



Minutes

Water Services Advisory Committee Meeting

February 21, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Council Chambers
10150 Bottom Wood Lake Road
Lake Country, British Columbia V4V 2M1

Council Present: Councillor Tricia Brett
Councillor Todd McKenzie

Council Absent: Mayor Blair Ireland

Staff Present: Kiel Wilkie, Capital Project Manager
Mike Mitchell, Utility Operations Manager
Nick Van Dalen, Engineering Technician II
Janice Pederson, Infrastructure Clerk
Sarah Graham, Engineering Technician II
Shelby McFarlane, Wastewater Operator III

Committee Members Present: Keith Veerman, Chair
Berry Van De Snepscheut
Dave Allingham
Ron Buss
Al Gatzke
Brad Krahn
Keith Hanson

1. Call to Order

We acknowledge that we are conducting our business today on the unceded territory of squilx"/syilx (Okanagan) peoples. As a Committee, we recognize the importance of doing our best to build respectful relationships that contribute to stewarding the land and waters in the community with integrity and consideration for future generations.

Staff called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

2. Adoption of Agenda

It was moved and seconded

THAT the Water Services Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda of February 21, 2025 be adopted.

Carried.

3. Adoption of Minutes

It was moved and seconded

THAT the Water Services Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of November 8, 2024 be adopted with section 8 bullet 6 be revised as follows:

Staff noted that agricultural rates are currently subsidized by other user groups. An increase in agricultural water usage, without increase in revenue, could lead to decreased revenue and higher costs for other users.

Carried.

4. Election of Chair

It was moved and seconded

THAT Keith Veerman is Chair of the Water Services Advisory Committee for the 2025 calendar year.

Carried.

5. Beaver Lake & Vernon Creek Water Management Plan

The Engineering Technician II, (SG) presented an update on the Beaver Lake Chain & Vernon Creek Water Management Plan

- This is a plan to provide reliable Environmental Flow Needs (EFN) in Middle Vernon Creek (MVC), without jeopardizing the community water availability in a multi-year drought.
- The District is required to provide environmental flows as part of their water licensing.
- 2021 & 2023 drought conditions coupled with release orders for EFN in MVC made our source vulnerable to a multi-year drought situation.
- Previous Duck Lake control structure, (sandbag dam), wiped out in 2017 flood and was not replaced.
- Vernon Creek was diverted to Duck Lake (Pre1970s).

This plan was done in three phases:

- **Phase one** was to define the problem by collecting historical reports and data and collaboration with governing bodies such as Ministry of Water, Land and Resource and

the Ministry of Environment and other stakeholders including City of Kelowna, OKIB and RDCO,

- Several challenges that were highlighted:
 - DLC is required to release large amounts of water from Beaver Lake to fill Duck Lake, thus establishing EFN in Middle Vernon Creek. The amount of water released equates to >1,000ML, which is the equivalent of what the agriculture community uses in the months of July & August.
 - Duck Lake water levels drop below outlet level into Middle Vernon Creek causing the creek to almost run dry during summer months.
 - Achieving EFNs in Middle Vernon Creek requires releasing large volumes of water from Beaver Lake storage to fill Duck Lake to the outlet level.
 - Middle Vernon Creek is a key kokanee spawning habitat.
 - MVC nearly runs dry in the summer due to Duck Lake levels and adjacent agricultural withdrawals.
- **Phase two** was to review proposed solutions and meet with multi-sector agencies.
- Reviewed nine different alternatives that were proposed in past reports and studies.
- The three most preferred options from the nine alternatives are:
 - Reestablishing a control structure of Duck Lake outlet
 - Groundwater extraction well adjacent to the WWTP for stream augmentation
 - Partial piped bypass of Duck Lake, (considered ultimate long-term solution)
- **Phase three** which is currently underway, is to conduct a feasibility & environmental impact study on each of the three alternatives.

6. Liquid Waste Management Plan - Reclaimed Water

The Manager of Capital Projects presented to the Committee the Liquid Waste Management (LWMP) plan and highlighted the following:

- LWMP is a formal agreement with the BC Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy with two primary objectives:
 - Protect public health and the environment
 - Effectively consult the public
- Stage 1/2 report has been accepted by the Ministry of Environment, this report consisted of:
 - District collection system and required improvements
 - WWTP and required improvements
 - Clean water return - long term effluent disposal

- Biosolid disposal
- Storm water
- As per the Ministries requirements, the final Stage 3 report will consist of:
 - Final Environmental Impact Study (EIS) work for outfall
 - Retrofit sewer plan
 - Update cost estimates
 - Engagement with Indigenous partners
 - Engagement with Community and Stakeholders, particularly around reclaimed water
 - Finalize treated disposal plan (ground, reclaimed water reuse & Okanagan Lake)
- The reclaimed water use strategies are a requirement to have in the Liquid Waste Management Plan
- The District has been working with The Province to discuss solutions that will work and be found acceptable. All solutions use a groundwater extraction well adjacent to the WWTP, and they are as follows:
 - Middle Vernon Creek flow augmentation. Supplementing Middle Vernon Creek flows for environment and adjacent operations.
 - Bottom Wood Lake Road irrigation line extension, this will be a dedicated irrigation line, allowing pressurized agricultural water to any crops and parks that currently are not connected to the Districts system.
 - Winfield west bench twinning, adding groundwater to a future irrigation system.

This phase in particular requires regulations to change such that it will not impact farmers marketability and future land use.

The next steps:

- Finalize report and engagement
- Send a draft to Ministry staff for review
- Seek council adoption
- Send to Ministry for approval

It was moved and seconded

THAT the Water Services Advisory Committee supports the development of a reclaimed water reuse strategy, provided that it's implementation does not negatively impact the agricultural community's ability to sell it's product or have long-term impact on agricultural farm land.

Carried.

7. Agricultural Irrigation Usage Plan Terms of Reference

The Engineering Technician II, (NVD) presented to the committee on the final Terms of Reference for the Agricultural Irrigation Usage Plan.

- The Terms of Reference consists of:
 - Understanding agricultural needs
 - Address water availability challenges
 - Promoting water conservation
 - Mitigating drought impacts
- Terms of Reference Revisions:
 - Added definitions and used consistent wording for agricultural irrigation water
 - Stressed importance of education
 - Added OKIB as a stakeholder
 - Acquired a professional agrologist advisor
 - Included reference to the 2024 Water Conservation Plan

It was moved and seconded

THAT the Water Services Advisory Committee supports staff's proposed Agricultural Irrigation Usage plan terms of reference with changes as follows:

- *The addition of "and future agricultural" to the object of assess current irrigation practices and water consumption of users.*
- *Replacing Section 1.e bullet 1 with "Water requirements: assess the specific watering needs of different crops that can be grown within existing allocations and allotments".*
- *Adding "and water licensing" to end of Section 2.b.*
- *Adding "or long-term drought scenario" to the end of Section 4.a.*
- *Adding bullet "This plan will outline the impacts across all customer types" to Section 4.a.*

Carried.

8. Small Scale Farm Use

The Manager of Capital Projects updated the committee with the topic of Small Scale Farm use and highlighted the following:

- The issue statement related to this matter is that properties under 2 acres often struggle to obtain farm status, which disqualifies them from accessing water at agricultural rates and can make their farming operations financially unviable.
- A previous meeting resolution requested staff provide more information on the following related to small scale farming:

- Proposed types of properties that could be considered in a small-scale farming policy
- Potential impacts on water rates and consumption
- How other purveyors consider the issue.

It was moved and seconded

THAT the Water Services Advisory Committee requests staff draft a Small Scale Farming policy that includes provisions for properties to benefit from agricultural water rates provided:

- *Benefitting properties are greater than 1 acre and less than 2 acres*
- *Benefitting properties are included within the Agricultural Land Reserve*
- *Benefitting properties provide documentation demonstrating agricultural activities and practices*
- *All service installation costs, including metering, are to be borne by the benefitting properties*

AND THAT the draft policy be reviewed at a subsequent Water Services Advisory Committee meeting.

Committee was advised that if the draft policy is endorsed, its ultimate implementation is a Council decision.

Carried.

9. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be scheduled at the call of the Chair.

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Keith Veerman, Chair

Janice Pederson, Recording Secretary