

# CONFIRMED MINUTES

## NZ COUNCIL - MEETING #163 (VIA ZOOM)



At the **NZC Meeting #165 - 18 & 19 August 2023** on **18 Aug 2023** these minutes were confirmed as presented.

<b>Name:</b>	New Zealand Fish and Game Council
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 15 June 2023
<b>Time:</b>	7:00 pm to 8:15 pm (NZST)
<b>Location:</b>	Zoom Call , Zoom Call
<b>Board Members:</b>	Barrie Barnes, Dave Coll, Dave Harris, Dean Phibbs, Debbie Oakley , Gerard Karalus, Linn Koevoet, Mike Barker, Steve Haslett, Maryse Ropiha
<b>Attendees:</b>	Carmel Veitch, Corina Jordan, Jane Hutchings
<b>Apologies:</b>	Darryl Reardon, Tom Kroos, Greg Duley

### 1. Opening meeting

#### 1.1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to Fish and Game's National Council meeting being held online, noting Zoom meeting protocols and clarified that as an Extraordinary meeting of Council, these and the 21 April 2023 Council minutes would be confirmed as a true and correct record at the next Council meeting held in person on 18 August 2023.

#### 1.2 Apologies/Declaration of Interests

It was noted that the Council's register of interest was to be updated to include Steve Haslett's interests. The Chair reminded Councillors to send any updates for the register of interest to the NZC EA. It was also requested that the NZC meeting dates be recirculated and updated in calendars.



#### 23/06 - 01 Resolution

**That the Fish and Game New Zealand Council receives and accepts the apology from Gerard Karalus for lateness, and apologies from Darryl Reardon, Tom Kroos and Greg Duley.**

#### **CARRIED**

<b>Decision Date:</b>	15 Jun 2023
<b>Mover:</b>	Linn Koevoet
<b>Seconder:</b>	Debbie Oakley
<b>Outcome:</b>	Approved



## NZC Meeting Dates Recirculated

That the NZC meeting dates for the rest of 2023 be recirculated and updated in calendars.

**Due Date:** 30 Jun 2023  
**Owner:** Maryse Ropiha

### 1.3 Confirmation of Agenda and Urgent Items

The Council adopted the agenda with all papers accepted as read.

The NZC CEO noted that this meeting was in place so Fish and Game could make its recommendation to the Minister of Conservation on the 2023/24 Licence Fees for consideration by the 19 June 2023 deadline.

The draft Performance Management Policy was also included in the agenda for consideration with the NZC CEO noting this was part of the Ministerial Review recommendation for the NZFGC to adopt a full suite of governance and corporate policies which are binding on itself and all FGCs.

### 1.4 Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of the Draft 21 April 2023 NZC Meeting #162 Minutes are for information only and are to be confirmed at the 18 August 2023 in-person NZC Meeting.

### 1.5 NZC Correspondence

## 2. Decision Required

### 2.1 2023-24 Licence Fee



#### 23/06 - 02 Resolution

**That** the New Zealand Fish and Game Council receives the 2023/24 Licence Fees information and considers the consultation received from the regions; and

**Agrees** that the licence fees and categories as set out in the appended schedule, and specifically:

a. **That** the 2023/24 adult whole season sports fish licence fee is set at \$153 and that the adult whole season game licence is set at \$113 (inclusive of a \$5 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp), with all proportional changes to remaining licence fees and categories including a \$5 fee being added to the sea run salmon licence endorsement (as a cost-recovery mechanism).

b. **That** a new licence category is established called a Designated Waters Licence, available as a \$5 annual licence per Fish and Game region for resident anglers and as a day licence to non-resident anglers at a fee of \$40; and

Delegates to the Chief Executive the authority to recommend to the Minister the NZC Licence fee recommendation.

**CARRIED**

**Dave Harris voted against the motion.**

**Decision Date:** 15 Jun 2023  
**Mover:** Debbie Oakley  
**Second:** Gerard Karalus  
**Outcome:** Approved

The Chief Financial Officer spoke to the paper noting that feedback on the 2023/24 Licence Fees had been received from all regions, apart from the late feedback received today from West Coast Regional Council as they only met yesterday, however, all supported the proposed 2023/24 Licence Fees.

It was noted that North Canterbury feedback had not been received to date and Northland Regional Council did not support the annual \$5 charge to residents.

It was clarified that North Canterbury feedback was to be submitted today and the proposed fees were supported.

Council noted that its support of the proposed 2023/24 Licence Fees was to retain balance and ensure the continuation of the organisation, namely with the fees being the main contributor in revenue generation and 77% of expenses needing to keep up with inflation.

## **2.2 Draft Performance Management Policy**

The NZC CEO discussed the high-level consistent approach of a draft Performance Management Policy within the context of Fish and Game discharging its duties as an employer and aligning with Local Government standards for performance management. It is proposed that performance reviews are carried out every six months with staff and emphasis on enforcing organisational values and development areas as part of this. The initial review checks alignment with agreed KPIs with the formal review six months later focusing on remuneration.

It was noted that Managers were supportive of the policy, however, there were queries about establishing a national policy for individual employment contracts in different regions with this to be clarified and included as part of the consultation process with regions.

The following was suggested by Council as part of the performance management process:

- Linking performance to job descriptions and considering adjustments.
- Referencing page 57 for job scope assessment and job description relevance.
- Following productive consultation with Managers, should also be consulted/shared with staff and regional councils.
- Noted that staff may resist changes in job scope.
- Consultation policy to also go out for information.
- HR Business Partner to review feedback and ensure job description changes require staff confirmation.



### **23/06 - 03 Resolution**

**That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council receives the draft Performance Management Policy information; and**

**Agrees that the Draft Performance Management Policy be circulated to regions for feedback.**

**CARRIED**

**Decision Date:** 15 Jun 2023  
**Mover:** Mike Barker  
**Seconder:** Linn Koevoet  
**Outcome:** Approved

### 3. Reports to Note

#### 3.1 Residency Definitions

The NZC CEO commented that the majority of regions supported alignment with Immigration Act and DOC guidelines, however, the following points of non-support were identified:

Auckland/Waikato: Did not support changing current residency definition. Foreign nationals on temporary visas were taxpayers with low-paying jobs and they should have similar benefits as residents.

Wellington: Did not support amendments, reliance on DOC Taupo fishers and Immigration Act definitions not ideal with additional information on this provided in Wellington's letter attached to the paper/in Agenda.

Eastern Region: Not supported due to concerns over disadvantaging students and work visa holders. Paying non-resident licence fee would penalise those contributing to the county's economy through taxes and student fees.

How this was to be enforced was discussed with it noted the only time this could be implemented was at the time of purchasing a licence or Rangers could check licences while individuals were fishing. It was also highlighted the large numbers of short-term workers and concerns about reinforcing resident status for these workers.

The NZC CEO advised that the definitions would not change this fishing season, and suggested a decision be postponed until the NZC 18 August 2023 meeting.

The following was also noted:

- Work visa different from working holiday visa, including specific conditions for work visas and minimum wage + 8% payment requirement.
- Urged clear definitions for student visas, working holiday visas, and other options for those entering before August.
- Consideration of alignment with Australia's policies where work can be done without a visa.
- Requested additional information to understand various visa statuses for the upcoming August meeting.



#### 23/06 - 04 Resolution

**That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council receives the Residency Definitions consultation update;**

**Considers the consultation received to date from the Regions; and**

**Notes that the decision on amending the definition of resident and non-resident to align with the Immigration Act and DoC Taupō will be considered at the 18 August 2023 NZC meeting.**

#### **CARRIED**

**Decision Date:** 15 Jun 2023  
**Mover:** Gerard Karalus  
**Seconder:** Dean Phibbs  
**Outcome:** Approved



## Residency Definitions Visa Classification

Include visa classification clarification in the Residency Definitions paper for the 18 August 2023 meeting.

**Due Date:** 18 Aug 2023  
**Owner:** Corina Jordan

## 3.2 Remuneration Policy



### 23/06 - 05 Resolution

**That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council notes the feedback on the draft Remuneration Policy and recommends that the final policy be submitted for approval at the 18 August 2023 Council meeting.**

#### **CARRIED**

**Decision Date:** 15 Jun 2023  
**Mover:** Debbie Oakley  
**Seconder:** Mike Barker  
**Outcome:** Approved

The NZC CEO noted that feedback was received from various regions regarding the policy with some concerns raised, including the required two meeting cycles before approval and whether the policy could be applied nationally.

Other concerns on the Policy included:

Auckland/Waikato: Role definitions and salary bands. Requirement for two rounds of regional council meetings according to NZC's Policy on setting Policies.

CSI: Commerce Act not considered in policy development, potential "price fixing" concern. Legal opinion sought, discussions ongoing.

Otago: Appreciation for salary band review. Questioned NZC's involvement in non-statutory matters. Suggested amendments, most incorporated. Section 4's removal is the major unresolved issue, which they consider to be out of line with the process for budget setting, as distribution of funds is the responsibility of each council, therefore Section 4 should be removed.

It was queried if the revised policy would return to regions for feedback. It was clarified that the regions would receive an update following this meeting with more time given to consider the policy and final proposal to come to NZC at its 18 August 2023 meeting for consideration.

The following was also raised:

- Could regions override recommended salaries and was the NZC CEO role to ensure consistency.
- If policy binds regions, should it be guidelines instead? Encourage through budget approval process.

The NZC CEO clarified that the policy was not binding on regions and was intended to provide fair and transparent information. It engaged staff under relevant Acts (Conservation Act, Local Government Act and Public Services Act) while supporting national consistency and maintaining positive regional relationships.

There was support for the policy, which was long awaited at Fish and Game, and the move to unify the organisation through these processes. It was suggested that section 9.5 in the policy be amended for clarity.

*Greg Duley joined the meeting at 7.51 pm.*



## Remuneration Policy Amendment

Section 9.5 in the Remuneration Policy to be amended for clarity.

**Due Date:** 18 Aug 2023  
**Owner:** Jane Hutchings

### 3.3 NZC Finance Report



#### 23/06 - 06 Resolution

**That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council notes the NZC Finance Report for the nine months ended 31 May 2023 with a surplus of \$166,969.**

**CARRIED**

**Decision Date:** 15 Jun 2023  
**Mover:** Steve Haslett  
**Seconded:** Dave Harris  
**Outcome:** Approved

The Chief Finance Officer noted the Statement of Financial Performance tables attached in the Agenda, highlighting the following:

- Magazine expenses overbudget as indicated on page 84, due to increased post and paper costs.
- Year-to-date (YTD) expenses were 129k overbudget.
- Governance budgets on page 85, included NZC budget shortfall of 58k YTD with an anticipated overspend of 5-8k.

The governance budget overspend was discussed further with the following also noted:

- Investigation meeting held on 10 June 2023, airfare expenses exclusion and lawyer fees to be included.
- Under Regional Audit, strategic pay remuneration advice costs were pending.
- Ministerial Review Implementation, at the August NZC meeting a formal recommendation would be required for unspent funds to go to reserves for the next year (similar process to the RMA/Legal Fund).
- Under Staff Expenses, numerous recruitments were undertaken this year, including the utilisation of employment consulting services.
- Minor error noted on page 83 with an extra zero to be added to correct the value to \$160,000.

The following was noted for updating accordingly:

- There would be more legal costs to be updated in the final budgets.
- The accounts would not be ready in time for the 18 August NZC meeting, however, forecasts would be provided up to 31 August.
- Any savings from staff leaving to be updated appropriately, however, noted that this would all be utilised for the backfilling of positions and accounting for market movement.
- The staff budget for the next financial year would be revised and updated figures presented at the August NZC meeting.

### 3.4 General Business

**Designated Waters:** Council discussed Designated Waters going to the Minister of Conservation at the same time as the proposed Licence Fees and concerns raised on the process with Designated Waters identified as part of the Anglers Notice in June, after the Licence Fees are approved, and the fishing licences and fees implemented through the Sports Fish Licences Fees and Forms Notice in July.

The NZC CEO explained the current process under Fish and Game's statutory requirements regarding NZC's power to recommend licence fees to the Minister including NZC pulling together

the Anglers Notice from the regions directly and giving careful consideration to the regional councils feedback when reaching its decision as to the level of licence fee that would be appropriate. She noted that if there was unconformity between the proposed Licence Fees with the Anglers Notice, based on legal advice received, there were only two options for the Minister to consider when presented with the proposed Licence Fees, as we cannot modify the Anglers Notice once the Licence Fees are approved, which are to either accept the proposed Licence Fees or return to Fish and Game with areas to consider further.

### 3.5 List of Acronyms

## 4. Close Meeting

### 4.1 Close the meeting

**Next meeting:** NZC Meeting #165 - 18 & 19 August 2023 - 18 Aug 2023, 9:00 am

### New Actions raised in this meeting

Item	Action Title	Owner
1.2	NZC Meeting Dates Recirculated <b>Due Date:</b> 30 Jun 2023	Maryse Ropiha
3.1	Residency Definitions Visa Classification <b>Due Date:</b> 18 Aug 2023	Corina Jordan
3.2	Remuneration Policy Amendment <b>Due Date:</b> 18 Aug 2023	Jane Hutchings



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 15 June 2023