

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL,
HELD ON TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2016 AT 3.00PM AT HOTEL COACHMAN, 140
FITZHERBET AVENUE, PALMERSTON NORTH**

1. Present:

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Andrew Morris, Don Scott, Paul Shortis, Marc Flaws, Malcolm Francis, Chris O'Meara,

2. In Attendance:

Staff: Phil Teal (Manager), Steve Pilkington, Hamish Carnachan

Licenceholders: Roger Smailes

3. Apologies:

Councillors Brad Johnson, Eric Neumann, Jim Cook, Andy Tannock, Simon Muckley, Dan Waechter, Don Adams (Conservation Board)

Licenceholder: Reg Cull

It was then moved that:

the apologies be accepted.

Chris O'Meara/Marc Flaws

Carried

4. Conflicts of Interest

A list was available for viewing of the existing declarations of Conflicts of Interest. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting of 5 April 2016

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the Minutes of the Meeting of Wellington Fish & Game Council of 5 April 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Malcom Francis/Andrew Morris

Carried

After brief discussion it was moved that

The Minutes of the In-Committee Meeting of Wellington Fish & Game Council of 5 April 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Paul Shortis/Marc Flaws

Carried

6. **Matters Arising**

Mr Teal confirmed that he had organised a meeting of Wairarapa standholders and hunters in Masterton in May. Mr Teal had explained the Treaty of Waitangi Settlement process to the hunters who appeared to be appreciative of hearing how the process was proceeding. Chairman Cotsilinis noted that Fish & Game would assist hunters work through any issues such as legitimacy of structures but the principal goal is to maintain access to hunting on the lake.

Mr Teal noted that the draft Sports Fish & Game Management Plan was being prepared for the consultation phase ó pdf copy to be distributed to Councillors prior to formal consultation.

Discussion ensued on the strategic planning exercise undertaken in April and how this could be progressed at the August Meeting. Councillor Scott suggested that the divergent opinions could be grouped into functional areas and then primary and secondary objectives. Councillor Shortis noted that all needed to be cognisant of the resources available and current commitments. .

7. **Public Participation**

Roger Smailes (licenceholders) noted that there was a core of dedicated licenceholders that follow the political side of fish and game which is reflected in support for Fish & Game's positions and actions. He was however concerned at voter apathy in that low voting turnout of anglers and hunters may result in negative influences to the extent that policies contrary to the Fish & Game principles could result. He was concerned that licenceholders did not appreciate the value that the Fish & Game model gave them in determining favourable and relevant policy. He suggested that with high hunter turnouts at the Wairarapa standholders meeting and the pre-season duck nights that there was interest in the pursuits but it needed a campaign such as "the future is in your hands" as a regional F&G Council or NZ Council initiative.

Councillor Morris noted that these issues were discussed at NZ Council with it concluded that high interest in regional fish and game elections were related to specific issues and/or disgruntled eligible voters. The practicalities and costs of auto-enrolment was discussed ó considering the financial cost of democracy (up to \$75,000 each three years). Councillor Shortis noted that licenceholders were required to indicate their desire to enroll often well before any issues were known or arisen. Various options of encouraging enrolment such as auto-enrolment and tick-box "if you don't want to vote" were suggested, through to using effective technology - but by law a postal vote is required as an option. Chairman Cotsilinis noted that Fish & Game needed to continue their efforts to publicise the democratic options to licenceholders with regular newsletters, and promote further and regularly. Councillor Flaws noted that not enough public attend the meetings and licenceholders focus on

issues that directly affect them and what Fish & Game can do for them personally.

Mr Smailes suggested that the licenceholders needed to be told what they can do about an issue so it was important to challenge licenceholders to provide feedback on issues that affect them.

Mr Smailes left the meeting at 3:35pm.

8. NZ Council Business

Councillor Morris provided feedback and report from the most recent NZ Council meeting on 20 May 2016.

Councillor Morris noted that there now may be some access issues on Raonbow Station river near Nelson as the property had been sold to a NZ honey company.

Discussion occurred on in-house legal with the concept potential of getting a good high powered representation for not-much money. There was an expectation that a breakdown of all recent cases in terms of costs of technical expert witness costs vs legal representation.

There was discussion on a standard operating procedure for breeding and releasing of mallards so with a view for a standard set of rules and engagement. The Mallard Research Committee would be requested to formulate a report on the risks and benefits of captive reared mallards and how to consistently to deal with requests for release. Councillor Shortis noted that NZ Council needed to have a clear policy on captive reared release rather than watering down a regional perspective.

It was then moved

That the report presented by Councillor Morris relating to the NZ Fish & Game Council meeting on 20 May 2016 be received

Chris O'Meara/Malcolm Francis
Carried

9. Health & Safety Update

Mr Teal confirmed to Council that a draft template for a Health and Safety Plan had been developed by other regional staff. It is intended that staff will be working to tailour these to Wellington region's requirements.

10. Licence Fee Recommendation 2016/2017

Mr Teal provided an overview budget process and how the licence fee recommendation was derived.

Council considered the recommendation in the paper dated 25 May 2016 *2016/17 Licence Fee Recommendation* and concur with the recommendation made by NZ Council at its meeting on 20 May 2016,

After discussion it was moved that

*NZ Council be informed that Wellington Fish & Game Council had considered the licence fee recommendation and concurred with the licence fee recommendation, namely
A \$1 increase to the Adult Whole Season Fish Licence fee from \$124 to \$125; and
A \$1 increase for the Game Bird Habitat stamp increasing the Adult Whole Season Game Licence fee from \$92 to \$93 – inclusive of a \$3 Game Bird Habitat Stamp*

Chris O'Meara/Malcom Francis

Carried

Further discussion ensued on the effectiveness of the new licence categories such as Local Area Licences and whether licence purchase behaviour was favouring upgrade licences or discounting to lesser value. It was agreed that a marketing strategy needed to be developed to best place options for anglers, and that current category awareness was focussed on existing purchasers.

11. Draft Anglers Notice 2016/2017

Mr Pilkington provided a summary of the recommendations for changes to the Anglers notice, specifically for Otaki River where numbers in the drift dive survey were noted as low.

Council considered the draft Anglers Notice for the 2016/2017 Fishing Season. It was moved that

For the Second Schedule of the Anglers Notice Wellington Region - Otaki River downstream of the Tararua Forest Park boundary – a one (1) fish daily bag limit with a maximum length of 450mm (i.e. trout greater in length than 450mm must be returned).

Malcolm Francis/Paul Shortis

Carried

This represents a change from four (4) fish per day and no upper size limit.

Council considered the report (undated) by the First Schedule Anglers Notice Working Party which had a list of recommended changes and made the following comments:

Recommendation RB1 *ó provided direction on how to use regulation guide;*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves ease of use of regulation booklet

Recommendation RB2 *ó Change advert for Fish & Game information*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves information available to anglers

Recommendation RB3 *ó emphasis First Schedule applies to all regions – Second Schedule is region specific*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves ease of use of regulation booklet

Recommendation RB4 *ó reposition Code of Conduct, National Regulations, and ‘Stop the Spread of Freshwater Pests’ within booklet.*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent *ó* these should still be included as they are important issues but only reposition if improves ease of use of regulation booklet.

Recommendation Definition of Bait *ó a new definition of bait is proposed to simplify current list;*
Wellington F&GC comment: generally supportive but removes uncoloured bread dough and does not cover use of maize, or seed baits used by coarse anglers. Clarification was also sought on whether coloured bread dough (eg red ~ova) could be allowed.

Recommendation Definition of Bait Fishing – *a new definition to incorporate bait assembly*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves ease of use of regulation booklet

Recommendation Definition of Fly Fishing – *a new definition to incorporate fly assembly*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves ease of use of regulation booklet *ó* should read *no more than three artificial flies*

Recommendation Definition of Synthetic Lure – *a new definition to cover scented soft baits*
Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity to anglers on what is now widely available

Recommendation Definition of Spinner – *a new definition to provide clarity of continuous action of lure.*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity to anglers
ó but considerable debate did occur on which artificial or synthetic lures
constituted ÷baitørather than spinner

Recommendation Definition of Spin Fishing – *a new definition to incorporate
bait assembly*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves ease of use of
regulation booklet

Recommendation Definition of Freshwater –*remove definition of freshwater as
it is not referred to in the South Island regulation booklet*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent /supportive if improves ease of use of
regulation booklet, but considered it should be defined in the National
Regulations advice.

Recommendation Definition of Authorised Tackle/Equipment – *a new
definition to clarify that it refers to all equipment used*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity for
anglers

Recommendation Definition of for Sports Fish Clause 2.1 – *a new definition to
incorporate coarse fishing and emphasise use of one rod and running line and
authorised lures*

Wellington F&GC comment: supportive if improves clarity for anglers but also
requires discussion to clarify on what ÷use of one rodøin terms of competition
fishing where one rod is ÷usedøwhereas another is left on the bank ÷unusedø
Currently Wellington F&GC uses the interpretation to allow for this situation.

Recommendation Order of Clause 2.2 and 2.3 – *proposed to reverse order of
clauses to emphasise which is more relevant and important.*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity for
anglers

Recommendation No Need to Specify Use of Landing Nets – *proposed to
remove current clause 2.2.1 as it is not required to specifically permit the use of
landing nets.*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity for
anglers

Recommendation Definition of Use of Gaffs – *a new definition to clarify that
use of Gaffs except in Otago are no permitted*

Wellington F&GC comment: ambivalent/supportive if improves clarity for
anglers

It was moved that

Subject to further clarification that NZ Council be informed of Wellington Fish & Game Council's comments and recommendations.

Malcolm Francis/Paul Shortis

Carried

12. Decision taken potentially impinging on other region

Councillor Morris introduced the topic indicating that regions should consider the possible impacts on other regions ó giving examples of game preserve issue in mid 2000s and recent carp transfer issue. It was considered that there should be a process to encourage regions to consider effects of their decisions or positions on other fish and game regions.

13. Hunting Ethics

Mr Teal read Councillor Tannock's email on hunting ethics which separate out the issues into (1) animal welfare and the environment , and (2) ethical use of equipment used in hunting. Discussion ensued on dealing with criticism from anti-hunting arguments if ethical considerations are relaxed. It was noted that season length and bag limit only realistic control of population change due to harvest.

Councillor Shortis noted that some of the issues that may mobilise anti-hunting sentiment are often gross breaches of the rules. It was acknowledged that Fish & Game needed to lead the discussion and action, else it will result in reactive policy decision making. It was also considered that both the industry and Fish & Game should be leading the debate on the equipment used.

Chairman Cotsilinis noted that ethics are not gazetted, but are included in a code of conduct ó but they are understood by hunters as a requirement for hunting. Councillor Scott considered that if ethics were legislated for it will complicate issues and result in adhoc compliance and there needed to be a strong education component.

Councillor O'Meara noted that technology and innovative equipment had helped to level the playing field to new hunters, and they achieved success in harvest.

After discussion it was generally agreed that a national policy on hunting ethics may be appropriate and considered on a national basis but it was still a requirement for a significant consultation process to occur with regions prior to confirmation of any policy.

14. **Game Bird Habitat Trust Nomination**
After discussion it was moved
*Wellington Fish & Game Council nominate Andy Tannock as a Trustee
for Game Bird Habitat Trust*
Strato Cotsilinis/Andrew Morris
Carried
15. **Rangitikei River Trout Fishery Report**
Mr Pilkington gave a brief overview of the work undertaken in the upper and mid-sections of Rangitikei River including collection of water samples to determine differences in water chemistry to review the objectives and sampling regime of the otolith microchemistry project.

After discussion it was moved that
*Council receive the report for Project 1112 – Rangitikei River Trout
Fishery Management May 2016*
Malcolm Francis/Paul Shortis
Carried
16. **River Control Fishery Assessment Report**
Mr Pilkington provided an overview of the drift dive surveys for the Otaki, Waikanae, and Hutt rivers, noting that data collection sites were modified to coincide with GWRC monitoring sites.

After discussion it was moved that
*Council receive the report for Project 1113 – River Control Fishery
Assessment May 2016*
Don Scott/Malcolm Francis
Carried
17. **Governance and Accountability Report – Auditor General Advisory**
It was agreed that this report was useful in clarifying the responsibilities of governors and management and would be retained for reference and referral. Councillor Shortis noted that if issues become contentious there needs to be able to demonstrate processes.

After discussion it was moved that
*Council receive the report from the Office of the Auditor General on
governance processes*
Paul Shortis/Marc Flaws
Carried
18. **Planned Rangitikei River Work**
Mr Teal gave a brief update on the work undertaken by a Massey University research fellow and noted that sampling time was limited and would focus on existing data held by the Regional Council. It was hoped that the final report

would provide guidance on the adequacy of the current monitoring intensity and frequency and recommend what should occur in the future.

After discussion it was moved that

Council receive the report on the work on Rangitikei River monitoring
Malcolm Francis /Andrew Morris

Carried

19. Wairarapa Water Update

It was noted that the Wairarapa Water Project had sought funding from District Councils to get their buy-in even if dollar value is token.

After discussion it was moved that

Council receive the report on the work on Wairarapa Water Update
Chris O'Meara/Marc Flaws

Carried

20. Lake Wairarapa Moana Update

Discussion ensued on the letter from the Office of Treaty Settlements specifically noting the proposed establishment of a Statutory Board and sustainability of fisheries.

Council reviewed the report by A McEwan January 2016 *Exotic Fish Intervention in Barton's Lagoon Wairarapa Moana* and sought Greater Wellington Regional Council to seek external peer review - which is normal practice for scientific reports- and inclusion of a cost benefit analysis for continued effective management.

21. Junior Novice Angling/Hunting Programme Update

Mr Carnachan update Council that this year's Fish in Schools programme was about to commence with trout ova about to arrive in seven schools. He also provided an overview of the Life Education Project which had progressed with regional staff driving efforts to complete for this year's programme.

Councillor Morris noted that there were opportunities to generate more money to expand the programme with external funding and that North Canterbury F&GC had employed a fund generator. Mr Teal was requested to obtain an update from North Canterbury F&GC on the project and funding obtained to date.

Councillor Scott considered that separate projects possible with individual funding options. It was considered to have merit to consider a working group to assess viability, including how much cost for expansion of the programme, and implications to employ part time staff.

22. **Mallard Research Project**

Mr Teal gave a brief overview of the mallard research projects with initiatives to look at mustelid and predator movements within rural landscapes a priority research project for next year. Findings from the PhD programme funded by the Fish & Game research fund will direct future research and/or management actions.

23. **Management Report 1 April -31 May 2016**

Councillor Morris noted the opening weekend ranging efforts and Council sought to thank the efforts of the honorary rangers who participated.

Councillor Scott noted that he had contacted local MPs, and LINZ to progress solving the access issue at Bluff Road, Woodville and following contact from the Minister appears to be progressing.

After discussion it was moved that

The management report for 1 April – 31 May 2016 be received.

Don Scott/Andrew Morris

Carried

24. **Fish & Game Licence Sales**

Mr Teal gave overview of the licence sales for fish (95% budget) and game (92% budget) noting that both sales were slightly down on previous year's sales. He also noted that most agents were now agency online which provided an up-to-date assessment of sales.

After further discussion it was moved

The Fish Licence Sales report as at 25 May 2016 be received

Don Scott/Andrew Morris

Carried

25. **Expenditure Report**

Mr Teal gave overview of renewal requirements for the contract for long term office tenancy at 292 Featherston Street Palmerston North

It was moved to

Delegate authority of Council to Chief Executive to sign contract for extended lease period of three years plus renewal option

Strato Cotsilinis/Don Scott

Carried

After discussion it was moved that

the Expenditure Report for 30 April 2016 and Financial Transactions for March and April 2016 be approved

Malcolm Francis/Don Scott

Carried

26. **Correspondence**

Mr Teal noted that NZ F&GC had acknowledged Wellington Fish & Game Council's letter regarding the licence holder contribution to the Game Bird Habitat Stamp and that it would be considered a later meeting. .

After further discussion it was moved to

Correspondence and Media reports for April – May 2016 be received

Don Scott/Malcolm Francis

Carried

27. **General Business**

Clarification was sought on the use of motorised boats on the western shore of Lake Wairarapa to investigate what required to except when retrieving wounded birds.

Clarification was sought on the use of drones for checking rivers for compliance. Mr Carnachan noted you cannot use for compliance as you must seek permission from the landowner to but would make inquiries as to their use over public areas.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6.20pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan Club, Upper Hutt,
Tuesday 23 August 2016 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____