



Making a difference...together

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 1:30 p.m., 6th Floor Boardroom, 625 Fisgard Street, Victoria, BC

PRESENT: **Members:** R. Hunsinger (Chair); G. Baird; T. Krawczyk; P. Lennox; J. Rogers; S. Sinclair; D. Timothy; M. Turner
Electronic: C. Nowakowski; K. Sander; J. Todd (Vice Chair); H. Thompson
Staff: T. Robbins, General Manager; K. Wilson, Demand Management Coordinator, Water Quality; T. Duthie, Manager, Administrative Services; D. Dionne (Recorder)

REGRETS: R. Barnhart; E. Cote; D. Lee

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 1 (M. Doehnel) via teleconference

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Amendment: *Item 6.1 report number should be **EEP 20-24** (not EEP 20-10)*

MOVED by G. Baird and **SECONDED** by J. Rogers,
That the agenda for the June 25, 2020 meeting be approved as amended.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chair Hunsinger asked staff for an update regarding the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area Land Acquisition Priorities. T. Robbins advised that the recommendation and the list of items discussed at the February 27, 2020 Water Advisory Committee meeting were incorporated into a staff report and considered by Regional Water Supply Commission in closed meeting due to details of specific properties being identified within the report.

G. Baird advised that the input from the Water Advisory Committee was helpful in the discussions that took place at the Regional Water Supply Commission.

MOVED by G. Baird and **SECONDED** by K. Sander,
That the minutes from the February 27, 2020 meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Hunsinger reported that an article in the Globe & Mail noted that BC was participating in a study sponsored by the Canadian Water Network (CWN), to monitor wastewater for evidence of COVID-19 contamination. T. Robbins advised that the Capital Regional District (CRD) is assisting with that study, by providing wastewater samples from the Core Area and Saanich Peninsula, through the University of Victoria which is in partnership with the CWN.

4. PRESENTATIONS / DELEGATIONS

There were no presentations or delegations.

5. REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.1. Summary of Regional Water Supply Commission Recommendations

MOVED by J. Rogers and **SECONDED** by G. Baird,
That the Summary of Regional Water Supply Commission Recommendations be received for information.

CARRIED

5.2. Regional Water Supply Commission June 17, 2020 Agenda Package

Chair Hunsinger questioned whether Island Health had an approval process for the Annual Water Quality Report and what the regulatory requirements are as outlined in the permit for water quality. C. Nowakowski advised that the report is an account of the sampling and data for the past year and is received at Island Health for information.

T. Robbins provided some highlights regarding Regional Water Supply Commission decisions and reported on the replacement of the Intake Tower Screen and the budget amendment.

MOVED by J. Rogers and **SECONDED** by G. Baird,
That the Regional Water Supply Commission June 17, 2020 agenda package be received for information.

CARRIED

6. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1. EEP 20-10 Agriculture Water Demand Model and Land Use Inventory Report

T. Robbins introduced the report providing some background and clarified that the entire region is included in the report, but the entire region is not serviced.

K. Wilson provided a presentation on the Agricultural Water Demand Model Report. She reviewed the model and noted that it was intended to review worst case scenarios.

T. Robbins presented a water rate history and budget implications. He outlined Bylaw 2570 and the difference between the Agricultural water rate and the Retail water rate noting that municipalities track the retail demand through their billing processes.

He reviewed the Agriculture water rate table that was provided to the Committee prior to the meeting and spoke to the volume and total Agricultural demand. He noted that, while the agricultural demand rate hasn't increased, the retail demand rate continues to increase and the CRD pays the difference between the Retail rate and the Agricultural rate to municipalities.

T. Robbins reported that correspondence from the Peninsula Agriculture and Area Commission (PAAC) was received in the fall of 2019 seeking an evaluation of the funding model, equalization of rates across municipalities and to address the differentials between the municipal rates. The letter also requested standardized billing processes across the region, however the CRD cannot dictate how each municipality conducts its business. He noted that once the study has been completed the information would be forwarded to the PAAC for their consideration.

T. Robbins reviewed the recommendations noting that staff recommend continuing to provide an agriculture rate but undertake agriculture rate review and/or rate methodology to manage ever-increasing 'gap' between agriculture rate and municipal retail rate and resulting budget impact.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Agricultural water use versus total water from municipality to municipality
- Municipal cost for maintaining the agricultural water supply through their distribution systems
- Food security and land use
- Local food and feed production
- Livestock water use
- Water used for barns/kennels etc.
- Tiered system that puts food production first
- Subsidies for food production, not hobby farms, golf courses and tree farms

MOVED by G. Baird and **SECONDED** by S. Sinclair,

That the Water Advisory Committee recommends that the Regional Water Supply Commission recommend continuing to provide an agriculture rate but undertake agriculture rate review and/or rate methodology to manage ever-increasing 'gap' between agriculture rate and municipal retail rate and resulting budget impact.

CARRIED

MOVED by J. Rogers and **SECONDED** by G. Baird,

That the Water Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Water Supply Commission to direct staff to consult with stakeholders to gain input from and determine the impacts on the agricultural community related to the issues of food security and climate change with respect to the agricultural rate, and that the review process also consider how to better target local food and feed production in the distribution of the water subsidy.

CARRIED

MOVED by G. Baird and **SECONDED** by J. Rogers,

That the Water Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Water Supply Commission that the Agriculture Water Demand Model report be received for information.

CARRIED

6.2. Summary of Actions Taken on the Following Items

- EEP 19-67 pH & Corrosion Study - Interim Results
- EEP 19-69 Communication Plan – pH & Corrosion Study
- EEP 20-02 Water Quality Summary Report
- EEP 20-06 Revisions to the Uni-Directional Water Distribution Main Flushing Program Schedule

There was a question whether there is a concern with hotels and businesses re-opening after a long-term closure and if there is a concern over stagnant water.

T. Robbins responded to a question regarding stagnant water concerns related to hotels and businesses being closed down and reopening due to COVID-19. He advised that staff prepared information, which includes material from the Canadian Water and Wastewater Association, to address water quality questions as a result of buildings being closed for a period of time. The information is posted to the CRD website and was also shared with the municipal distributors.

J. Todd left the meeting

T. Robbins reported that the pH & Corrosion Study has been paused, while addressing deficiencies in the liquid hypochlorite system. The deficiency work is expected to be completed by September 2020. The next step in the Study was to conduct the tap sampling pilot project and staff want to undertake the study while operating on the liquid systems completely, which has an impact on water quality results.

He reported that during the pandemic the spring flushing program was able to move to four crews at 10 hour shifts, and achieved all the spring flushing by the end of May which was about a month ahead of schedule.

MOVED by J. Rogers and **SECONDED** by G. Baird,
That the verbal report be received for information.

CARRIED

6.3. Water Watch Report

MOVED by G. Baird and **SECONDED** by K. Sander,
That the June 15, 2020 Water Watch report be received for information.

CARRIED

7. WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Discussion ensued regarding:

- How to better engage Committee members in discussion of issues.
- Initiating the working groups, which would occur every other month following these regular business meetings.

- Working group meetings are an opportunity for Committee members to get together in an informal setting without staff. CRD can supply meeting space.
- Canvass Committee members for what working groups they would like to see or be part of.
- Opportunity to have a staff subject matter expert attend a working group meeting to provide guidance on an issue.

Item 8 was postponed to the next meeting.

8. WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION

8.1. 2020 Priority Initiatives

- 1) Long Term Water Supply and Demand Management
- 2) Water Quality
- 3) Major Capital Projects
- 4) Water Rates
 - Agriculture
 - First Nations
- 5) Water Supply Area – Land Acquisition Strategy
- 6) Dam Safety

8.2. Working Group Establishment and Procedures

- 1) Working Group Focus Areas and Membership
- 2) Staff Subject Matter Support
- 3) Reporting to Committee and Commission

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by J. Rogers and **SECONDED** by G. Baird,
That the Water Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

CARRIED

CHAIR

SECRETARY