

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Fish and Game NZ, Southland Region council meeting held at the Southland Fish and Game Offices, 17 Eye Street, Invercargill on 30th May 2024, commencing at 6.00pm.

Present:

Lindsay Withington (Chair) Mike Hartstonge
Dave Harris Dave Linklater
Craig Horrell – via zoom Mike Turner

In attendance: Zane Moss (Manager), Cohen Stewart

Steve McCartney (Minutes).

Members of the Public:

1 Welcome:

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.10pm and welcomed those in attendance.

2 Apologies:

Lyndon Norman, Stevie-Rae Blair and Rebecca Munro (member of public).

Moved: D Harris. Seconded: M Hartstonge. 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.

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

4 Confirmation of Minutes.

The minutes of the public meeting held 27th March 2024 were considered.

Resolved D Linklater/D Harris That the minutes of the public meeting held 27th March 2024 were taken as read and were a true and correct record, subject to a minor spelling amendment. Carried.

5 Notices of Motion

Health & Safety Report to 20th May 2024.

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.

The Manager advised that a staff first aid course is to be conducted on 9 April 2024.

An audit of the F & G Health and safety plan is to be undertaken by DOC in support of contract work.

Resolved M Turner/M Hartstonge : *That the Health and Safety Report to 20th May 2024, be received and accepted.* Carried.

Licence Fee Recommendation 2024-25

Disappointed to learn from the Chairs meeting that whilst we were told that the Minister was unwilling to support a licence fee increase, that a case could have been made, should a reason in support have been sufficiently compelling.

Motion to accept licence recommendation as presented. D Harris/ M Hartstonge.

Discussion on motion -

D Linklater considers removing DW licence fee from resident licence holders and increasing DW licence fee for NR's from \$40 to \$60.

M Hartstonge supports this view but not this year in light of the current DW proposal (Mataura/Waikaia) in train.

Amended motion : D Harris/D Linklater to accept the licence fee recommendation as presented subject to an increase to the Non-Resident day licence fee from \$40 to \$60. in Favor 4 : Against 1. Carried.

Resolved D Harris/D Linklater to accept the licence fee recommendation as presented subject to the NRDW day licence being increased from \$40 to \$60. Carried.

Anglers Notice considerations for 2024/25 season.

Craig Smith (president of The Professional Guides Assn) joined the meeting via speaker phone. The chairman asked Craig what the feeling of the guides association was towards the DW proposal. Craig advised they were broadly supportive. Their main concerns are the DW day licence cost and the displacement of licence holders by guides on those rivers. Craig outlined a Lumsden guide (Australian based) who rotates a standard quota of 16 clients through the same waters, which creates pressure with the associated revenues collected in Australia. He advised that he had spoken the previous day with the Minister to make it clear that this mode of operation was not practiced by members and distanced themselves from it. The Minister advised that he had already been lobbied, a lot, from across the Tasman. Craig stated that he steered his clients away from the Feb/Mar period as it was too crowded on account of NR (mainly Australian) anglers.

Cr Withington thanked Craig for his time and input to our meeting.

Cohen spoke in regard to work undertaken on beat occupancy and compliance on the Mataura and Waikaia undertaken by Dwight and Blake over the summer period. Data included in papers. NR anglers represented 2/3rds of the angler numbers on these waters, particularly through the January/March period. Anglers stated that such pressure is affecting fish behaviour.

Cr Turner advised that he has had feedback from the West Coast and Nelson regions who are considering adding rivers as designated waters, as well as our region.

Cr Linklater advised that the beat occupancy rate should not exceed 33% in order to reduce the pressure.

Election Considerations

Elections to be held on 11th October 2024.

D Harris – recommends 6 elected + 2 coopted + Ngai Tahu representative.

M Hartstonge – recommends the status quo ie 9 elected.

M Turner – recommends status quo – 9 elected.

D Linklater – considers 5 elected is too low and recommends the status quo.

C Horrell – recommends the status quo of 9.

The Manager advised that 5 does not include 2 co-opted plus a Ngai Tahu rep, equalling 8. NZC Organisational Strategy indicated that it was to move towards an amalgam of elected and appointed governors. The Southland Council had earlier this year approved our Strategy that stated that we would reduce the number of elected councilors for the 2024 and look to subsequently coopt additional members based on requisite skills and representation.

Resolved D Linklater/M Turner to maintain the current position of the SFGC consisting of 9 councillor's.

Staff Report

Opening weekend survey results generally indicated that numbers were down on previous season.

Acknowledged Cohen's work in regard to the wellbeing study and its publication.

Mandeville pond. The neighbour has not indicated an interest in buying it. Now looking to market it via facebook subject to due diligence first.

Joint meeting with the Otago F & G Council – 25th July 2024 in Tapanui

Coincides with the next SFGC meeting, which will now be held on Thursday 18th July.

Council's Information reports.

Letter to the Professional Guides Assn.

Emails re designated waters in Southland.

Chairmans response to Hon Todd McClay, Minister of Hunting and Fishing.

Administration Reports

No matters raised.

NZC update.

Dave Harris Gave an update.

Budgets – most contestable fund applications were approved.

Discussed Health & Safety Report & Policy, Auditors report, licence fee forecast.

Discussion regarding introduction of a meeting fee allowance in recognition of the time some spend at meetings during the work day.

Chairs Meeting

Cr Withington advised he had a discussion with the Northland Chair in regard to unlicensed hunters operating in their region and enquired as to Southland's approach. Lindsay advised the Southland region had a strong focus on having ranging staff regularly in the field.

Future Finance Working Group.

Nigel Juby (Chairman Auckland/Waikato) joined the meeting via zoom to discuss the Future Finance Working Group report.

Topics discussed –

- Financial efficiency within the organisation
- Reserves policy and Practice
- Licence forecasting
- Centralising licence sales and income
- Budgeting
- Review past reports and advice
- Governance and Finance

Nigel stated that the goal was to have a workable system that had a good chance of being adopted by councils.

RMA – look to centralise the oversight of outputs but not to micromanage at regional level.

Staff Salaries – Manage payroll centrally ie pay staff via a central process but with salaries remaining a regional budget matter.

HR – centralise to enable consistency of application of relevant HR matters.

Funding based on activity – Nigel suggested that in his view there would be issues around this in respect of competing/off-setting levels/areas of activity between regions resulting in the risk of regions competing against each other.

Levy's – set regionally with any under/overspends at year end applied to or from reserves.

External Funds – if generated in the region, will stay in the region.

Items for next meeting

Nothing specific.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Next meeting to be held 18th July 2024.

Chairman _____ Date _____