

FISH & GAME NEW ZEALAND NELSON MARLBOROUGH REGION

**MINUTES OF THE NELSON-MARLBOROUGH FISH AND GAME COUNCIL HELD AT
10AM ON 18 MARCH 2024 AT AWATERE MEETING ROOM, NZ WINE CENTRE, 85
BUDGE STREET, BLENHEIM.**

Present: Owen Baigent **Chair**
Tom Kroos
Bill Cash
Guy Gardiner
Carey Cudby
Nick King

In Attendance:

Rhys Barrier	Manager
Karen Crook	Secretary
Lawson Davey	Field Officer Afternoon
Gavin Finch	DOC 11.30 am to 12.30 pm

The chair noted that a quorum was not present, it was agreed that the meeting would proceed, and all motions passed would be ratified at the next full Council meeting.

1. APOLOGIES Nev Gane, Steve Holmes, Sebastien Den Doncker, Jean Willis, Felix Borenstein, Ian McLeod, Darran Kerei-Keepa Ngai Tahu Representative.

C1/03/24 MOVE THAT THE APOLOGIES BE ACCEPTED
G Gardiner/N King CARRIED

2. IDENTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS AND AGREEMENT ON AGENDA ORDER

No urgent business was identified. Discussion on the draft Deed to occupy Fish & Game Council land tabled by the Whale Trail to be discussed prior to Nigel Muir's presentation at 1.15pm.

3. ANNUAL AGENDA AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No change to the Annual Agenda:

It was agreed the Fish Committee would meet on the 9th of May to prepare a recommended for the 24/25 Anglers Notice to the full Council.

It was agreed that the Executive Committee would meet either prior to or after the full Council meeting on the 20th of May for the Managers half yearly review.

Councillors were asked to identify any topics to be discussed at this meeting that they perceive to be a potential conflict of interest. No conflicts were identified.

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4. CONSIDERATION OF THE JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

**C2/03/24 MOVE THAT THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING
BE CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THE
MEETING.**

B Cash/G Gardiner CARRIED

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE JANUARY MINUTES/ ACTION REQUIRED SCHEDULE

5.1 NUMBER OF SEATS FOR THE NEXT ELECTIONS.

Pending ratification at the next full meeting it was agreed in principle that those present support the reduction of Councillors from 12 to 8. Moved T Kroos/B Cash

5.2 WHALE TRAIL DRAFT DEED.

It was agreed that the following would be discussed with Nigel.

4 (a) delete the word "alter".

5(a) delete the word "firearms".

Disputes – Ensure that the primary use of the wetland is gamebird hunting and the cycleway is secondary to this use.

A termination clause also needs to be discussed and ensure that the signage content/placement and size is agreed to by both parties.

6. DOC Liaison

Gavin Finch was welcomed to the meeting. The main topic of conversation was access to the Branch while logging was taking place, Councillors again expressed concern that nothing tangible has come of the discussions to date for midweek access to the Branch fishery. Various ideas were discussed and ongoing communication with Darryn Newman will continue, noting that the fishing season for this area ends 31 May.

PUBLIC FORUM _ 1pm

2 licence holders were present, Robin Blackmore and Graham McHaffie. The Chair updated them on where Fish and Game are at with implementing recommendations from the Ministerial Review and the Resource Allocation Project.

NIGEL MUIR PROJECT MANAGER THE WHALE TRAIL – 1.15PM

Nigel gave an update on where the project is at currently and this council went through their discussions earlier in the meeting with him. Nigel left the meeting to consult with his legal team on the concerns/points the council brought up.

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Nigel then came back just after the meeting concluded. It was agreed that he would email a track changes 2nd draft that the manager and chairman would look over and if it was felt necessary, they would come back to Councillors for further comment via email.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

The Health & Safety Report was tabled and accepted.

8. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

**C3/03/24 MOVE THAT THE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ACCOUNTS FOR
PAYMENT TOTTALLING \$238,318.16 BE CONFIRMED FOR PAYMENT
T Kroos/N King CARRIED**

The Financial report was tabled and noted.

9. DRAFT 24/25 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Council received and noted the letter from NZC Chair Barrie Barnes requesting regions to try and reduce their base funds by 3%, in NM's case this would be \$16,924. Management started with a 0.00 budget and have been unable to produce any major savings that would not greatly impact the work of the Council. These included but not limited to the following,

1. No spending on Para Wetland \$10,000 & reduce our share of the hatchery budget leaving only \$23,000 as our contribution to Manawa Energy's \$86K.
2. Close Blenheim Office (\$14,234) and reduce Admin Staff hours to make up the shortfall.
3. Closing the hatchery or reducing spending is not a real option as this is a joint mitigation project with Manawa Energy and this region leading R3 tool.

After discussions it was agreed that the best option for NM is to retain our original budget of \$564,125 and use the new ongoing Designated Waters Licence (DWL) income for any increase in costs that would normally have been put forward as a contestable application, such as increase in staff salaries, increase in audit fees, insurance, and Blenheim Office rent. By not putting in these contestable applications (\$20,500) and using our DWL income we will be saving the organisation 3.6%.

The agreement by managers was that the DWL income should be put into a reserve the same as the non-resident levy was and could only be spent through an application to the contestable fund process. This Council sees this income as a separate licence income from residents and non-residents, and that this money should be identified as income in the year it is received and spent on designated waters not stockpiled in a reserve and we then continue to put up the licence fee.

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It is noted that this years DWL income will go into our reserves and our DWL income for next year 24/25 will show as budgeted income which is covering costs for any REN salary increases and increases in rent, insurances, and audit fees.

Councillors felt very strongly that we should be spending this money and not putting it into reserves and accumulating large amounts of licence holders' money.

10. OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN REPORT.

The Manager expanded on items in the report when asked.

11. CHAIR REPORT

Chair reported that he had attended a chairs meeting in Wellington in February.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Noted.

13. GENERAL BUSINESS

No general business.

MEETING CLOSED 3.15 pm.

Chair *O. F. Baigent* Dated *20 - 3* 2024.