

# Report to Council



**Date:** February 11, 2019  
**File:** o605-20  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Kevin Van Vliet, Utility Services Manager  
**Subject:** Update on Kelowna Joint Water Committee

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council support dissolution of the Kelowna Joint Water Committee and direct staff to continue to work together with Improvement District staff to improve overall efficiencies, reduce risks and form partnerships for shared services in an effort to best serve all of the citizens of Kelowna.

## **Purpose:**

**To update Council on the status and activities of the Kelowna Joint Water Committee**

## **Background:**

Kelowna has four major water purveyors that provide drinking and irrigation water to Kelowna residents: City of Kelowna Water utility, Black Mountain Irrigation District (BMID), Rutland Waterworks (RWW) and Glenmore Ellison Improvement District (GEID); in addition to two dozen small independent water systems. In June 2018, the South East Kelowna Irrigation District (SEKID) was integrated into the City's Water Utility.

These major water providers have many common interests that drive a good working relationship. In the past, it was felt beneficial to formalize this relationship through the Kelowna Joint Water Committee (KJWC). Founded in 1991, the KJWC acted as an umbrella organization to promote standardization of methods and materials, improve communications, and to provide an integrated approach to water supply within the City boundaries. Since its creation, the committee has implemented a few successful technical programs including a common "approved products list" for new development, a city-wide cross connection control program, the 2012 Integrated Water Supply Plan and an independent website to provide information about water suppliers in Kelowna. The KJWC operates a bank account to fund some common projects and initiatives. Funds are collected from each partner annually. The City of Kelowna administers the cross-connection control program under the KJWC name.

The KJWC structure currently exists as a political partnership in the form of a Board of the Whole that includes a member appointed from each elected Board of Trustees and a member of Council. The KJWC is not a Committee of Council, but Council does appoint a member to the KJWC Board of the Whole. The Board of the Whole is supported by a Technical Committee consisting of the managers from each water provider.

The KJWC is not a legal entity or society, and as such lacks transparency and accountability. Decisions made by the Board of the Whole are not binding on any member, but are recommendations to each respective water provider's decision-making bodies or approvals for expenditure of KJWC funds.

The last official Board of the Whole meeting was held on September 10, 2015. The main topic of discussion was an attempt to develop a Terms of Reference for a Value Planning consultant to review the 2012 Integrated Water Supply Plan. This issue was never resolved to the satisfaction of all of the water providers.

Staff from each of the water providers have continued to meet as the Technical Committee of the KJWC. Three meetings were held in 2016, two in 2017 and three meetings in 2018 to deal with common interests and ongoing management of existing KJWC programs.

It has become apparent that a working relationship with the Improvement Districts is sufficient to continue to build on the work of the KJWC and move towards an integrated water system over time. Staff from each of the providers feel that it is in the best interest of our respective utilities, as well as the citizens of Kelowna, to continue to work together on common interests and partner where practical. Some Improvement District staff have informed the City that their respective Boards of Trustees support the dissolution of the KJWC Board of the Whole and continuing to work together regularly at a staff level. Meetings at the political level can be held informally as and when required.

Upon dissolution of the Kelowna Joint Water Committee (including all subcommittees), the KJWC bank account will be closed and funds returned to each provider based on the ratio of contributions made. The [kjwc.org](http://kjwc.org) website will be removed including the automated centralized water quality notification system. In place of this, each district has already implemented their own water quality notification system with messaging in line with Interior Health Authority requirements. The City of Kelowna will continue to provide information on "who is my water provider" for all Kelowna citizens and will continue to manage the cross-connection control program on behalf of the partners.

City staff will continue to maintain and build operating and planning relationships with all Kelowna water providers to optimize operational and capital efficiencies as well as inter-agency operational support including, but not limited to the following areas:

1. Improvement of overall water supply reliability across the City of Kelowna,
2. Continued operation of successful inter-agency programs such as Cross Connection Control, drought response and others through a partnership model,
3. Development of operational programs to improve water supply and water system management consistency across the City,
4. Emergency preparedness and response,

5. Development of a consistent approach for setting agricultural water rates across the City,
6. Development and implementation of a consistent approach to water use restrictions and conservation efforts,
7. Implementation of universal domestic and agricultural metering,
8. Streamlining water system design and pricing for development,
9. Facilitating future water system consolidation consistent with City of Kelowna and Provincial policies.

**Internal Circulation:**

Divisional Director, Infrastructure  
Utility Planning Manager  
Senior Engineer, Infrastructure  
Communications Consultant

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

**Legal/Statutory Authority:**

**Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:**

**Existing Policy:**

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

**Personnel Implications:**

**Communications Comments:**

**External Agency/Public Comments:**

**Alternate Recommendation:**

Submitted by:

Kevin Van Vliet, Utility Services Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**

A square box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'J Creron'.

J Creron, Deputy City Manager