

**NORTHLAND FISH & GAME COUNCIL
CONFIRMED MINUTES OF A MEETING
HELD AT THE NORTHLAND FISH & GAME OFFICE
NELL PLACE, WHANGAREI
7.00 PM FRIDAY 8th February 2019**

PRESENT:

Chairman: Phil Durham

Councillors: Kris Batelaan, Noel Birchall, Russel Daniels, Chris Lynch, Mark McGinley, Mike Newson, Dave Nicholson, Wayne Pepper, Darryl Reardon, Cameron Shanks, John Skeates.

Department of Conservation: Sue Reed-Thomas, Ross Atkinson

Staff: Rudi Hoetjes (Manager), Fay Stodart (Administrator)

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors to the Council table and made a special welcome to Sue Reed-Thomas, Director of Northland Department of Conservation.

APOLOGIES: No apologies received.

The Conflict of Interest register was circulated around the table for all councillors to sign and declare any conflicts.

Sue Reed-Thomas gave a brief description of her background and her job description. She believed in building and strengthening the relationship between the Department of Conservation and Fish & Game as both organisations have common goals. Sue acknowledged the huge amount of work by Fish & Game and especially, Rudi, the manager in the Wairua Wildlife Management Reserve. She thought that signing a ten year agreement was a real milestone.

The manager informed the Council that a past life member of the Northland Fish & Game Council, Mr Snow Cochrane, had passed away the previous week. Mr Cochrane was instrumental in purchasing the Draffin Farm which is now known as the Jack Bisset Wetlands.

Previous Minutes

It was resolved: *That the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th December 2018 are confirmed as true and correct.*

Darryl Reardon/Kris Batelaan

CARRIED.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Manager's Report

The Council considered the operational report with discussions on the following items:

1121 Kai Iwi Lakes

The Manager informed the council that Dr Adam Canning from Wellington Fish & Game and the Northtec students will be going to the Kai Iwi Lakes to take gut and flesh samples from trout on the 5-7th March 2019. He will take 15 trout from each lake and will analyse the flesh from individual trout using isotopes.

1172 Game Gazette

An email was received from DOC, Wellington querying the definition of Area A in the Northland region. The council discussed the definition and believed that the definition was following a geographical line and if any changes are discussed, the licence holders from the Kaitaia area and the Far North should be consulted and reviewed fully before the 2020 game bird season.

It was moved: *That the definition of Area A in the Northland region stays the same for the 2019 game bird season.*

Wayne Pepper/Mark McGinley

CARRIED.

1221 Jack Bisset Wetland

The stand holder committee had a meeting on the 30th January 2019 to discuss the maintenance programme and the predator control work on the Jack Bisset Wetlands.

At the request of the stand holders committee, Northland Fish & Game will make an application to the Oxford Trust for the shortfall of the costs to have the swamp monster come to the wetland for weed control management.

It was moved: *That Northland Fish & Game Council applies to the Oxford Trust for development work, mainly weed control, on the Jack Bisset Wetlands.*

Dave Nicholson/Russell Daniels

CARRIED.

1228 Wairua Wildlife Management Reserve

The 10 year co-management agreement has been signed by all three parties, Fish & Game, Ngati Hau Iwi and the Department of Conservation. The manager reminded Sue Reed-Thomas of the Department's obligation to contribute enough funds for some overdue maintenance and repair work. The manager informed DOC that access was a priority for all parties concerned and the control of pest plants, which are now potentially weakening the stopbanks and placed at risk if a storm or flood was to occur. Sue Reed-Thomas will talk to the Operations Manager, Louisa Gritt, on the urgency of this project.

1228.02 Greenheart Property

The digger work at this wetland is now completed. There will be no ballots for the 2019 game bird season as the pond will not be established with plantings.

1316 Secondary School Clay Target Competition

The Bay of Islands Gun Club is not organised for the first shoot of the 2019 clay target competition and this shoot will now be at the Whangarei Combined Gun Club on the 23rd March 2019.

1317 Junior Shooting

The manager informed the council that there are two available ballots at the Jack Bisset Wetland. For the 2019 game bird season, the manager will advertise one vacant stand for either junior shooters, novice shooters or female shooters who have never shot before. The other vacant stand will stay vacant due to Health & Safety reasons.

1421 Te Paki Reserve

John Macpherson, the field officer in the Far North has been actively working with Northland Regional Council to make an attempt to manage and try to eradicate the Gypsywort pest plant in the Te Werahi Wetlands. There has been very little support from the Department of Conservation on this matter. Sue Reed-Thomas informed the council of a major biosecurity problem in the Far North with Argentine Ants and a lot of their resources are going into eradicating these ants on public conservation lands. The manager informed DOC that a major problem will occur if access to these wetlands remains closed as this wetland will become a wildlife refuge and bird numbers will increase significantly.

Sue Reed-Thomas advised she will get DOC Kaitaia to contact the manager to discuss this problem.

1900 Administration

The new field officer, Graham Gallagher, commenced work on the 7th February 2019.

Field Officer Report

The Council discussed the Field Officer's report briefly on the botulism outbreak at the Kaitaia Oxidation Ponds. The council instructed the manager to write a letter to all the District Councils expressing our concerns and to notify them of their responsibilities to prevent another outbreak.

It was moved: *That the Manager's and Field Officer's Activity Report are received.*

Dave Nicholson/ Kris Batelaan

CARRIED.

Trend Count Spread Sheets and Graphs

The council briefly discussed the results of the trend counts. The numbers are very similar to the previous year. The manager advised the council not all of the sites were counted in an effort to reduce the costs of flying.

Fish & Game New Zealand Bequests Policy

The New Zealand Fish & Game Council has sought feedback on establishing a uniform policy relating to the acceptance and utilisation of bequests. Councillor Birchall gave a brief summary of the importance of having a policy in place.

It was moved:

That the Northland Fish & Game Council supports the recommended Fish & Game New Zealand Bequests Policy.

Mark McGinley/ Chris Lynch

CARRIED.

Setting National Policy

The New Zealand Fish & Game Council has sought feedback on seeking an agreement on the process for setting national policy. The council discussed the recommendations and thought that a clause 9 should be added. Northland Fish & Game region recommended the following clause:

9. All new policies are to be reviewed after two year period.

It was moved:

That Northland Fish & Game Council supports the recommendations of New Zealand Fish & Game Council of setting national policy subject to an additional clause 9 being a review after 2 years.

Chris Lynch/ Cameron Shanks

CARRIED.

Game Preserves

The New Zealand Council has sought comments and feedback on the upland game preserves from all Fish & Game regions. The NZFGC provided regional councils with five questions to provide comments and vote on.

The Chair asked each individual councillor to express their views and opinions on game preserves.

The following questions were discussed and voted upon:

1. Does your Council support the operation of upland game properties with special conditions for the principle purpose of providing a guaranteed hunting opportunity for a fee?

Northland Fish & Game Council does NOT support the operation of upland game properties with special conditions for the principle purpose of providing a guaranteed hunting opportunity for a fee.

Northland Fish & Game voted 9 against. 2 support the motion

Cr John Skeates is recorded as supporting the operation of upland game properties.

Cr Darryl Reardon abstained from voting.

2. Is there support for non-commercial (i.e. where hunting is not provided for a fee) upland game properties operated by families, private syndicates or friends to provide an immediate and guaranteed hunting opportunity with special conditions?

Northland Fish & Game voted 9 for and 3 against.

They voted adding "with special conditions" to the question.

3. If F&G allows pheasant/quail/partridge hunting on upland game properties with special conditions for a fee, should it also allow hunting of mallards or other game birds on that property for a fee?

Northland Fish & Game voted against unanimously.

4. If F&G allows pheasant/quail/partridge hunting on upland game properties with special conditions without a fee, should it also allow hunting of mallards or other game birds on that property without a fee?

Northland Fish & Game voted against unanimously.

5. Would you support legislation being changed to allow the sale of hunting rights on upland game properties with special conditions? ~~but maintain the prohibition on the sale of hunting rights in all other hunting situations?~~

The Northland Fish & Game Council amended the question and voted against. They believed that it was illegal to charge for hunting rights.

The recommendation from the Northland Fish & Game Council on Game Preserves is that the Northland Council does not support game preserves.

9.15pm: Sue Reed-Thomas left the council meeting. The Chairman thanked her for her attendance.

Employsure

A proposal from Employsure was received, specifying their services and a pricing schedule. The councillors believed that the proposal was very expensive and thought that the New Zealand Council should have insurance for all regions for any personal grievances.

10.00pm: Ross Atkinson left the Council meeting. The Chairman thanked him for his attendance.

Auditors Management Letter

The Auditor's Management letter was received in January thanking the staff for their help and cooperation with the audit. The auditors found no untoward concerns. The Councillors accepted the auditor's management letter and congratulated the Manager and the staff on an excellent report.

It was moved: *That the Auditors Management letter is received.*

Darryl Reardon/Dave Nicholson

CARRIED.

Manager's Annual Performance Review

The Chairman asked the Review committee to meet after the council meeting to arrange a date and time for the Manager's review.

Health and Safety Report

Northland Fish & Game is required to give a Health & Safety report at each Council meeting detailing:

- The implementation and adherence to Health & Safety policy/manual
- Any new issues or hazards that have arisen and how these have been addressed.
- Progress with any ongoing issues.
- Outcomes of audits and reviews required in the Health & Safety manual.
- Any near misses or injuries.

It was moved: *That the Health and Safety Report is received.*

Mike Newson/Cameron Shanks

CARRIED.

Executive Limitations Report

It was moved: *That the Executive Limitations Report is received.*

Russell Daniels/ Cameron Shanks

CARRIED.

Managers Financial Report

The financial administrator gave a brief summary on the financial report ending 31st December 2018. The manager informed the council that NZC will pay the third instalment of the grant on the 20th February 2019. The Chairman and councillors advised the manager to write to the NZC to accept this proposal as a one off and expect the grant to be paid in two instalments in the 2019-2020 financial year as agreed upon five years ago.

It was moved: *That the Financial Report to the 31st December 2018 is adopted.*

Mark McGinley/Darryl Reardon

CARRIED.

General Business

Other correspondence items were circulated to the Council table for their information.

Councillor Kris Batelaan has put his apologies in for the next Council meeting on the 20th March 2019.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.20pm.



Phil Durham
Chairman