations to government regulators to better manage the watershed, and provide funding for water quality and conservation projects.

In their 53 years of operation, the OBWB has consistently run three programs: a Sewage Infrastructure Grants Program whereby the OBWB provides grant funds to local governments for upgrades; a Eurasian Watermilfoil Control Program in Okanagan Lake; and a Water Management Program. Over the years other programs have been delivered including water conservation, water quality improvement grants, 'Don't Move a Mussel' education and advocacy, drought communication, collaborative flood mapping and flood risk mapping, and hydrometric monitoring and modeling.

There was a question period following Ms. Warwick-Sears presentation. Director Gibbons inquired how the funding model, with equal contributions from three local governments, was established. Ms. Warwick-Sears replied that it was set up in the very beginning (late 1960s) shortly after regional districts were established.

Vice Chair Melnychuk commented on the shared water responsibilities by local government and the Province. Ms. Warwick-Sears further commented that the OBWB is sensitive to the fact that it is doing work that falls within Provincial mandates but that the OBWB feels strongly that they need to be leading work in order to mitigate the risk of water quantity and quality issues.

Chair Simpson thanked Anna for her presentation and commented that another meeting with her to learn more would be beneficial.

Action item:

Staff to set up another meeting with Ms. Warwick-Sears (possibly March 2024 SWC mtg).

Roundtable

This agenda item was removed from the agenda.

Adjourn

Moved/seconded by Mayor Hamer-Jackson/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The September 13th 2023 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adjourned.

Carried

Meeting adjourned at 12:24 PM.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:



Chair