

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 25th February 2023 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: N. Juby
Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, C. Sherrard, G. Annan, M. Barker,
B. Barnes, T. Clark.
Staff: B. Wilson, A. Daniel, D. Klee
Visitors: P. Hardy (DOC), R. McKnight (DOC)

1. APOLOGIES:

G. Dickey, J Dyer

It was moved;
that apologies be accepted.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

Nil.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 10th December 2022:

Councillor Annan reported that he had attended meetings at the Te Awamutu and Hamilton Fish & Game clubs and hadn't heard any concerns expressed over the game regulations.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Waikato River was closed to boat traffic in the vicinity of the new bridge being constructed near the Hamilton Gardens.

It was moved;
that the minutes of the previous meetings of the 10th of December 2022 be accepted as true and correct records.

Annan/Sherrard – CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Nil.

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter was tabled from Mr Ken Parker and Mr Bruce Street regarding the game regulations. The Chairman recommended that at the next game regulation review, licence holders were informed as to Council's policies and procedures regarding the game regulations.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BI-MONTHLY REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

6.1 Bi-monthly Chief Executives Report

Mr Klee provided an update on the botulism outbreak in the Whangamarino wetland:

- DOC were spending one day a week in the wetland and were contributing \$5,000 towards employing contractors.
- Waikato Regional Council had contributed \$5,000 to the cleaning efforts.
- Fish & Game staff were spending 3-4 days a week on the outbreak.
- Another large fish kill had recently occurred in the Maramarua River.
- There were still healthy birds in the upper Maramarua, and this population was being regularly monitored.

In reply to a question, Mr Klee stated that it was the worst outbreak in the Whangamarino Wetland in living memory.

Ms Renee McKnight reported that DOC were keeping local iwi fully informed on the outbreak. DOC were considering increasing funding and expected the Waikato Regional Council to match any funding. DOC's main concern was Bitterns but expected these birds to have moved elsewhere with the rising water levels.

Councillor Barker requested a brief summary of the biology of botulism and what was the ideal scenario for dealing with an outbreak. Mr Klee summarised what was known about botulism, emphasising that it was strain C which was specific to birds.

Councillors requested an update on the duck banding programme. In reply, Mr Klee stated that the total number of ducks banded was likely to be down by a third, mainly due to the difficulty of attracting birds to the cages as they weren't interested in eating maize due to the abundance of natural foods. He emphasised that total numbers caught in the banding programme didn't reflect overall population levels.

Mr Wilson confirmed that the submission on the Waitomo District Plan included a request for conservation and access benefit lots.

Dr Daniel updated Councillors on the proposals for the boat ramp in the upper reaches of Lake Arapuni.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dyer for his efforts on the firearms legislation.

Councillor Cocks emphasised that the high cost of firearms licence renewals would affect the ability of hunters to control pests.

6.2 Financial Report

Mr Wilson informed Councillors that there was \$12,000 in reserves to replace the telephone system, but the actual cost of converting to voice over internet was less than \$3,000.

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive's Bimonthly Report and Financial Statements be accepted.

Cocks/Shaw – CARRIED

7. NZ COUNCIL MEETING:

An update from the NZ Council meeting on the 10th and 12th February was distributed to Councillors.

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Barnes for being elected as Chairman of the New Zealand Fish & Game Council.

Councillor Barnes observed that there were several vacancies at the National Office, and positions were currently being advertised. In reply to a question, he agreed that National Office employees did not have to live in Wellington.

Councillor Barnes warned Councillors that there were many challenges facing Fish & Game at a national level especially regarding F&G's 'social licence'.

Councillor Sherrard requested a list of the NZ Councillors.

Disappointment was expressed by Councillors over the decision by the NZ Council to seek a one-year phase out of lead shot for .410.

Councillor Cocks expressed his concerns over the current Government review of the wildlife Act.

Councillor Barnes informed that a new national committee had been formed to look at overall funding opportunities. The future finance committee included Councillor Juby.

The meeting rose for lunch at 1:10pm and resumed at 1:40pm.

8. NZ GAME BIRD HABITAT TRUST BOARD NOMINATION:

It was moved;

that Councillor Williamson be nominated to the Game Bird Habitat Trust.

Cocks/Annan – CARRIED

9. LAND & WATER HABITAT TRUST:

It was moved;

that the Annual Performance Report for the Land & Water Habitat Trust 2021/22 be accepted.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

10. MEDIA SURVEY:

Dr Daniel introduced his report. He highlighted that YouTube was the most favoured media platform. Councillor Barnes noted that the NZ Council would be preparing a communications strategy when they had the staff capacity available.

It was moved;

that Dr Daniel report be sent to the NZ Council with the recommendation that it is placed on the agenda of their next meeting.

Williamson/Cocks – CARRIED

Mr Wilson agreed to provide for the proposed expenditure in the draft 2023/24 budget.

11. OSH UPDATE:

It was moved;

that the OSH report for February 2023 is accepted.

Cocks/Sherrard – CARRIED

12. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillor Barnes spoke on the Governance Review emphasizing that it was up to the regions to implement the review. A working group had been set up to look at matters that will benefit Fish & Game that will require legislative change, including the amalgamation of regions.

Councillor Williamson expressed his view that he didn't see any benefit from the review, and he did not support amalgamating with Northland.

It was moved;

that funding is sought from the NZ Council for Governance training.

Barker/Annan – CARRIED

Councillor Clark expressed disbelief that any region would support the phase out of lead shot for .410 shotguns.

It was moved;

that the other Fish & Game regions be requested for their position on the proposed phase-out of lead shot for .410 shotguns.

Williamson/Clark – CARRIED

Councillor Barker stated that he had been approached by one of the organisers of the recent national secondary school clay target competition, noting that the Auckland/Waikato girls had won the Fish & Game shield and enquiring whether Fish & Game was still funding free licences for the winner. Mr Wilson agreed to contact the National Office about funding.

It was agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to volunteers who assisted in the botulism clean up.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2:44pm.