

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 08th June 2024 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: N. Juby.
Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, C. Sherrard, M. Barker,
B. Barnes, T. Clark, G. Annan.
Staff: D. Klee, J, D. Lelievre, B. Jarvis-Child
Visitors: L. Altham, P. Hardy

1. APOLOGIES:

G. Dickey, A. Daniel,

It was moved;

that apologies be accepted.

Shaw/Cocks – CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

Nil.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 27th April 2024:

Councillor Barnes noted that L. Altham was a visitor at the meeting.

It was moved;

That subject to the addition of L Altham being present, the minutes of the previous meeting of 27th April 2024 meeting be accepted as true and correct records:

Sherrard/Annan – CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Nil.

5. INWARDS COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter from Geoff Tremain.

The chairman indicated that he had spoken to Geoff who was very understanding once everything was explained. Part of the discussion established the potential to put together a simple document for 5 easy public access points and highlight this on the F&G website. The CE will discuss with staff and put together a shortlist.

The C.E. explained mapping system updates and noted new objective in draft OWP, regarding access project.

Discussion around H&S provisions which were mentioned in the letter. The Chair raised need to highlight with rural community to explain H&S provisions in terms of recreational access and the fact landowners are not liable for recreational users.

Consultation Document Licence Costs and forecasting

The CE explained that the feedback letter from the Auckland/Waikato Council had been dispatched and had not changed significantly from the draft circulated to councillors previously. The deadline for feedback was at the end of May, hence the response could not be considered at this meeting.

Councillor Barnes explained that if a good reason were given to minister, a licence fee increase could be possible. Councillor Williamson raised concerns with decrease in licence sales and inaccurate forecasting. He noted budget increases based on regional reserves in the appended table it indicates this expenditure comes from licence fees not regional reserves. The Chair agreed that forecasting is an issue and budgets need to have a greater buffer. The Chair also noted that DOC fees have gone up significantly. e.g. campsite passes this year.

Councillor Barnes stated that there was no decision at this stage by the NZ council and that the final decision would be made at the upcoming meeting subject to regional feedback. Councillor Barnes personal position is that the licence should go up and that there is a need for a clear directive from minister as to what his plans are for Fish & Game.

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

It was moved;

that a letter of thanks to Theunis Miedema be sent for all his work as an honorary ranger.

Annan/Cocks – CARRIED

Extra Work: Councillor Sherrard noted all the extra work that Roslyn does and wanted to extend his thanks.

Ranging Participation:

The Chair asked about ranging participation with the CE explaining that new staff are registered for CERT course and plan to assist Eastern on opening weekend for their ranging activities. The plan is to increase the number of teams active during next year's duck shooting season.

Honorary Rangers:

Issues around honorary rangers pulling out due to complexities with processes. Councillor Barnes raised work safe regulations, and that these are out of our control. Chair raised prospect of pairing up with police. The CE explained that he is happy to have dialogue with police and conduct joint compliance exercises if that is something the council wish staff to do more of. The CE mentioned that rangers Kerr and Matthews had expressed interest in attending the next meeting to share their perspective. This topic will be added as an agenda item for that meeting.

Facebook Ranging:

Social media ranging – CE explained how we are using social media to check for noncompliance and get information from the public.

It was moved;

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

Annan/Sherrard – CARRIED

7. FUTURE STRUCTURE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS TO NZC:

The future structure report was discussed with councillors providing their preliminary feedback. Points agreed/disagreed with notes in Table below in blue. Councillor Barnes explained the both the futures report had not been considered by NZ Council yet and this was only the preliminary information for regions. Further in-depth consultation would occur later in the year with ample time for regions to provide feedback.

Recommendations to NZFGC
<u>That</u> the Chair of NZFGC be elected from among the FGC councillors and serve a three-year term. No, should be able to remove.
<u>That</u> the chair's appointment to NZFGC and all regional chairs be confirmed no later than the 28th of February each year. Yes
<u>That</u> the Chair of NZFGC be a paid position. No NB: Legislation change required
<u>That</u> the composition of the NZFGC include members who are either elected or appointed by the regions. Their appointment should be for a three-year term. Three-year terms should extend beyond the three-year election cycle that is held in the regions so that major changes to the NZFGC does not occur every three years following the regional elections. No should be confirmed annually.
<u>That</u> the size of NZFGC reflect the number of regions, with the NZFGC empowered to appoint additional independent members with relevant expertise as needed to cover skill gaps. These appointments should be for a specified term and would be in addition to the regular members elected or appointed by the regions. This could include Te Ao Māori appointments with full

voting rights. **Yes in part, disagreement regarding voting rights**

That all Fish and Game Councillors receive financial compensation in the form of a meeting allowance payable on meetings attended. **No**

That the voting process for NZFGC and FGC elections be retained with licence holders casting one vote for the FGC and each FGC either elect or appoint one of their members to NZFGC. Note: FGC nominees on the NZFGC provide a direct link back to the regional councils. **Yes**

That the existing regional structure be retained, while also considering the potential for merger or amalgamation of smaller regions with larger ones. **Yes**

That there should be no more than 7 Regional Managers, focused on key operational functions, within the organisation. Note: This will require some Regional Managers having to manage staff across several regions. The current structure is not sustainable with too many managers and too much duplication of functions across the smaller regions. This situation needs to be addressed with urgency. **No, there is no benefit unless mergers occur as it duplicates work across 2 regions. No cost savings shown for voluntary mergers to date.**

That each FGC comprise a maximum of 9 members, with a maximum of 8 elected, and the option of an iwi nominee with full voting rights. This option will be pursued if desired by Māori. **No, the option for 12 councillors should be retained.**

NB: Legislation change required

That each region has no more than 3 subregions, with 1 person to be elected from each subregion. Note: Regions that have merged may require additional subregions which can be determined during the merger process. **No**

That candidates hold a primary residential address applicable to the region or subregion they wish to represent, as shown on the NZ Electoral Roll. **No, if councilors primarily partake in hunting and fishing in another region they should be able to stand there.**

NB: Legislation change required

That the electoral roll automatically includes any NZ resident licence-holders from the previous year with no opt-in requirement. **Yes**

NB: Legislation Change required

That the electoral system becomes an electronic one with a postal option to those who request it. Note: The election process is becoming a very expensive one for NZFG and any means that will increase participation and reduce costs should be pursued. **Yes**

That the NZFGC should review the eligibility requirements for voting in respect to type of licence held with 2 adults on a current season family licence being able to vote individually.

NB: Legislation Change required No

That a "fit and proper" test for candidates be implemented to maintain high standards of governance. Note: This will require legal advice but could include police vetting and/or the signing of an affidavit when standing for election.

NB: Legislation Change required No

8. FUTURE FINANCE:

The Chair took us through the Future Finance report.

Recommendation 1: Shared RMA

The CE noted some uncertainty regarding how regional priorities would be considered at a national level and whether there would always be alignment, and regions may lose the ability to determine what processes are prioritised. Benefits of having items such as regional and district plans run through a central team to ensure national consistency and efficient use of staff were noted.

Recommendation 2: Separate wages/budgets.

Salaries – Council suggested that salaries should stay within budgets but if not used for salaries they go back into central pool. Staff performance and remuneration to stay a function of regional managers as they are best placed to evaluate performance of staff.

Recommendation 3: Bulk funding of budgets.

Wide ranging discussion around best allocation framework. Generally agreed some change may be necessary but uncertainty regarding proposal and how it work in practice. Need to see working example including actual budgeted figures under proposal. It was noted that it would not address the fundamental issue of allocation in particular that NZ council continue to approve CF bids for regions and the national office to hire staff. These choices are continuing to increase the proportion of the total budget going to fixed costs (staff salaries) and does not appear to be sustainable.

Recommendation 4: NZC conduct more audits.

Some uncertainty around what further audits are proposed. Financial audits are done by independent auditor annually, need to ensure any extra audits don't create a lot of extra workload for staff. If the suggestion is simply that independent audits are passed to NZC this may be appropriate.

Recommendation 5: Yes, agree that current forecasting is not fit for purpose and this needs to change. Proposed system makes more sense than existing one.

Recommendation 6: Yes agree.

9. DRAFT OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN:

The Chair and CE outlined additions to the operational workplan in particular addition of the new organisational strategy. The CE outlined that there are still some uncertainties regarding how the strategy should be reflected in the OWP and at this stage no guidance has been received regarding implementation. The chair outlined his core aims he would like considered.

- i) More ducks, equating to increased opportunity for licence holders
- ii) Access, especially for trout fishing.
- iii) Focus on external revenue gathering and funding.
- iv) Communication: More regular communication with licence holders.

There appeared to be general consensus that that these were appropriate aims and the CE advised he would make some updates to the strategy for final approval at the August meeting.

10. OSH:

Defibrillator

This has been purchased. Beau conducted a cost analysis and determined that over 10 years the cell AED was the most cost-effective option for us and was also compact and suitable for outdoor activities. This should be available for the team leader at all working bees.

OSH protocols

The CE gave an update regarding new protocols being implemented with staff. The team will now have monthly meetings which will have an OSH component and review of key documents e.g. the accident register, noting any near misses or accidents and how these will be captured in hazard register and tailgate forms. It will also provide staff a formal process where they can raise any H&S concerns. The minutes of these meetings will be provided in future agendas.

Staff will also begin to use the Fish and Game online intentions log. This is to be completed by staff before leaving the office/home prior to conducting field activities. The staff will also further develop tailgate forms. These include a risk assessment process which all members undertaking the activity go over prior to beginning the days fieldwork. It is used to determine ways to eliminate or minimise risks. The forms are then signed by everyone prior to commencing the activity and completed forms are stored on SharePoint. These will also need to be completed by volunteers for working bees on our wetlands.

It was moved;

that the OSH report is accepted.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

11. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Voting:

Councillor Clark raised issue about how licence holders to see if they are registered to vote. The CE noted that he had just received an election update which involved a coms

plan from national office leading up to the election. Roslyn can check who is registered to vote.

Trapping:

Councillor Shaw gave a trapping update.

Thanks:

Councillor Annan passed on that Ben and John gave their thanks for their retirement gifts of engraved bird and trout knives, given to them at their farewell dinner.

Fishing regulations:

This is to follow the same process as Game regulations. Staff report and licence holder feedback needs to be considered. Adam is working on preparing staff recommendations and coms currently with a final decision to be made by council at the February meeting.

Hamilton Anglers, adopt a river:

The club wish to adopt a section of the Waihou River where they can assist in updating angler access signs and doing enhancement projects. Staff and Councillor Juby to work with them on this project.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 3.10pm.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 17th of August 2024.