

# AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



**Minutes of a Meeting of Council**  
**held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton**  
**on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2024 commencing at 11:00am.**

## **PRESENT:**

**Chairman:** N. Juby.  
**Councillors:** E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, M. Barker,  
B. Barnes, G. Annan, G. Dickey.  
**Staff:** D. Klee, D. Le Lievre, B. Jarvis-Child, A. Daniel  
**Visitors:** L. Altham, P. Hardy, G. Hall.

## **1. APOLOGIES:**

C. Sherrard, T. Clark.

It was moved;

**that apologies be accepted.**

**Annan/Cocks – CARRIED**

## **2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:**

Nil.

## **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024:**

It was moved;

**That the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024 meeting be accepted as true and correct records:**

**Cocks /Barker – CARRIED**

## **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Updates were given of ranging activities on social media and diversion policies. Northland have recently received a legal opinion which may have further implications for our current national diversion policy.

## **5. INWARDS COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

### **Letters from Minister.**

It was noted that the minister requires detailed information for any regulation changes especially if they appear to limit hunter opportunity. Councillor Barker questioned why the proposed increase in non-resident designated waters had not been accepted. Councillor Barnes explained that overseas anglers already pay much higher fees than New Zealand residents and the reason the fee increase was declined was due to a lack of rationalisation on behalf of the proponents justifying it.

### **Whakapapa Access Issues**

Dr Daniel, explained that we are waiting for wording for the proposed easements to formalise access through the property. Further dialogue is occurring with Mana Whenua including discussion around signage informing the Waahi Tapu status of some of the surrounding land. The CE explained that the approach that Auckland/Waikato F&G has taken in order to create access is being viewed favourably both within the organisation and externally. There is discussion around using this as a 'model of its kind' and establishing a national access fund to replicate the process. We have also been approached by a landowner who may be interested in selling their property on the Whakapapa to us. Dr Daniel explained to council that the current mitigation fund is constrained to the Whakapapa/Wanganui catchment but we are actively seeking donations for a regional access fund.

Councillor Williamson requested an update on the issue surrounding a dwelling on public land that blocks access to the Whakapapa River. Dr Daniel explained the issue was that the District Council did not lodge the correct paperwork at the time, and the opportunity to formalise the access was lost. The dwelling is partially on DOC land and Dr Daniel is going to work with the CE to raise this issue with the Department and see whether we can gain any traction to have access instated.

The CE gave an update on access to the upper Whakapapa via Intake Road. Following intervention by the minister, DOC have taken the position that access must be restored and are working towards that goal. We are awaiting confirmation of timeframes for this to occur from DOC.

### **Hamilton Anglers Club letter**

Gavin Hall spoke to the HAC letter focusing on kids fishing areas in/around Hamilton. He also raised the potential for an area where anglers with disabilities could have access to fish and develop a project in line with Fish and Games hooked on angling programme. HAC are looking for an easy access area with signage explaining the lake, fish that are in the lake and how to catch them.

Dr Daniel outlined Hamilton City Council had tried to ban fishing in Lake Rotoroa (Hamilton Lake) and Turtle Lake. Lake Te Kouto (Cambridge) may be a good starting point to develop this project. Dr Daniel will discuss options to create signage and an easy access area for kids and people with disabilities with Waipa District Council and report back at next meeting.

The Chair discussed a HAC initiative to adopt a river and is looking to begin at a section of the Waihou River below Whites road. Anglers would do some riparian planting and enhancement of the farm and in return the landowner provides non-exclusive access. Dr Daniel suggested that there is potential to put in a walkway from SH5, right through to Whites Road which would create around 4km of great fishing access, although there may be some pushback from local landowners.

Messer Hall left the meeting.

## **6. OUTGOING COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE**

Letter of thanks to retiring ranger Theunis Miedema.

Letter sent to Corina and Barrie providing feedback on licence fee and National Policy Statements for the public record. (previously circulated via email to councillors).

## **7. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BI-MONTHLY REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:**

### **Arapuni stocking spawning surveys**

The Chair discussed the Arapuni spawning surveys which found approximately 25% of fish spawning are hatchery derived. Dr Daniel explained that recent analysis suggests that this is likely to be having detrimental impacts on the overall population. One more survey is scheduled and Dr Daniel will prepare a report for the next meeting.

### **Karapiro stream 2**

The Chair asked if the stream was closed to fishing. Dr Daniel explained that it is not and gets fished by lots of kids at the downstream confluence with the Waikato River. One of the landowners raised issues around pollution in the stream associated with a Christian Rock festvie which discolours the stream. Dr Daniel will investigate when the festival is on.

### **Opening Weekend Harvest Survey**

Councillor Williamson raised his belief that the total number of ducks harvested on opening weekend shows the need to reduce season length to two weeks. Discussion ensued around duck populations and what is controlling numbers with a wide variety of views expressed. The CE outlined that Messer Jarvis-Child has started doing further analysis and will be preparing a report on the subject.

Further discussions occurred around predator control, and it was agreed that the CE will include a question to hunter user group in an upcoming letter asking for information on predator control programmes and urging committees to be active in that space.

### **Waitomo District Plan**

Discussion around Waitomo district plan with the Chair congratulating staff on the potential of increasing access to significant fisheries in the district. The CE explained, whilst there tends to be a focus on access being lost to hunters and anglers the recent examples of Stone Jug Road and this plan should it land, does indicate that F&G regions can use various levers and develop incentivised access programmes which will remain a focus for the Auckland/Waikato Council.

### **Financial Report**

The CE raised the issue that with the LWHT winding up, that council will be receiving several assets, including 4 tractors, which will require a significant increase in our Asset Replacement Fund(ARF) budget, once the remaining dollars from the trust have been used. There was further discussion around ARF and the apparent large discrepancies around the country in how ARF budgets are being applied. The Chair raised concerns that ARF budgets are being treated as general reserves which appeared to be an incorrect tagging of a fund earmarked to replace assets.

It was moved;

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

**Annan/Dickey – CARRIED**

### **8. HONORARY RANGER FEEDBACK – ANDREW KERR:**

Messer Kerr addressed the meeting, tabling a letter raising some concerns with the new honorary ranger's policy.

It was moved;

**that Andrew Kerr's letter to be forwarded to NZ Council and Corina Jordan, supporting the issues raised in the letter and requesting a response.**

**Cocks/Williamson – CARRIED**

The meeting rose for lunch at 1:03pm and resumed at 1:48pm.

### **9. DRAFT FATIGUE MANAGEMENT POLICY:**

The CE explained that staff have provided feedback seeking some amendments. Dr Daniel clarified that fatigue management and drug and alcohol policies have to be adopted as part of the Maritime programme. The CE noted that the drug and alcohol policy had been adopted by council and once a final copy of fatigue management policy is provided council should adopt this to comply with Maritime NZ requirements. Councillor Barnes expressed that in many instances, adopting NZC national policy was optional for regions. As autonomous bodies, the NZC could not compel regions to adopt National policies.

The CE raised the lack of transparency on how regional feedback is considered and incorporated in final national policy. This needs to be addressed if NZ Council want national policy to be adopted universally.

**10. 2024/25 CONFIRMATION OF BUDGET AND OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN:**

Th CE noted that given the updated timeframes to finalise budgets by the middle of March 2025, the council need to have its draft OWP finalised at the February meeting. The Chair outlined his desire to treat the OWP as a living document so that new initiatives can be added as they are thought of and developed. If councillors have Governance suggestions at any time, they should forward them to the CEO and they will be discussed at future meetings.

It was moved;

**that council approves the 24/25 Operational Work Plan and budget of \$881,824.**

**Cocks/Annan – CARRIED**

**11. OSH:**

The CE updated the council on H&S updates and new protocols including monthly staff meetings, the adoption of new intentions logs and risk assessments providing an audit trail which shows how H&S policy is being implemented. The CE explained that volunteers, including councillors, working on our wetlands, as part of organised activities, need to also use these update protocols.

Mses Lelievre is drafting a letter to all wetland associations with the primary purpose of identifying maintenance activities, to be included in our annual report to WRC, and will add some information on H&S processes to be employed by volunteers working on our wetlands.

A calendar of activities and work involving staff, volunteers and contractors will be maintained by staff and become a regular council meeting agenda item.

It was moved;

**that the OSH report is accepted.**

**Barker/Shaw – CARRIED**

## **12. GENERAL BUSINESS:**

### **Question for the Minister of Hunting and Fishing:**

Councillor Barnes informed the meeting that the minister would be attending the next NZ Council meeting and there may be an opportunity to ask him some questions. Councillor Williamson suggested that Councillor Barker formulates a question for the minister and forward it to Councillor Barnes.

### **Elections:**

The Chair noted that the communication from NZ Council has been excellent with non-registered licence holders all receiving an email inviting them to register.

### **Risk Management Plan:**

The Chair raised some concerns he had with the risk register that was provided as part of the NZ Council meeting agenda.

It was moved;

**That CE & Chair to provide feedback on risk register to NZ Council.**

**Barker/Williamson – CARRIED**

### **Letter of condolence:**

Councillor Annan noted the passing of long-standing Otago councillor and duck call maestro Alan Hammond. His contribution to the sport was noted and It was moved;

**that The CE send a letter of condolence for Alan Hammond to be sent to Alans family.**

**Dickey/Annan – CARRIED**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 3pm.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 12th of October 2024 at 11am.