

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Fish & Game NZ, Southland Region Council meeting held at Waghorn's Woolshed, Waituna Lagoon on Thursday 7th December 2023.

Lindsay Withington (Chair)
Dave Harris
Corey Carston
David Linklater

David MacGregor
Lyndon Norman
Stevie-Rae Blair
Mike Turner

Present:

In attendance: Zane Moss (Manager), Corina Jordan (New Zealand Fish & Game CEO), Jacob Smyth, Ben Febery, Cohen Stewart, Ian Hadland (Otago F & G)

Steve McCartney (Minutes).

Members of the Public: One

1 Welcome:

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8.00pm and welcomed those in attendance.

2 Apologies:

Mike Hartstonge, Craig Horrell and Bill Jarvie.

Moved: D Harris. Seconded: L Norman. Carried.

3 Declarations of Interest:

The individual member declaration of conflicts of interest with any item on the agenda had been circulated to members before the start of the meeting.
Any conflicts were noted by the Chairman.

4 Confirmation of Minutes.

The minutes of the public meeting held 5th October 2023 were considered.

Resolved D Linklater/D Harris: That the minutes of the public meeting held 5th October 2023 were taken as read and were a true and correct record. Carried.

5 Notices of Motion

Health & Safety Report to 30th November 2023.

The Council Health & Safety report for the period was attached to the agenda for consideration. All known hazards were listed in the Southland Health & Safety Plan. The meeting was advised that the health and safety plan had been reviewed and that the H & S Plan is provided to external contract providers, feedback from whom indicates our plan is robust.

Resolved M Turner/L Norman: *That the Health and Safety Report to 30th^t November 2023, be received and accepted.* Carried.

Designated Waters licence

The Athol Fishing and Hunting club were concerned about the beat system F & G introduced on the Mataura River. Whilst this matter was resolved it did highlight to staff that such management mechanisms may cause conflict in small communities. The possible introduction of Designated Waters Licensing on the Mataura River, perhaps including the Waikaia, may similarly cause upset with local anglers. Staff are seeking feedback from other regions in respect to offering DW licenses to locals (NZ resident) at no charge, on a national basis.

Moved D Harris/M Turner *To support staff approaching other regions for feedback in respect to offering regional designated waters licence free of charge.* Carried.

Gamebird Regulations for 2024 season.

The manager outlined the model Cohen had developed regarding the effect of soil moisture conditions on mallard populations. This model indicates that we are likely to have lower bird numbers this coming season, hence the recommendation to reduce the bag limit from 20 to 15. This was also in keeping with the formula Council had previously approved, taking into consideration factors such as the previous year's count, previous year's harvest, rainfall and brood counts. The season closure date is proposed to be 21st July, which would coincide with the end of the school holidays, something the Council had previously suggested. Shoveler harvest is proposed to be set at 1 drake. This is based on the national trend (given the mobility of the population), which suggests the population is at best stable. Staff had consulted with our Ngai Tahu representative, who supported a one drake limit.

Robust discussion was held around variances in population estimates and in particular there was dispute and a significant difference in opinion with regard to the setting of the spoonbill limit and the reduction to 1 drake. The discussion concluded with a motion put forward to support the limit of 1 drake.

Moved D Harris/M Turner *To accept all of the staff recommendations for both bag limits and season lengths for the 2024 season. In favour 3, against 3. Chairman's vote 1 in favour.* Carried.

6. Staff Report

The manager reported that wetland work continues to increase. Dairy NZ are looking to fund a project (Edge of Field Interventions) in the Waimea catchment, which staff are involved in. Staff are also investigating a research project aimed at collecting data from wetlands (typical builds) in order to provide information to farmers in regard to nutrient budgeting.

SWALP – continues on.

Monowai jetty Project – pioneer have signed a licence to occupy. Staff have sought a renewal of the quotes for project materials.

SFGC attended the Environment Southland Awards evening where we sponsor the Environmental Action in Water Quality Improvement Fund. The winners were the Makarewa Catchment Group for risk management of winter crop sediment losses.

Draft Policy on setting National Policy.

Council's Information reports.

Letters to Composite developments and Britten Wynyard-Outdoor division regarding the results of the Women's Angler survey.

Letter to NZC chairman re feedback from SFGC.

Letter to the Athol Hunting and Fishing Club re their concern with the Upper Mataura beat system.

Email from Nathan Nelson thanking the Southland Fish & Game 'guy' for the YouTube videos on lures techniques in river along with the angler's access maps.

Administration Reports

Licence sales slightly behind target LEQ's. No other issues raised.

NZC items.

Dave Harris reported –

Dame Lynda Topp has been appointed as F & G's patron.

NZC had a presentation from DOC on Health and Safety.

Legal fund applications received were approved.

Research fund application – approval for Cohen regarding recreational Trout Fishing and Wellbeing in Aotearoa. Also, approval for Rasmus to attend a World Fisheries Conference.

Public excluded – F & G Magazines to continue.

Awarua Bay

Cr Carston enquired regarding Awarua bay. The manager advised that DOC want to close part a New River Estuary and all of Awarua Bay, but that the information came to us late o/a of DOC sending it to an incorrect email address. F & G will formulate an alternative plan and to this end have spoken with hunters who use the area and asking for their observations of Dotterel behaviour. This matter to be brought to council before the next meeting.

Items for next meeting

Executive positions renewal

Draft Governance code of conduct.

Consideration of the Organisational Strategy.

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____