

Council Meeting
December 11th 2024 • 9:30 – 11:45 AM
Zoom meeting

Meeting summary
Approved on March 5th 2025

Meeting objectives

1. Receive update from program managers
2. Discuss invasive mussels with DFO staff
3. Approve revised budget
4. Discuss and approve revisions to Terms of Reference
5. Approve meeting schedule for 2025

Present

Rhona Martin, Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area E
Natalya Melnychuk, Vice Chair – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area G
Jay Simpson – Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Area F
Stephen Karpuk – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, City of Kamloops
David Lepsoe – Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Village of Chase
Cliff Arnouse – Secwepemc Nation, Adams Lake Indian Band
Robyn Laubman – Secwepemc Nation, Splotsin te Secwepemc (*from 10:30 am*)
Brian Schreiner – Regional District of North Okanagan, City of Enderby
Diane Sutherland – BC Ministry of Environment & Parks
Lindsay Benbow – BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
Erik Kok – Community representative
Phil Owen – Community representative
Kimm Magill-Hofmann – Community representative (*from 10:45 am*)

Erin Vieira and Alex de Chantal – Fraser Basin Council

Observers

Cathy Sawatzky
Barbra Fairclough
Ian Rogalski
Robyn Hooper
Adrianna Johnson

Regrets

Marty Gibbons
Dean Trumbley
Pam Beech
Debbie Cannon
Rick Fairbairn
Kelly Chiatto

Call to Order

Chair Rhona Martin called the meeting to order at 9:38. The traditional territory of the Secwepemc People was acknowledged. A round of introductions took place around the room. Diane Sutherland introduced herself as the new representative to the SWC from the BC Ministry of Environment and Parks.

Chair Martin remarked that today's meeting is the last one for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District directors. She thanked them for their time and energy on the SWC for the last ten years and their efforts to learn about the water quality, protect and improve it, and advocate for the Shuswap watershed. She acknowledged Director Simpson as the past Chair and Director Melnychuk as the Vice Chair for their support, involvement and commitment to the SWC.

Adoption of meeting agenda

Moved/seconded by Director Schreiner/Director Simpson that:

The agenda for the December 11th 2024 Shuswap Watershed Council meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

Adoption of meeting summary

Moved/seconded by Director Karpuk/Director Simpson that:

The draft meeting summary for the September 11th 2024 Shuswap Watershed Council meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

Correspondence

Moved/seconded by Director Simpson/Director Karpuk that:

The correspondence be received for information.

Discussion

Director Karpuk suggested that the SWC send a letter to the Member of Parliament for the Shuswap riding. There was a brief discussion and it was agreed that the Council could direct staff at the next meeting to prepare a letter.

CARRIED

Old business

Moved/seconded by Director Schreiner/Director Karpuk that:

The draft summaries of the Water Monitoring Group meeting (November 7th 2024), Water Protection Advisory Committee meeting (November 13th 2024) and Wetland Committee meeting (November 15th 2024) be received for information.

Discussion

Director Karpuk asked a clarifying question about the Watershed Security Fund. Director Simpson asked a clarifying question about the research that Dr. Dan Selbie is working on.

CARRIED

Report from Chair

Chair Martin reported that she worked with the *ad hoc* governance committee to revise the Terms of Reference this fall. She worked with staff to send letters to newly elected and re-elected MLAs.

**Report from
Program Managers**

Program manager Erin Vieira provided a financial report for the second quarter, April 1st – September 30th 2024:

See next page

Program	Annual budget (\$)			Q1+ Q2 actual expenses (\$)		
	Expenses	Program mgmt.	Sub-total	Expenses	Program mgmt.	Sub-total
Water Quality Monitoring Program						
Shuswap Water Monitoring Group	0	6637.50	6637.50	0	315.00	315.00
Water monitoring expenses	26,209.00	2025.00	28,234.00	18,901.18	1395.00	20,296.18
Annual Water Quality Report	6850.00	5400.00	12,250.00	7570.69	4770.00	12,340.69
Water Quality Protection Program						
Water Protection Advisory Committee	400.00	5050.00	5450.00	0	0	0
Water Quality Grant Program	115,421.00	8062.50	123,483.50	26,638.56	2655.00	29,293.56
Wetland Strategy	4000.00	6462.50	10,462.50	0	2046.67	2046.67
Climate change impact study (with TRU)	5000.00	675	5675.00	5000.00	585.00	5585.00
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program						
Education and outreach campaigns	27,432.00	7425.00	34,857.00	25,244.05	6840.00	32,084.05
Safe Recreation Program						
Safety campaigns	9480.00	3712.50	13,192.50	8290.99	2475.00	10,765.99
Communications, Public Engagement, & Advocacy						
Communications collateral	225.00	3475.00	3700.00	1763.00	3150.00	4913.00
Public engagement and media	2500.00	10,587.50	13,087.50	147.02	6251.67	6398.69
Advocacy	0	2700.00	2700.00	0	900.00	900.00
Administration						
Council meetings	1850.00	14,825.00	16,675.00	758.01	7100.00	7858.01
Administration (budgeting, staff liaise with chair and vice chair, membership and governance, etc.)	0	3693.75	3693.75	0	1890.00	1890.00
Financial administration and fund development	0	19,612.50	19,612.50	0	9860.00	9860.00
Sub-total expenses	199,367.00	100,343.75	299,710.75	94,313.50	50,233.04	144,546.84
Surplus			15,250.25			
Total budget for 2024-25			314,961.00			

Ms. Vieira provided an update on program operations since the last Council meeting:

- The Shuswap Water Monitoring Group (committee of the SWC) held a bi-annual meeting on November 7th to discuss 2024 water monitoring programs by all organizations
- The SWC Water Quality Grant Program is providing funding to six water protection projects on five farms in the Shuswap watershed, work will be complete by proponents by March 31st 2025
- The 2025 Water Quality Grant Program is now accepting applications, from December 1st to January 31st 2025. Up to \$45,000 will be distributed to successful applicants in spring 2025. Prospective applicants can find everything they need to apply on the SWC website, www.shuswapwater.ca.
- The Wetland Strategy Committee met on November 15th. The Fraser Basin Council (FBC), on behalf of the SWC is expecting \$170,000 funding from Environment & Climate Change Canada (Canada Water Agency) to advance the next phase of the Wetland Strategy; a contribution agreement will be signed soon.
- Educational campaigns to prevent the spread of invasive mussels wrapped up mid-fall
- Early-detection monitoring for invasive mussels in the Shuswap watershed wrapped up late fall by the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society. The CSISS receives funding from SWC for this work.
- Staff relayed that a new detection of whirling disease has been found in Kootenay Lake, in the Columbia watershed, highlighting the need for everyone to follow best practices including clean-drain-dry and watercraft inspection
- Letters of introduction were sent to Shuswap-area MLAs post-election
- Presentations and meetings with First Nations and community groups scheduled for the new year
- Fraser Basin Council is applying for funding from the Provincial Watershed Security Fund on behalf of the SWC for 2025 and 2026.

Discussion

Chair Martin commented that she is sharing social media posts about the Water Quality Grant Program. There was a brief discussion and some questions about whirling disease. There were suggestions that FBC staff seek letters of support for the funding application to the Watershed Security Fund from Shuswap-area MLAs and the MP.

Action item

FBC staff to send information about whirling disease to SWC members.

**Roundtable
discussion about
Zebra & Quagga
Mussels**

Chair Martin welcomed Mr. Joshua Lindner to the meeting and thanked him for attending the meeting. Program Manager Erin Vieira provided a brief summary of recent correspondence between the SWC and the Minister for the Department of Fisheries & Oceans.

Mr. Lindner introduced himself as the Senior Regional Advisor for BC and Yukon working for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. He acknowledged that invasive mussels are a threat to freshwater ecosystems.

Kimm Magill-Hofmann entered the meeting at 10:45

Discussion

Director Karpuk asked about the availability of maps of watersheds infested with invasive species. Mr. Lindner said that he can find out and follow up. Director Karpuk also commented that he has observed the watercraft inspection station at Golden, which closes at 7 pm, and he asked how to expand operating hours for the stations to 24 hours/day. Mr. Lindner acknowledged that resources are a limiting factor for the inspection stations and that invasive species are a shared responsibility of the Province of BC and the federal Department.

Director Simpson commented on the recent detection of Quagga mussels in Idaho, and asked if the Canada Border Services Agency will increase their capacity at the borders for watercraft inspection and decontamination. Mr. Lindner acknowledged it is a great suggestion, and that border services are the responsibility of other Ministers.

Phil Owen asked what current research is being done on invasive mussels, including for treatment. Mr. Lindner responded that he is unaware of any research on invasive mussel treatment. Mr. Owen further commented on his concern about the potential for an infestation to BC via transboundary waters.

Erik Kok asked how much of a priority invasive mussels are for the Department in Western Canada. Mr. Lindner responded that there are many priorities for the DFO, including invasive mussels as a serious priority. Mr. Kok further asked what else the SWC can do to raise the profile of the issue and gather the attention it needs from the Minister, aside from letter-writing. Mr. Lindner responded that engagement with the Minister and himself as the regional advisor to the Minister for BC is a good strategy, and he would be happy to meet with any member of the SWC again. He also suggested that the SWC engage with the new BC cabinet because invasive species is a shared priority for the federal and provincial governments.

Chair Martin remarked on the vast number of watersheds in Canada already infested with invasive mussels, whereas in BC we remain mussel-free and there are many community-level efforts at keeping BC that way. She commented on the concern over the detection of invasive mussels in Idaho last year. She asked

if his office could provide a connection to the researchers within the Department. Mr. Lindner said he would be happy to do so.

Tk-wemi'ple7 (Councillor) Arnouse explained his concern for invasive species impacting water and reiterated his support for the work to prevent aquatic invasive species.

Chair Martin thanked Mr. Lindner for attending the meeting today and suggested that we stay in touch.

Action item:

Staff will follow up with Mr. Lindner, establishing a point of contact for any follow-up items from the meeting.

**New business:
revised budget for
2024-25**

Program Manager Erin Vieira presented a revised budget for 2024-25. She clarified that revisions are necessary to reflect the \$170,000 grant from Environment & Climate Change Canada (Canada Water Agency).

Table 1. REVENUE

Source	Amount (\$)
2023-24 operational surplus (carried forward from March 31 st , 2024)	25,113
2023-24 funds allocated and carried forward to 2023-24 projects	59,961
<i>Per Contribution Agreement:</i>	
Columbia Shuswap Regional District	0
Thompson-Nicola Regional District	53,600
City of Salmon Arm	0
Adams Lake Indian Band	1300
<i>Grant funding:</i>	
Transport Canada – Boating Safety Contribution Program	0
Grants-in-aid	0
NEW: Environment & Climate Change Canada – Fraser River Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative	170,000
<i>Operating Reserve:</i>	
Operating Reserve balance from March 31 st 2024	174,987
Revenue for 2024-25	484,961

See Table 2, Expenses, on next page

Table 2. EXPENSES

Program	Original budget (no ECCC funding)			Revised budget				
	Program mgmt. (\$)	Disbursements (\$)	Sub-total	SWC funding		New ECCC funding		Sub-total (\$)
				Program mgmt. (\$)	Disbursements (\$)	Program mgmt. (\$)	Disbursements (\$)	
Water Quality Monitoring Program	14,063	33,059	47,122	8687	28,684	11,000	32,000	80,372
Water Quality Protection Program	20,250	124,821	145,071	15,725	120,821	14,000	100,000	250,546
Zebra & Quagga Mussel Prevention Program	7425	27,432	34,857	7425	27,432	0	0	34,857
Safe Recreation Program	3713	9480	13,193	3713	9480	0	0	13,193
Communications & Advocacy	16,763	2725	19,488	16,763	2725	0	0	19,488
Council Meetings, Governance & Financial Administration	38,131	1850	39,981	38,169	1850	3000	10,000	53,019
Sub-total operational expenses	100,344	199,367	299,711	90,482	190,992	28,000	142,000	451,474
Surplus			15,250					33,487
Summary of expenses			314,961					484,961

The meeting attendance did not meet quorum for financial decisions.

Moved/seconded by Director Schreiner/Director Karpuk that:

Staff facilitate a vote on the revised budget via email.

CARRIED

Action item:

Staff will facilitate an email vote for the revised budget.

**New business:
revised Terms of
Reference**

Program Manager Erin Vieira reported that the governance committee met twice this fall to review the SWC Terms of Reference. Staff researched TORs and governance structures for several collaborative watershed-based organizations in the Province, and this informed some of the initial updates to the TOR.

Ms. Vieira highlighted the major revisions to the TOR, including to the proposed membership, quorum, and voting as outlined in the agenda package. She explained that to ensure a smooth transition to the new membership which takes effect April 1st 2025 the SWC could extend the membership terms for the community reps and fill the seat for an agriculture representative in the meeting today.

Moved/seconded by Director Karpuk/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The Terms of Reference be revised as recommended.

Discussion

Several SWC members expressed their desire to continue to participate including Director Schreiner, Director Simpson, Director Karpuk, and Chair Martin. The Chair clarified that CSRD elected officials will not be able to participate on behalf of the CSRD after December 31st but they could participate as a community representative.

Phil Owen expressed his desire to become the agriculture representative and suggested increasing the local government members from the proposed three to four, which would bring the membership up to 17 – an odd number with no ties in voting.

Program Manager Erin Vieira reminded everyone that the proposed new membership has provisions for ‘up to’ a certain number of members meaning that at any time there could be an even or odd number of members. She also reminded everyone that the decision-making is proposed to be by consensus, including budgets, not voting.

Lindsay Benbow reminded everyone that representatives of Provincial agencies would abstain from decision-making processes at the SWC.

Director Karpuk commented that TNRD should continue to be involved since they are contributing financially to the SWC.

Vice Chair Melnychuk commented on the importance of balancing First Nations participation and perspectives. She also supports the addition of a youth representative to the membership. Overall, she agreed that a new governance structure is needed given the changes in funding.

Tk’wemi’ple7 (Councillor) Arnouse remarked that he would like to see more members from the science/academia sector in the SWC membership. He also

suggested that a representative of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council be included in the membership as they would be able to report to all First Nations communities. Robyn Laubman acknowledged that capacity is a constraint, but suggested that community members are better positioned to bring their concerns about the watershed to the SWC. Director Simpson commented that the proposed membership has 'up to 3' spots for First Nations and there is time for communities to determine how they'd like to participate.

Director Simpson remarked that regional districts represent the majority of the watershed, from a geographical perspective. He suggested that the local government seats be increased to six.

Program Manager Erin Vieira explained that the youth seat would be filled by someone 18-30 years of age residing in the Shuswap watershed. The seat would be filled following the same process as for the community representatives: the opportunity will be posted, interested applicants submit an Expression of Interest to staff, candidates are evaluated and then one applicant would be chosen by the SWC for a three-year term.

Moved/seconded by Director Simpson/Director Karpuk that:

The above-stated motion be rescinded and that the proposed membership be revised to add three more seats for local government representatives.

CARRIED

Moved/seconded by Director Karpuk/Vice Chair Melnychuk that:

The Terms of Reference be approved.

CARRIED

Moved/seconded by Director Lepsoe/Director Karpuk that:

The Community Representatives' terms be extended as follows: Erik Kok to March 2026 and Kimm Magill-Hofmann to March 2027; and that Rhona Martin be appointed into a Community Representative seat until March 2028; and that Phil Owen be appointed into the seat for the agriculture sector.

CARRIED

**New business:
meeting schedule
for 2025**

The proposed meeting schedule for 2025 is:

- March 12th
- June 11th
- September 10th
- December 10th

Meetings take place on a quarterly basis, on the second Wednesday of the month in March, June, September and December from 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM.

Meeting locations are to be determined. Staff are looking into meeting spaces that can accommodate the SWC membership and enable hybrid in-person/Zoom participation. The December meeting is exclusively online (Zoom).

Discussion

Director Simpson commented that the Local Government Leadership Academy is scheduled for March 12th – 14th and the Keeping it Rural Conference is June 10th – 12th, and that these will create scheduling conflicts for some locally elected members.

Action item:

Staff will send a poll out to SWC members to find an alternative date for the March meeting. The June, September, and December meetings can remain as-scheduled.

Vice Chair Melnychuk, Erik Kok, Lindsay Benbow, and Diane Sutherland left the meeting at 12:00 pm

Roundtable updates Program Manager Erin Vieira announced that sadly, Mr. Dennis Einarson, the Senior Scientific Advisor to the SWC and retired biologist from the BC Ministry of Environment passed away in November. Chair Martin expressed her sorrow and remarked that Dennis was an incredible wealth of knowledge and a valued member of the SWC who will be dearly missed.

Adjourn **Moved/seconded** by Director Karpuk/Director Simpson that:

The December 11th 2024 meeting of the Shuswap Watershed Council adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM