

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 10th June 2023 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: N. Juby
Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, G. Annan, T. Clark, G. Dickey,
M. Barker.
Staff: B. Wilson, A. Daniel, D. Klee, J. Dyer.

1. APOLOGIES:

C. Sherrard, C. Robertson, B. Barnes.

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 18th March 2023:

It was moved;
that the minutes of the previous meetings of the 18th of March 2023 be accepted as true and correct records.

Annan/Shaw – CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

5. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Nil.

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

Dr Daniel updated Councillors on the sterile trout programme in Lake Arapuni. He emphasised that no further releases of sterile trout were currently planned but that monitoring would continue for several years. Initial results indicate that catch rates of

sterile trout were only 50% that of non-sterile fish and there was so far no evidence of longer life or greater maximum size.

Councillor Williamson asked regarding Lake Tomarata, how do we get regional councils to put more effort into reversing the declining water quality of lakes? In reply, Dr Daniel reminded Councillors that regional councils had a statutory requirement to prepare management plans for lakes that are in decline (National Policy Statement – Freshwater Management 2020). Auckland Regional Council was making progress on this issue, but the Waikato Regional Council were still procrastinating.

Dr Daniel provided an update on the Golden Clam intrusion. He highlighted the potential role of wake boats in spreading this invasive shellfish from overseas waters to Lake Karapiro, and from Lake Karapiro to other waters in New Zealand. Dr Daniel will be Fish and Game's representative on the Technical Advisory Group set up to advise on the national response to the Golden Clam incursion.

Mr Klee provided a brief update on the recent game season based on the first two hunter telephone surveys. He reported that most hunters were happy with the number of ducks seen and generally it had been a good season. The Whangamarino Wetland had a very good season despite the botulism outbreak.

The Chairman thanked staff and Councillors for their efforts in keeping hunters informed of the Whangamarino rahui and for maintaining our good relationship with local iwi.

The Chairman thanked Roslyn Simmonds for her work on the Fish & Game website, not just for Auckland/Waikato but also for the other regions. The Chairman emphasised that Ms Roslyn's technical skills were outstanding, and the website was much improved.

Mr Wilson stated that he was satisfied with the increase in licence sales, especially junior sales which were the highest for at least ten years. Nevertheless, he believed that the long-term target for fish sales should be around 5,000 LEQ, well above the budgeted sales for next season of 3,700 LEQ.

It was moved;

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

Cocks/Annan – CARRIED

7. BOTULISM PRESENTATION:

Mr Klee gave a PowerPoint presentation on recent botulism outbreaks in the Waikato. He believed that botulism outbreaks on ponds in wastewater treatment plants were generally well controlled after the adoption of botulism management plans by district councils and the employment of contractors to disperse birds and appropriately manage initial outbreaks – both Fish and Game initiatives coordinated by Mr Klee. However, Mr Klee warned that botulism outbreaks in the natural environment were much more difficult to manage but that progress was being made with a botulism management plan in place for the Hauraki Plains. The emphasis was on minimising the environmental

conditions required for a major outbreak by reducing water temperatures and maintaining flow. However, there was still much to be done.

Mr Klee was thanked by the Chairman for his presentation.

The meeting rose for lunch at 1:00pm and resumed at 1:30pm. Dr Daniel left meeting.

8. NZ COUNCIL MEETING: 21-22 APRIL 2023:

The Chairman expressed his disappointment that neither the agenda nor draft minutes from the NZ Council were available.

It was moved;

that a letter be sent to the Chairman of the NZC requesting that both the agenda and draft minutes of NZ Council meetings be available to regional councils within 2 weeks of the meeting.

Williamson/Cocks – CARRIED

The Chairman emphasised the large discrepancy between regional licence income and budgeted expenditure which is causing conflict within the organisation. He asked Councillors to imagine that they were on another council and highlighted two extremes - Northland and Southland. Northland councillors are justifiably proud of the services that they provide but their license revenue of around \$190k is well below their budget of around \$550k. In comparison, Southland sells 1.6M of licenses and has a budget of \$900k. Southland is also getting huge pressure from anglers who travel to their region to fish and thus councillors are trying to reduce activity on important rivers. Managing these conflicts is difficult for the organisation as a whole but there is general acceptance that changes are required to funding models. The Chairman asked Councillors to consider other region's perspectives as well as their own in upcoming decisions regarding any changes to funding.

Councillor Williamson recommended that budget/levies be allocated on a similar system to that used in national taxation with a sliding scale, increasing levy percentage as income rose.

A letter was tabled from Alan Strong, Chairman North Canterbury Fish & Game, recommending that F&G councils discussed the concept of adjacent regions developing an MOU rather than considering mergers.

Councillors agreed that there was already considerable collaboration between Auckland/Waikato and adjacent regions, and agreed that a MOU would highlight these strong inter-regional relationships.

It was moved;

that Council supports the concept of an MOU between adjacent Fish & Game regions.

Cocks/Barker – CARRIED

9. 2023/24 LICENCE FEE CONSULTATION:

It was moved;

that the recommendation from the NZ Council for licence fees for the 2023/24 season are accepted.

Annan/Clark – CARRIED

10. RESIDENCY DEFINITIONS CONSULTATION:

It was moved;

that there be no change in the current definition of residency.

Williamson/Dickey – CARRIED

11. DRAFT NATIONAL RESERVES POLICY:

After discussion, it was moved;

that the draft policy is accepted with the following recommendations:

- **That the Asset Replacement Fund is reviewed with consideration given that it only applies to assets valued at more than \$5,000.**
- **That general reserves for regions should be maintained at 30% of budget.**

Cocks/Williamson – CARRIED

12. REMUNERATION POLICY:

Mr Wilson explained the potential impacts of the draft remuneration policy on the Auckland/Waikato region. He advised that staff contracts would have to be changed with no adjustments for CPI but rather with salary ranges reviewed annually by Strategic Pay with comparable roles in the market.

Concerns expressed by Councillors and staff were:

- Council supported the concept of bulk funding rather than having NZC involved in determining individual pay rates.
- Salary ranges should be adjusted for the Fish & Game “model”. For example, it was inequitable that the minimum salary for a new field officer should be considerably higher than that for an experienced and skilled office manager.
- Roles should be better defined, especially the demarcation between field officer and senior field officer.
- Manager’s salary range should be based on actual council expenditure rather than budgeted expenditure as the latter didn’t take into consideration external income.
- Concern was expressed that the proposed salary range would widen the *gender pay gap* for Fish and Game employees.
- There should also be transparency with the salary range for national office staff.

It was moved;

that the concerns of Council on Draft Remuneration Policy be conveyed to the NZ Council.

Dickey/Williamson – CARRIED

13. OSH REPORT:

The June 2023 OSH Report was tabled.

It was moved;

that the OSH report for June 2023 is accepted.

Annan/ Shaw – CARRIED

14. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Councillor Dickey requested that the following items be placed on the agenda for the next council meeting:

1. That paper tags should have an expiry date.
2. That 16-year-olds should be able to mark-up a maimai.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 2:40pm.

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