

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME

Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 12 August 2021 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: G. Annan

Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, G. Avery, C. Sherrard, S. Smith,
N. Juby (11:24), W. Howard (11:23).

Visitors: B. Barnes, G. Ralph, P. Hardy (DoC).

Staff: B. Wilson, J. Dyer, D. Klee.

1. APOLOGIES:

A. Kerr, C. Robertson, N. Juby (for lateness), A. Daniel

It was moved;

that apologies be accepted.

Shaw/Smith – CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 12th June 2021:

It was moved;

that the minutes of the previous meeting of 12th June 2021 be accepted as true and correct records.

Sherrard/Smith – CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Mr Wilson advised that the Chairman's letter to the Minister of the Environment had been acknowledged but otherwise there had been no reply to date.

The Chairman reported that a Merit Certificate had been given to Mr Gary Fraser, who expressed his appreciation to Councillors for this honour.

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

The reply to Council from the Minister of Conservation, Hon. Kiritapu Allan, was tabled.

Councillors discussed the Governance Review with concerns expressed over the lack of licence-holder representation and especially the reduced governance that would occur with any reduction in the number of councillors from 12.

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

Mr Dyer was asked about his report on the illegal selling of wild pheasants on TradeMe and whether he had received any feedback from DoC. Mr Dyer replied that no feedback had been received and he wasn't sure whether DoC would follow up his complaint.

Councillors discussed the impact of the new National Environmental Standards, especially in regards to grazing near wetlands and on stopbanks. It was noted that many stopbanks and wetlands in the lower Waikato would have to be fenced.

The Section 128 Review of the Whangamarino Weir consents were discussed. Mr Klee advised that he had recently attended a 2-day workshop to review the latest technical documents and provide feedback. A draft report had been prepared on the environmental and hydrological impacts of the weir, and when finalised this report would be sent to Councillors.

The Chairman spoke on the recent passing of Murray Fisher, who was a strong supporter of Fish & Game, and a great loss to the hunting community on the Hauraki Plains.

Mr Wilson introduced his financial report emphasising that licence sales had been much higher than predicted and that a balance budget was likely despite the forecast deficit of \$101,619.

It was moved;

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

Juby/Smith – CARRIED

7. DRIFT DIVE REPORTS:

The drift dive reports prepared by Dr Daniel were tabled. The Chairman reported that the Mangatutu stream had been fishing well over the summer.

It was moved;

that the drift dive reports be accepted.

Juby/Smith – CARRIED

8. WARD RANCH UPDATE:

Mr Wilson reported that the High Court Judge, P.J. Andrew, had agreed to Ward Ranch discontinuing proceedings against Council.

9. 2021/22 BUDGET CONFIRMATION:

It was moved;

that the 2021/22 Operational Work Plan and budget of \$810,240 be approved.

Cocks/Smith – CARRIED

10. ESSENTIAL FRESHWATER PACKAGE: TE MANA O TE WAI:

Councillors discussed the government's recently issued national direction on the way freshwater is managed. Discussion followed on the impact of the new legislation on the Healthy Rivers appeals, and activity on Fish & Game land.

Councillor Juby emphasised that individual farmers were changing their farming practices to reduce their environment impact. He suggested that a generational change was occurring within the farming community with much more effort spent by farmers on achieving more environmentally sustainable farming.

11. TE AWA TUPUA: NOMINEE FOR TE KŌPUKA AND UPDATE:

The Te Awa Tupua update report was tabled. It was noted that Mr Glenn Maclean, Council's representative on Te Kōpuka, would be retiring at the end of the year and would be no longer available to represent Fish & Game on this strategy group for the Whanganui River.

It was moved;

that Allan Stancliff be Council's representative on Te Kōpuka.

Juby/Sherrard – CARRIED

12. GOVERNANCE REVIEW:

Councillors discussed the recommendation of the Strategic Financial Review Committee. Some concerns were expressed over the proposal for a zero-based budget for all councils every 5 years.

13. LEGALITY OF DRIFT SHOOTING IN AUCKLAND/WAIKATO REGION:

Ms Davis's report was discussed with staff emphasizing that they were concerned with the current situation where motorised vessels were often used for drift shooting and the

difficulties in enforcing the regulations. Ms Davis's report had clearly shown that drift shooting should be restricted to rowboats.

It was moved;

that there be an extensive PR campaign about the regulations for drift shooting with rangers taking an educational role in the 2022 game season.

Shaw/Howard – CARRIED

Lunch taken: 12:50pm – 1:30pm

14. LIVESTOCK GRAZING ON FISH AND GAME WETLANDS:

The reports from Mr Wilson and Mr Dyer were tabled.

It was noted that the Council's wetlands most affected by the new legislation would be the Central and North Shepherd where grazing was currently prohibited.

15. LAKE WAIKARE AND WHANGAMARION ADVOCACY:

Mr Wilson introduced his report on the advocacy efforts that Fish & Game had been involved with at a regional level for the restoration of Lake Waikare and the Whangamarino Wetland.

Councillor Williamson expressed his frustration that despite Council's efforts it would be unlikely that he would see any appreciable change in Lake Waikare water quality in his lifetime. Mr Klee agreed with Councillor Williamson that only an increase in water level could possibly have an immediate impact. Staff had tried to get the consent for the Lake Waikare water level reviewed as part of the recent (2014 - 2020) Section 128 review of the discharge from Lake Waikare to the Whangamarino Wetland but were unsuccessful. The current water level consents did not expire until 2037. However, there was a legal requirement under the *Vision and Strategy* for the lake to be swimmable and fishable within 80 years.

16. NZ COUNCIL MEETING 17TH JUNE & 20TH JULY 2021:

Councillors discussed the decision by the NZF&G Council to allow for the continuation of commercial pheasant preserves by allowing pheasants in designated properties to continue to be on Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act. Councillors expressed their disappointment with the decision and especially the lack of consultation with regions despite the long-standing opposition of the Auckland/Waikato Council to commercialisation of pheasant hunting.

Councillors agree to write to both the NZ Council and the Minister of Conservation expressing these concerns.

17. OSH:

It was moved;

that the OSH report for August 2021 be accepted.

Shaw/Juby – CARRIED

18. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillors discussed the recent publicity over Canada geese. Mr Wilson explained that Auckland Waikato Fish & Game had been dragged into the debate over geese because we were the only agency that had any long-term trend data for the geese population. It was agreed that geese were not Council's concern.

Councillors discussed the concept of having a "map book" available at meetings showing significant wetlands, rivers, and other areas of interest. Mr Wilson will investigate this further.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2:36pm.

UNCONFERMED