

OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM BOARD

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the **OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE (SIR) PROGRAM BOARD**
held in the RDCO Woodhaven Boardroom, Kelowna BC, on Friday, February 3, 2023

Voting Members:

Director Shirley Fowler	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director George Bush	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Director Tim Lavery	Regional District Columbia Shuswap
Director Gord Lovegrove	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Grower Walter Makepeace	Grower Representative – Zone 1, organic
Grower Joginder Dhand	Grower Representative – Zone 3
Grower Tarsem Goraya	Grower Representative – Zone 2
Alternate Director Blair Ireland	Regional District of Central Okanagan

Non-Voting Members:

Dr. Susanna Acheampong	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Taras Pojasok	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Guests/Delegates:

Glen Lucas	BC Fruit Growers Association
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Regrets:

Mohini Singh

Staff:

Melissa Tesche	OKSIR General Manager
Lori White	RDCO Financial Manager
Evan Esch	OKSIR Entomologist
Michelle Cook	OKSIR Operations Manager
Shelby Austen	OKSIR Office Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting of the OKSIR Board to order at 1:01 pm.

a. Election of Chair

The OKSIR General Manager called for nominations for the positions of Chair of the Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Board for 2023. Director Fowler was nominated by Director Bush and Grower Makepeace. There being no further nominations, Director Fowler was acclaimed the 2023 Chair.

a. Election of Vice Chair

The OKSIR General Manager called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Board for 2023. Director Bush was nominated by Director Fowler and Grower Makepeace. There being no further nominations, Director Bush was acclaimed the 2023 Vice Chair.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1 Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: Grower Makepeace

Seconded by: Director Bush

"THAT the February 3, 2023, meeting agenda be adopted as presented."

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

3.1 Regular Board Meeting – Oct. 7, 2022 – for adoption

Moved by: Director Lovegrove

Seconded by: Grower Makepeace

"THAT the SIR Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2022, be adopted as presented."

CARRIED

3.2 Business Arising from Minutes

4. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

5. CORRESPONDENCE/ INFORMATION

5.1 Appointments to the OKSIR Board

- a. Columbia Shuswap RD – Letter dated December 15, 2022, appointing Director Tim Lavery, with Director Dean Trumbley as alternate
- b. North Okanagan RD – Letter dated December 20, 2022, appointing Director Shirley Fowler, with Director Victor Cumming as alternate
- c. Central Okanagan RD – Letter dated December 7, 2022, appointing Director Gord Lovegrove and Director Mohini Singh, with Director Blair Ireland and Director Kevin Kraft as alternates
- d. Okanagan-Similkameen RD – Letter dated November 22, 2022, appointing Director George Bush, with Director Tim Roberts as alternate

Moved by: Grower Makepeace

Seconded by: Grower Goraya

"THAT the appointment letters from the four partnering regional districts be received."

CARRIED

5.2 Letter from the Honourable Pam Alexis, Minister of Agriculture and Food, dated December 14, 2022

The General Manager presented the letter in detail. The Board agreed to send a letter of appreciation to Minister Alexis in response.

Moved by: Director Lovegrove

Seconded by: Grower Dhand

"THAT the letter from the Minister of Agriculture be received and that OKSIR send a letter of appreciation and welcome to Minister Alexis."

CARRIED

5.3 Staff Report from Evan Esch, Program Entomologist, dated January 2023, re: Measuring Program Success: 2022 Season Results

Mr. Esch gave his report in detail.

Moved by: Director Ireland

Seconded by: Grower Goraya

"THAT the staff report from the Program Entomologist be received."

CARRIED

5.4 Staff Report from Melissa Tesche, General Manager, dated January 27, 2023, re: Program Update

The General Manager gave her report in detail.

The General Manager briefed the new Board Directors on the stages of Facility production, stating that it takes about 6 weeks from egg to adult moth. Production levels have begun to ramp up for the season. She hopes to tour the new Directors and the Ag Minister soon.

The facility chiller that was approved last year was set to be replaced in January but due to supply chain delays is now estimated for October.

The General Manager explained SIR's process for collecting parcel taxes and issuing rebates. She noted that there is a substantial amount of acreage loss anticipated between the completion of the parcel tax roll in February and the rebate cut-off date at the start of the growing season.

There is an upcoming SIT forum hosted by the Coville Confederated Tribes in Washington, February 21-22. The General Manager and Program Entomologist will be attending to connect with North American SIT researchers and Washington stakeholders interested in expanding codling moth SIT in the state.

The General Manager noted that Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) hosted the Taiwanese inspector in October for their annual inspection visit. OKSIR's Program Entomologist presented on the program and the 2022 results, and trap records are provided to the inspector via CFIA.

She shared with the Board that the Program Entomologist would be using personal leave in February to travel to Vienna as he had been invited by International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) to lead the development of their upcoming SIT strategic plan at the United Nations in Vienna.

The province is investing in the renewal of the Okanagan weather station network, with the new network online for 2024. This investment will see the weather data return to the public domain and will support their recent three-year investment in BCDAS.

Industry stabilization work for tree fruits and grapes continues. The General Manager informed the Board that she is very appreciative of the inter-commodity team that has been built through stabilization and the work that has been accomplished already.

As Co-chair of the extension subcommittee, the GM noted she will be co-hosting the upcoming Okanagan Extension Conference, March 1-3, in Penticton. For SIR, extension is focused on helping growers understand the science of codling moth. The conference will be funded by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food's internal funding and funds from the Stabilization fund with OKSIR acting as the fund administrator.

The General Manager is set to present to both RDOS and RDCO in the coming weeks.

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Ireland

"THAT the staff report from the General Manager be received."

CARRIED

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Meeting Schedule for 2023

The Board opted to change the meeting start time from 9:00am to 10:30am for all meetings.

Moved by: Director Lovegrove

Seconded by: Director Ireland

"That the meeting schedule for 2023 be adopted as presented."

CARRIED

7.2 Staff Service Awards

The General Manager reviewed the year's staff service awards. The Chair thanked all staff for their hard work and determination demonstrated over the years.

Moved by: Director Ireland

Seconded by: Director Bush

"That the Board express their appreciation to the staff recognized for service awards in 2023."

CARRIED

7.3 Annual Adoption of Safety Policy

Moved by: Director Lovegrove

Seconded by: Director Ireland

"THAT the Board adopt 'OKSIR's Occupational Health and Safety Policy' as presented."

CARRIED

7.4 Memo re: Increase to Parcel Tax Rate

The General Manager gave the report in detail.

The General Manager reviewed the strategic planning decisions from 2020 and 2021 where the Board decided on 8% year over year increases to the parcel tax for 2022 and 2023.

The Board raised concerns about the economic challenges that growers currently face.

Glen Lucas, BCFGAs General Manager, echoed these concerns and offered that the BCFGAs contribute a one-time direct payment for 2023 that would allow the Board to reduce the increase from 8% to 4%.

After some discussion, the Board accepted the offer and increased the 2023 parcel tax rate 4%.

Moved by: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Lavery

"That OKSIR increase the parcel tax rate for 2023 by 4% for a total of 156.42/acre."

CARRIED

7.5 Bylaw 41 – SIR 2023-2027 Five Year Financial Plan – Three Readings and Adoption

- a. **2022 Projected Year End and 2023 Budget**
- b. **Schedule A to Bylaw 41 (2023-2027 Financial Plan)**

The budget was amended to reflect the 4% parcel tax increase and include the BCFGA one-time payment. Ms. White presented the financials in detail.

Moved by: Director Lovegrove

Seconded by: Director Ireland

"THAT the SIR 2023-2027 Five Year Financial Plan, Bylaw No.41, 2023, be adopted."

CARRIED

7.6 Bylaw 42 – 2023 OKSIR Board Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw No. 42, 2023 – Three Readings and Adoption

Moved by: Grower Dhand

Seconded by: Director Lavery

"THAT the 2023 OKSIR Board Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw No. 42, 2023, be adopted."

CARRIED

8. ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA

The Board adjourned to an in-camera meeting at 2:22pm.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Grower Makepeace

Seconded by: Grower Goraya

"THAT the SIR Board meeting be adjourned at 2:31 pm"

CARRIED



Chair



Corporate Officer