

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at the NZ Deerstalkers Hall, Wairere Dr, Hamilton
on Saturday 27th April 2024 commencing at 11:00am.

PRESENT:

Chairman: N. Juby.
Councillors: E. Williamson, D. Cocks, P. Shaw, C. Sherrard, M. Barker,
B. Barnes, T. Clark, G. Annan.
Staff: D. Klee, J, A. Daniel.
Visitors: P. Hardy (DOC), L. Altham

1. APOLOGIES:

G. Dickey

It was moved;

that apologies be accepted.

Annan/Cocks – CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

Nil.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF 9th December 2023:

Councillor Williamson discussed the Piggott wetland management plan noting live capture traps and poison are allowed on other wetlands. Councillor Cocks confirmed that the changes to the management plan suggested by council were accepted. The chair clarified budgeting process and contestable funding bids noting that previous council meeting had been rescheduled due to staff and councillor availability.

Subsequently it was moved;

Not to submit a contestable funding bid and approve the 24/25 budget.

Annan/Barker – CARRIED

It was moved;

That the minutes of the previous meeting of 24th February 2024 meeting be accepted as true and correct records:

Barker/Shaw – CARRIED

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Nil.

5. **INWARDS COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Letter to the Minister: The Chair gave a verbal update on this process and copies of the letter and draft response were tabled. Discussion around the draft letter with some useful feedback presented. The Chair requested that any further feedback be given to him so it could be considered noting that the letter needed to be dispatched the following day (April 28). Council suggested that issues of 4.10, Whakapapa access and the state of the lower waikato lakes and wetlands were also included.

Letter to NZ Council regarding Levy payment: Councillor Cocks felt that the NZ Council representatives had not actually answered our previous request appropriately. Councillors expressed disappointment at the fact NZ Council was unwilling to engage in arbitration and reach a mutually acceptable position. The Chair explained that given this situation there was probably no point taking this issue any further. He explained that even though we are the only region that are up on licence sales this year it is unlikely that we will achieve our budget due to the inflated sales target and given the low level of our reserves we may now require a bailout from NZ Council through no fault of our own.

It was moved;

That the incoming correspondence be accepted as true and correct records:

Cocks/Barker – CARRIED

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

Staff update: The Chair suggested it may be prudent to give councillors an update on staff recruitment now that both new staff had signed contracts. The CE expressed excitement at having some new skilled enthusiastic staff starting shortly. He explained that the two candidates appeared to complement each other's skill sets well.

Mangatutu earthworks: Councillor Williamson questioned WRC's lack of action to the earthworks conducted adjacent to the Mangatutu stream. Adam responded that it was a major piece of work and was disappointed that he had not received a response to date. Adam will follow up again.

Banding analysis: Councillor Barker asked about information from banding data and noted a recent report from Australia with helpful information for regulations. CE stated he had not read the report but would appreciate a copy. Also, new staff member Beau Jarvis-Child will be assigned to work with Matt McDougall from the Eastern region and

prepare a report for council. It is hoped that all North Island regions will adopt a cohesive banding programme with Northland potentially coming on board in 2025.

Arapuni trout competition: Councillor Annan gave an update of the competition. Some excellent fish landed; most large fish got caught near the top under the dam. Around 50% of the fish were wild. Adam will be preparing a report for the next council meeting.

Whangamarino Weir: CE gave an update on S128. Latest information from WRC is that they agree it can be non-notified providing provision to raise the weir to 3.14 RL removed from the consent. The weir has never been put at that height (current design level is 2.95 RL) and it was only a provision in the consent which required a further assessment regardless. The CE suggested that it was in no one's best interest to try and litigate this now, given the weir comes up for re consenting in just a few years anyway.

It was moved;

That the council sends a letter and gift to Ben and John thanking them for their services:

Cocks/Barker – CARRIED

It was moved;

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

Cocks/Annan – CARRIED

7. NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FOR RANGERS:

Page 34 – “She” should be changed to “they”.

Concerns were raised around the requirements to implement policies 1 – 9 especially for honorary rangers. For example, first aid requirements. Is it envisaged that every honorary ranger will have to go through first aid training and if so has that been budgeted for noting that in our region we have around 15 honorary rangers. It was also unclear what level of detail will be required to comply with reporting conditions back to the National office. Concern was expressed that requiring the NZC CEO to understand and sign off 13 different plans was inefficient and unworkable - a template issued by NZC which allowed for regional variation would make everyone's jobs easier.

It was moved;

The CE to seek further clarification what will be required under policies 1-9 and request a reporting template to better understand what is being asked of regional councils.

Cocks/Annan – CARRIED

8. DRAFT NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY:

Discussion on health and safety plans, the Chairman indicated that there will need to be some changes in how we operate. CE confirmed we have an active Health & safety plan, which may need to be updated based on recent national policy.

It was moved;

That CE has the authorisation to respond and seek further explanations on all national policies.

Cocks/Sherrard – CARRIED

9. DRAFT PROTECTED DISCLOSURE POLICY:

No issues raised on this document.

10. RESEARCH FUND APPLICATION:

External funding

The Chair questioned whether there is a general overreliance on the research fund to pay for entire projects. The form should include an accurate breakdown of what funding sources have been investigated, applications lodged and what the outcomes were. This would allow a much better evaluation of the value of research projects.

Councillor Barnes explained a need to update the research process as previous projects had variable results.

The CE explained that concerns were raised at the last managers meeting about funding for projects e.g. Engaging with Mana Whenua which stemmed from the F&G review and insight work related to the F&G manifesto. The managers had recommended that this should not come from the research fund as it did not appear to fit the criteria, but this occurred regardless. Councillor Barnes explained that this was before his time and is exactly why there is a need to update the application process. Council discussed the need for better dissemination of research projects and held in a central repository to make available to licence holders and publish results.

11. NZC CEO UPDATE TO REGIONAL MANAGERS:

Budget setting and contestable funding, discussion around the process and it was noted that only half of the regions made the requested 3% budget savings. The Chair indicated that we were the only region that made the 3% saving and did not put in a contestable funding bid but that we were only able to do this because of staff changes. It was noted that Taranaki/Wellington did not make any budget savings despite the voluntary amalgamation and that it would be interesting to see what savings will be made in future years. Councillor Barnes indicated that the contestable funding process as it currently stands will be changed next year as it was not viewed as a constructive process.

12. WHAKAPAPA INTAKE ROAD CLOSURE:

Dr Daniel gave a brief history of the access issues and future prognosis for getting it re-established. It appears that all avenues to find an acceptable outcome with the new landowners has been exhausted and the matter has been elevated to the minister of hunting and fishing.

13. .410 NON TOXIC SHOT PAPER:

Discussion around how the regulation came into effect, CE raised concerns about availability of non-toxic and lack of communications being put out to our hunters through our communications team. The CE confirmed that he will be purchasing some non-toxic .410 bismuth if it can be sourced to take ranging on opening weekend. Any children found with lead shot will be given some nontoxic alternatives to use to ensure they can remain compliant.

Councillor Barnes suggested that everyone that any of our hunters who have concerns should write to the minister and seek that the exemption for .410 lead shot be reinstated.

14. OSH REPORT:

Update on recent incident involving Fish & Game vehicle that was driven into the Emmett wetland. It appears this vehicle may be written off, but we are yet to receive confirmation. CE gave an update on the defibrillator purchase stating that he is investigating new light portable options which are well priced, but wants to ensure they are also effective.

It was moved;

that the OSH report is accepted.

Annan/Cocks – CARRIED

15. GENERAL BUSINESS:

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 3.00pm.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 8th of June 2024.