

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 20 March 2021 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: G. Annan

Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, A. Kerr, N. Juby, S. Smith.

Staff: B. Wilson, C Robertson, J Dyer.

1. APOLOGIES:

G. Avery, C. Sherrard.

It was moved;

that apologies be accepted.

Shaw/Kerr - CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 20th February 2021:

It was agreed that the meeting had started at 11am.

It was moved;

that the minutes of the previous meeting of 20th February 2021 as amended be accepted as a true and correct record.

Shaw/Kerr - CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Councillor Juby updated the meeting on his concerns over the lack of Fish & Game input into the decision by DOC to renew guiding concessions for another 20 years. Councillor Juby recognised that this was a much greater issue for South Island councils, and thus he was pleased to report that the manager of Nelson/Marlborough Fish & Game was actively working on a submission with assistance from Mischa Davis.

Mr Wilson was asked as to whether Mr Klee had reported back on the Lake Waikare section 128 review liaison group meeting. Mr Wilson replied that he would follow this up with Mr Klee.

Councillor Juby was asked whether the Minister of Conservation had approved the Fish & Game recommendation to phase out commercial pheasant preserves. Councillor Juby replied that he was unaware of any response to date by the Minister.

Councillor Shaw requested an update on the project to replace the netting on the banding cages. Mr Dyer replied that he was intending to employ a student to do the work. Councillors agreed that the work could be carried out by volunteers after the duck season. Councillor Shaw recommended that the netting be a larger gauge to stop ducks getting their bills caught in the wire.

Discussion took place on the Singer Wetland and the current rezoning application by the owners.

General discussion by Councillors on the current national review of Fish & Game, and the budgeting process.

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter was tabled from Ray Grubb, Chair NZF&G Council and Andrew Hoggard, National President Federated Farmers, about building a positive Fish & Game/Federated Farmers working relationship.

Councillor Smith reported that he had noticed that local farmers were more likely to give access and were not as negative about Fish & Game.

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

Ms Robertson provided an update on the application for consents to carry out maintenance work on Council's wetlands. She had met with WRC staff to discuss the application and it was envisaged that the application would be lodged soon.

Councillor Juby updated Councillors on Mr Dyer's successful advocacy regarding the delays by police in reissuing firearms licence. Their issue had been taken up by the NZ Fish & Game Council who were now strongly advocating at a national level.

Financial Report

In reply to a question, Mr Wilson noted that he had not yet heard back from the insurance company as to whether they would pay for the replacement of the two sliding doors damaged in the recent burglary attempt.

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive's bi-monthly report and financial statement be accepted.

Smith/Williamson - CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 12.45pm and resumed at 1:20pm.

7. LAND AND WATER HABITAT TRUST:

The 2020/21 Annual Accounts for the Land and Water Habitat Trust were tabled.

Mr Wilson advised that the Trust was now registered as a charity in the U.S.A and thus U.S.A residents could make tax deductible donations.

Councillor Cocks enquired as to whether the funds held by the recently defunct Te Kauwhata Fish & Game Club had been disposed of. Councillor Kerr replied that it was the intention of the club that the funds would be spent on a suitable project in their local area. He would discuss this issue with the club treasurer and report back to Council.

8. WARD RANCH UPDATE:

Mr Wilson updated Councillors on the Ward Ranch case noting that they had not yet heard back from the Wards as to the proposed discontinuance.

9. OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2021/22:

Mr Wilson introduced the draft 2021/22 operational workplan emphasizing that there was still considerable uncertainty as to funding due to the various internal and external reviews.

Councillors discussed the necessity of increasing the licence fees to maintain an adequate funding base.

It was moved;

That Council recommends to the NZF&G Council that the game licence be increased by \$2, the fish licence by \$3, and the non-resident licence by \$25.

Williamson/Cocks – CARRIED

It was moved;

That Council recommends to the NZF&G Council that the 5% cutback on regional budgets be reinstated.

Williamson/Cocks – CARRIED

Mr Wilson advised that the 5% reduction in budgeted expenditure had been achieved by deferring expenditure on wetland maintenance.

It was moved;

That a contestable funding application for \$20,000 be submitted for Council's RMA applications for maintenance work.

Smith/Cocks – CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 1:14pm and resumed at 1:50pm.

10. OSH UPDATE:

Mr Wilson advised that Dr Daniel was on a training course to renew his Coastguard qualifications.

Councillor Annan informed the meeting that he and the field staff had attended the one-day CERT ranger course held the previous weekend at the Eastern Fish & Game office in Ngongotaha.

It was moved;

OSH report for March 2021 be accepted.

Smith/Shaw – CARRIED

11. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillor Juby provided a brief update on the recent NZ F&G Council meeting and recent staff change at the national office.

Councillor Kerr advised the meeting of the appalling state of Lake Waikare, which was perhaps in even worse condition than in past years. He considered that a causal factor was the ongoing discharge of treated effluent into the lake from the Te Kauwhata wastewater treatment plant and the lack of water being flushed through the lake.

Councillor Cocks considered that restoration of the lake would require the lake levels to be raised back to near historic levels.

Mr Wilson advised that staff had spent considerable effort on Lake Waikare in recent years, including successfully in getting the special status of Lake Waikare recognised in the proposed Healthy Rivers Plan and contributing to the catchment management plan.

Councillor Shaw asked whether Eyede received a commission on each licence sold. Mr Wilson replied that he believed Eyede was on a fixed contract for maintaining the licence database including the provision for selling licences.

Councillor Shaw enquired as to whether staff had contacted the maimai owner on Lake Ngaroto regarding their firing zone in relation to the adjacent walkway. Mr Wilson replied that he would ask Mr Klee to report back to Council on this issue.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2:35pm.

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