

Council Meeting
June 12th 2024 • 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Columbia Shuswap Regional District Boardroom
555 Harbourfront Drive NE
Salmon Arm, BC

Draft Record of Decisions and Action Items as at June 12th 2024
This record is subject to change at the next Council meeting

Meeting objectives

1. Receive update from program managers
2. Approve revised budget for 2024-25
3. Receive guest presentations
4. Roundtable discussion on formation of a committee to work on fundraising and governance

Present

Rhona Martin, Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area E
Natalya Melnychuk, Vice Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area G (*by Zoom, to 10:10*)
Jay Simpson – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area F (*by Zoom, until 11:15*)
Debbie Cannon – City of Salmon Arm
Pam Beech – District of Sicamous (*by Zoom*)
Reid Hamer-Jackson – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase
Rick Fairbairn – Regional District of North Okanagan, Area D (*by Zoom*)
Diane Sutherland – BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (*alternate, by Zoom*)
Lindsay Benbow – BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
Kelly Chiatto – BC Ministry of Forests (*by Zoom, to 11:50*)
Erik Kok – Community representative (*to 11:35*)
Kimm Magill-Hofmann – Community representative
Phil Owen – Community representative
Dennis Einarson – Senior Scientific Advisor

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

Observers

Rob Solinger
Ian Rogalski

Regrets

Robyn Laubman
Brian Schreiner
Marty Gibbons
Dean Trumbley
Howard Nordquist

- Call to Order** Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair acknowledged the meeting taking place on the historical and traditional lands of the Secwepemc and Syilx Peoples.
- Adoption of meeting agenda** **Moved/seconded** by Councillor Cannon/Erik Kok that:
The agenda for the June 12th 2024 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adopted.
CARRIED
- Adoption of meeting summary** **Moved/seconded** by Phil Owen/Kimm Magill-Hofmann that:
The draft summary of the March 13th 2024 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council be adopted.
CARRIED
- Correspondence** **Moved/seconded** by Councillor Cannon/Director Hamer-Jackson that:
The correspondence be received for information.
CARRIED
- Old business** Erin Vieira, program manager, reported that an email vote took place on April 23rd to approve two Water Quality Grant Program applications. The vote passed with 7 in favour and one opposed. Staff have signed Contribution Agreements with all grant recipients, and work is underway with the grant funds. The total value of the SWC grant funding awarded this year is \$59,961.
- Report from Chair** No report.
- Update from CSRD administration** John MacLean, Chief Administrative Officer for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, joined the meeting by telephone. He explained that the CSRD established their participation in the SWC through a bylaw that had a 'sunset clause'. The bylaw was originally scheduled to sunset during the Covid pandemic. The provincial government granted an extension to the CSRD's bylaw until such time it was safe to convene the public in an assent process regarding the continuation of the bylaw. A referendum was scheduled for August 2023 but had to be re-scheduled due to wildfires in the region to February 2024. Referendum results indicated that the majority of voters are not in support of continuing CSRD funding to the SWC. Thus, the bylaw will come to an end in December 2024. Beyond 2024, the CSRD will not have a service, bylaw or other mechanism to appoint CSRD directors to the SWC. Mr. MacLean clarified that CSRD directors may choose to use discretionary or grant-in-aid funding to support the SWC, but there will be no formal agreement or participation of the CSRD in the SWC starting in 2025.

Vice Chair Melnychuk left the meeting at 10:10

Discussion

Erik Kok asked about the percentage of electorate that voted in the referendum. Mr. MacLean said that approximately 1200 votes were cast, out of an estimated 10,000 – 12,000 eligible voters. Mr. Kok also clarified that CSRD directors could participate in the SWC beyond 2024, but not as an appointed representative of the CSRD. Mr. MacLean confirmed that yes, that is correct. Mr. Kok also clarified that the CSRD is not ordering directors not to participate in the SWC. Mr. MacLean said that yes, that is also correct.

Director Simpson asked SWC staff if Area Directors were to contribute funding via grant-in-aid or discretionary funds in 2025, would that allow them to participate and vote? Erin Vieira replied that it possibly could, but that the SWC Terms of Reference would need to be revised to reflect changing membership and funding. Revising the Terms of Reference will be a decision of the SWC members.

Kimm Magill-Hofmann asked if the CSRD could change their participation and support of the SWC in the future? Mr. MacLean said that it could, if the board provided the direction to do so. It would require public assent to establish a service, as before.

Councillor Cannon asked if the CSRD could hold another referendum concurrent with the next local government election. Mr. MacLean said that yes, it would be possible, and would require a CSRD board directive.

Dennis Einarson asked about the results of the referendum. The CSRD website reports that the results were 982 against and 364 for the service and funding to the SWC.

Director Lepsoe commented that water quality is very important, including for residents in the Village of Chase downstream of the lake. He remarked that he and residents of Chase disappointed with the results of the referendum.

Councillor Beech commented that a lot of effort by the CSRD was put into preparing for the referendum and she agreed with other comments that the voter turnout was very poor.

Mr. MacLean left the meeting at 10:30.

Director Fairbairn commented that the Regional District of North Okanagan has two representatives appointed to the Shuswap Watershed Council.

Director Simpson suggested that local government representatives of the SWC convene for a meeting in the Fall to discuss how to keep the SWC going.

Report from Program Managers: Year-end financial report for 2023-24

Erin Vieira, Program Manager, presented the year-end financial report for 2023-24:

Revenue Source	Amount (\$)
2022-23 operational surplus (carried forward from March 31 st , 2023)	47,656
2022-23 funds allocated and carried forward to 2023-24 projects	53,004 ¹
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Areas C, D, E, F and the District of Sicamous)	160,000
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	40,000
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Federal grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada – Boating Safety Contribution Program	24,025
Environment & Climate Change Canada – Fraser River Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative	40,000
Revenue for 2023-24	419,585

Expenses on next page ...

Program Expenses	Budget (\$)		Expenses (\$)		Variance (\$)
	Program mgmt.	Disbursements	Program mgmt.	Disbursements	
Water Quality Monitoring Program					
• Monitoring Group	7200	0	7493	0	(293)
• Water monitoring	2200	21,900	600	21,037	2463
• Annual Water Quality Report	5800	7200	4880	8402	(281)
Water Quality Protection Program					
• Advisory Committee	4200	0	4173	429	(402)
• Grant Program	9800	118,464	9827	52,849	65,588
• Wetland Strategy	12,600	51,400	11,280	36,398	16,322
• Climate change research (TRU)	600	3000	560	3000	40
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program	6600	33,300	6800	34,251	(1151)
Safe Recreation Program	10,000	20,000	9920	13,925	6155
Communications & Advocacy					
• Communications collateral	6100	3250	5907	4509	(1065)
• Public, media engagement	17,400	9650	19,320	10,159	(2429)
• Advocacy	4200	0	3213	0	509
Management & Administration					
• Council meetings, work planning, liaison	20,800	2600	23,007	1405	(1012)
• Financial management, fund development	16,700	0	16,547	0	153
Sub-total operational expenses	124,200	270,764	123,527	186,363	85,074
2023-24 contribution to Operating Reserve		24,621		24,621	0
Summary of expenses		419,585		334,511	85,074

Ms. Vieira gave a brief overview of 2023-24 activities and accomplishments, which will be covered in the upcoming Annual Report (publishing soon):

- The Shuswap Watershed Council facilitates collaboration on water issues. 10 organizations participate in the Council and 19 organizations participate in the Monitoring Group.
- The Water Quality Grant Program awarded five grants in 2023 worth \$52,760 which leveraged an additional \$56,869
- Development of a wetland strategy for the Shuswap began, with two preliminary phases complete that involved data collection and analysis
- The Zebra and Quagga Mussel Prevention Program supported early-detection monitoring on seven waterbodies in the Shuswap while the education and outreach had approximately 2.5 million impressions through articles, advertising, and billboards
- Safe boating campaigns had approximately 686,000 impressions
- Two new watershed research projects got underway with universities
- New and ongoing communiques and advocacy.

**Report from
Program
Managers:
Program
operations
update**

Erin Vieira presented an overview of work done since the last Council meeting in March:

- The new Community Water Monitoring Grants program is running. It has a \$3000 budget. Community and stewardship groups are invited to apply for a grant to support water monitoring. To-date, grants have been approved for Gardom Lake Stewardship Society and White Lake Residents' Association.
- The Water Quality Grant Program is also running; six projects have been recommended and approved for funding. Staff have contribution agreements in place with all applicants. The grant recipients are: Sunnybrae Winery, Gietema Farms, Syme Farms, Foxtrot Dairy, and Jeff Czepil.
- Phase 2 of the Wetland Strategy is complete. Associated Environmental submitted their report to staff, it contains four strategic direction to be incorporated into a strategy. Staff have completed reporting to the funder of this work, Environment & Climate Change Canada. Next step for staff is to convene the Wetland Strategy Committee to review the report and discuss next steps.
- Staff worked with graduate student Margot Webster, Royal Roads University, to sign a contribution agreement for funding support of her research project on floating treatment wetlands in the Salmon River. A media release about the project was sent out by staff and then a radio interview on CBC was done with Ms. Webster and SWC Chair Rhona Martin.
- Education/awareness campaigns for the prevention of zebra and quagga mussels are underway. Staff sent out articles and advertisements throughout the month of May, 'Invasive Species Action Month'. Campaigns will continue through summer into fall. Staff also relayed that the Province of BC has enacted a new prevention measure requiring travellers to pull watercraft drain-plugs prior to travelling on BC roads.
- The SWC is providing financial support to the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society who are monitoring 12 sites on six waterbodies in the Shuswap for invasive mussels in 2024

- Boating and recreation safety campaigns launched on May long weekend. Campaigns promote 8 tips for safety and also promote the availability of lifejackets for kids from 20 loaner kiosks in the Shuswap.
- Staff reported that Transport Canada turned down the SWC’s application for \$24,000 federal grant funding due to the federal fund being oversubscribed.
- Staff have sent out four media releases since April and are working on the SWC Annual Report for 2023-24
- Staff have submitted a report to Elections BC for communication expenses incurred by the SWC during the CSRD referendum period, as required by the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act
- Staff are looking into a new funding opportunity from the Provincial Watershed Security Fund.

Revised budget for 2024-25

Erin Vieira presented a revised budget for 2023-24. Ms. Vieira explained that revisions were necessary to update actual expenses according to what was approved at the March SWC meeting and to adjust the revenue due to loss of funding from Transport Canada:

Revenue Source	Former budget (approved March 13th 2024)	Revised budget
2023-24 operational surplus	20,410	25,113
2023-24 funds allocated and carried forward to 2024-25 projects	65,000	59,961
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>		
Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Areas C, D, E, F and the District of Sicamous)	0	0
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	0	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	0	0
Adams Lake Indian Band	0	1300
<i>Federal grant funding:</i>		
Transport Canada – Boating Safety Contribution Program	24,391	0
Grants-in-aid (potential multiple contributors)	40,000	
<i>SWC Operating Reserve:</i>		
Operating reserve balance from March 31 st 2024	174,987	174,987
Revenue for 2024-25	324,788	314,961

Program expenses shown on next page...

Program Expenses - Summary	Former budget (approved March 13 th 2024)			Revised budget		
	Program mgmt.	Disburse-ments	Sub-total	Program mgmt.	Disburse-ments	Sub-total
Water Quality Monitoring Program	14,063	33,559	47,622	14,063	33,059	47,122
Water Quality Protection Program	20,250	129,860	150,110	20,250	124,821	145,071
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program	7425	26,220	33,645	7425	27,432	34,857
Safe Recreation Program	9450	20,700	30,150	9450	14,400	23,850
Communications & Advocacy	16,763	4900	21,663	16,763	2725	19,488
Council Meetings & Administration	38,131	1850	39,981	38,131	1850	39,981
Sub-total operational expenses	106,081	217,089	323,170	106,081	204,287	310,368
Surplus			1618			4593
Summary of expenses			324,788			314,961

Erik Kok proposed that, due to loss of funding from Transport Canada, the Safe Recreation Program be cut back while maintaining the focus on water quality and invasive mussels. Chair Martin explained that there is some strong – albeit mixed – support for the safety program. Councillor Cannon also commented that in her opinion water quality is the more important focus for the SWC. Phil Owen also agreed that without federal funding, the safety program be cut back.

Ms. Vieira explained that the revised budget needs to be approved, and reminded everyone present that the meeting attendance does not meet quorum for financial decisions.

Moved/seconded by Director Simpson/Director Hamer-Jackson that:

Staff be directed to reduce the safe recreation program to a minimum, direct the savings to the surplus, and that the budget go to an email vote.

CARRIED

Action item:

Staff will facilitate an email vote for the revised budget.

Director Hamer-Jackson and Director Simpson left the meeting at 11:15 AM

Guest presentation: Update on Canada Water Agency

Mr. Ian Rogalski, Senior Ecosystems Analyst with Environment & Climate Change Canada presented an overview of the Canada Water Agency (CWA) and Fraser River Basin Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative. Creating the Canada Water Agency was a federal directive in 2019; it was created as a branch within Environment & Climate Change Canada in mid-2023 with a mandate to “*improve fresh water in Canada by providing leadership, effective collaboration ... improved coordination ... to proactively address national and regional transboundary freshwater and opportunities...*”. The federal Budget 2023 provided \$85.1M over five years and \$21M ongoing thereafter to support the CWA and \$650M over 10 years to support monitoring, assessment and restoration work. watershed restoration. Ian is leading the Fraser watershed work.

The CWA has national and regional initiatives. Of the latter, one is focused specifically on the Fraser River basin (which includes the Shuswap and Thompson watersheds), the *Fraser Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative (FEI)*. Priorities include restoration, water quality protection, science, monitoring, Indigenous knowledge, governance, knowledge and reporting, and improving climate change resiliency. He noted that algal blooms in parts of Shuswap Lake are a priority ‘hotspot’ for the Fraser FEI. Key strategies of the Fraser FEI include engagement with governments, sub-basin collaboratives, non-government organizations and academia; information sharing and coordination; and developing knowledge and restoration priorities.

There was a short question-and-answer period, and Chair Martin thanked Mr. Rogalski for his presentation.

Erik Kok left the meeting at 11:35 AM

Guest presentation: Compliance and enforcement within the BC MOECCS

Mr. Bryan Vroom, Section Head with BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (MOECCS), presented an overview of the Ministry’s compliance management framework. The four-part compliance model includes setting requirements, promoting compliance through education, verifying compliance through inspections, and enforcing requirements. He outlined the non-compliance response which includes consideration of environmental and human health impacts. He also outlined complaint management. Complaints may be submitted to the Ministry via an online form or the RAPP hotline. Environmental Protection Officers review complaints, gather information, conduct inspections, and refer for enforcement if appropriate.

He explained how the Ministry verifies compliance with the *Agricultural Environmental Management Code of Practice (AEMCoP)*, which is the Provincial regulation that ensures agriculture practices are consistent with the preservation of water and air quality. Compliance inspections are complaint-driven, and responded

to by a dedicated team. AEMCoP requires all agricultural operations not to cause pollution, and there are requirements for record-keeping, nutrient management, plus special requirements for farms in vulnerable aquifers and high-risk areas.

There was a short question-and-answer period. Chair Martin asked Mr. Vroom if he could comment on some of the recent complaints related to sewage discharge into Shuswap Lake. Mr. Vroom replied that the Ministry responds to these issues through a set process with policies and procedures and he remarked that administrative penalties have been issued recently to some operations in the South Shuswap.

Chair Martin thanked Mr. Vroom for his presentation.

Kelly Chiatto left the meeting at 11:50 AM

**Guest
presentation:
Adams River
watershed
glacier
research**

Mr. Tay Powrie, graduate student with Thompson Rivers University, introduced himself and thanked the SWC for the funding support of his research project. He explained that his research is investigating the future of glacier ice and melt processes in the Adams River sub-basin of the Shuswap watershed.

Mr. Powrie presented some data and charts about the general state of glaciers and their influence on runoff. He briefly explained that glacial coverage affects many attributes in a watershed including water quality and nutrient composition which in turn affect trophic systems (i.e., food availability). Additional potential regional effects of glacial melt will affect water supply/utilization and habitat.

His research project is attempting to answer the following questions: How will glaciers within the Adams watershed respond to future climate? Will changes in glacier run-off influence hydrological processes? Is management of water resources within the watershed necessary, and what management is suggested?

Mr. Powrie explained the use of predictive models as part of his research methodology and shared some preliminary results. Generally, models predict that run-off will shift to earlier in the season, which will negatively impact ecosystem requirements such as water for salmon habitat. Models also predict that run-off will be driven more by precipitation than ice melt.

He concluded with an overview of the SWC funding, which included at \$3000 contribution in 2023 and a \$5000 contribution in 2024. The funding has gone toward equipment and data analysis for the project.

New business

Chair Martin suggested that the SWC members spend some time looking at the Terms of Reference, as well as how other watershed organizations are structured and funded. She proposed that there be some dedicated time on the September meeting agenda for this.

Dennis Einarson commented that he was involved, as a staff biologist with the BC Ministry of Environment, prior to the formation of the Shuswap Watershed Council.

He commented that it is imperative that the SWC – or something just like it – continue to function.

Roundtable updates

Lindsay Benbow reported that the Ministry has a Water Infrastructure Program for producers. The application period opens on June 20th. She also commented that the Ministry is hosting water management and irrigation field days later in the summer, and a phosphorus field day next week in the North Okanagan.

Phil Owen reported that a society is forming for the Bessette watershed to address water quantity issues, including considering water storage for irrigation and for fish habitat.

Dennis Einarson reported that a group from Cherryville contacted him about concerns related to farming and water quality, and he has since put them in touch with Lindsay Benbow.

Councillor Beech reported that she is working with the Sicamous Chamber of Commerce to deliver some information to residents about invasive mussels via in-person outreach.

Chair Martin reported that there have been two instances of high *E. coli* at CSRD beaches.

Councillor Cannon, Phil Owen, and Kimm Magill-Hofmann are unable to attend the September SWC meeting.

Action item:

Staff to collect comments from SWC members that can't attend the September SWC meeting.

Adjourn

Moved/seconded by Councillor Cannon/Director Lepsoe that:

The June 12th 2024 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12:40.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chair