

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 18th March 2023 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: N. Juby
Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, G. Annan, B. Barnes, T. Clark.
Staff: B. Wilson, A. Daniel,

1. APOLOGIES:

G. Dickey, J Dyer, C. Sherrard, M. Barker, D. Klee, C. Robertson

It was moved;
that apologies be accepted.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

Nil.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 25th February 2023:

It was moved;
that the minutes of the previous meetings of the 25th February 2023 be accepted as true and correct records.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Councillor Clark expressed his disappointment at the decision by the NZ Council to support the Minister of Conservation's decision regarding the phasing out of lead shot for .410 shotguns.

Councillor Cocks observed that although the national office had supplied copies of all the regional submissions received on the .410 issue, the individual regional councils had not been directly asked for their opinions as requested by Council.

Councillor Barnes stated that as Chairman of the NZ Council he did not vote on the .410 issue but believed that the Minister was always going to ban lead shot unless Fish & Game could provide considerable evidence that lead shot was accepted internationally for shotguns of this calibre. He didn't believe that it was in Fish & Game's interest to oppose

the Minister on this issue, and indeed the Minister was testing Fish & Game as to whether it was going to step up and support “his” (her) decision.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that submissions on this issue had been received by the NZ Council from just four regions of which only two had opposed the phase-out decision. Consequently, he didn’t believe that there was much point asking the regions individually for their opinion especially as most regions didn’t bother submitting.

Councillors Williamson and Clark as movers of the March 2023 resolution agreed that they were supportive of the Chairman’s decision not to directly approach the individual regions.

It was moved;

that Council supported the decision not to request from the other Fish & Game regions their position on the proposed phase-out of lead shot for .410 shotguns.

Cocks/Clark – CARRIED

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Nil.

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

6.1 Bi-monthly Chief Executives Report

Dr Daniel reported that drift dive surveys had been completed on the Awakino, Mangatutu and Waihou rivers and that he intended to survey the Waitawheta River soon. He noted that the rivers were generally 4°C colder than in previous years, which was probably beneficial to the trout population in that it allowed for more river habitat to be available to trout.

Councillor Annan complemented Dr Daniel on his recent Awakino video.

Mr Wilson updated Councillors on the consent application for maintenance work on Fish & Game wetlands, and on the proposed Fish & Game/DOC work programme for the Whangamarino Weir.

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive’s Bimonthly Report and Financial Statements be accepted.

Cocks/Shaw – CARRIED

7. BOTULISM PRESENTATION:

It was agreed that this agenda item would be postponed until the June Council meeting due to Mr Klee’s non-availability.

Mr Wilson provided a brief update on recent botulism outbreaks in the region. He informed that the only large outbreak was confined to the Whangamarino with only minor outbreaks elsewhere. Although there was a contractor still working in the wetland, the numbers of affected birds were declining rapidly and would continue to do so with the cooler weather.

8. DUCK STRATEGY:

Mr Wilson noted that the strategy was produced in 2013 and that it had been superseded by the 2021-2031 Management Plan. Nevertheless, the main objectives of the strategy had been implemented including considerably more effort on RMA processes and wetland restoration.

Councillor Williamson believed that the strategy was fundamentally flawed because it did not take into consideration the impact of over-harvest due to the 4-week season. He did not believe that there was any shortage of duck habitat, and in his opinion the season should be reduced to 2 weeks.

Mr Wilson replied that staff believed the main limiting factor for the duck population was duckling survival influenced by the relative absence of good quality rearing habitat (good water quality and pest fish free).

It was agreed that licence holders would be surveyed during the game season for their opinion on reducing the season to 2 weeks.

9. SUMMARY OF NES-F AMENDMENTS:

Councillor Williamson welcomed those aspects of the new legislation that allowed minor earthworks to be undertaken without requiring a consent.

It was moved;

that Mischa Davis is thanked for her report and her work on this legislation.

Cocks/Williamson – CARRIED

10. 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET AND OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN:

Councillors expressed their concern that licence fees were not keeping up with inflation.

Mr Wilson explained the need for a new field officer who would be appointed as part of a succession strategy that will allow for the new officer to work with current staff next summer.

It was moved;

that the draft operational work plan and 2023/24 budget applications be accepted.

Annan/Cocks – CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 1:10pm and resumed at 1:30pm.

11. OSH UPDATE:

The March 2023 OSH report was tabled.

It was moved;

that the OSH report for March 2023 is accepted.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

12. GENERAL BUSINESS:

The chairman provided an update of his discussions with the Northland Council. He didn't believe that the Auckland/Waikato Council should be directly involved with negotiating financial arrangements with Northland.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 1:45pm.

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