

**WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL, HELD ON  
TUESDAY 5 APRIL 2016 AT 3.10PM AT MASTERTON COSMOPOLITAN CLUB, 398 QUEEN  
STREET, MASTERTON**

**1. Present:**

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Paul Shortis, Jim Cook, Don Scott, Dan Waechter, Malcolm Francis, Brad Johnson, Andrew Morris, Simon Muckley, Marc Flaws

**2. In Attendance:**

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

Hawke's Bay/Wellington Conservation Board: Don Adams

Licenceholders: John Pansters

**3. Apologies:**

Andy Tannock, Chris O'Meara, Eric Neumann, Corina Jordan

It was then moved that

*the apologies be accepted.*

**Marc Flaws/Don Scott**

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 16 February 2016**

After brief discussion it was moved that:

*the Minutes of the Wellington Fish & Game Council of 16 February 2016  
be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that  
meeting.*

**Jim Cook/Malcolm Francis**

Carried

**6. Matters Arising**

Discussion ensued on the revenue streams for the Game Bird Habitat Trust funding base. Mr Teal provided a summary of income obtained from GBHT Annual Reports over the last five year that:

Revenue:

- Average income from licence sales was ~ \$65,000,
- Average income from general sales (print and stamp collectors) was ~\$26,000
- Average income from interest on principal was ~\$30,000

Expenditure:

- Average costs for administration (NZ F&GC) and production (NZ Post) was ~\$28,000

Average total income from interest and net sales income was ~\$95,000 per year

Council considered that efforts should be made to make the gamebird habitat stamp programme more well-known to hunters so that they could see value in contributing to the fund, especially if an increase of \$1 per licence was considered. Councillor Morris indicated that there was a mixed response by NZ F&G Council for the request by Wellington F&GC to consider the merits of an increase in the licence holder contribution. It was agreed that Wellington Council would support the status quo until a more refined proposal is presented to Fish & Game regions.

Mr Teal noted that he had invited Mr Neil Hayes to the meeting to provide an opportunity to discuss his recent papers on mallard numbers and use of steel shot but had declined the invitation for this meeting.

Mr Teal indicated that there was a Fish & Game working party undertaking work on updating the Health and Safety Manual now that the new legislation has come into effect. This would effectively provide a template for all Fish & Game regions and then refined for each region on their specific needs. A legal opinion on OSH responsibilities for Fish & Game staff and governors had been provided for information with respect to being proactive to issues and including as a regular agenda item

It was noted that the national reparation policy had been adopted by NZ Fish & Game Council which completes the national policy for compliance and prosecutions.

It was moved that

***Wellington Fish and Game Council would adopt the national policy referring to options for reparation options relating to compliance and prosecutions***

**Don Scott/Dan Waechter**

Carried

Mr Teal confirmed that Wellington Fish & Game Council would contribute up to \$2,500 to the development of website based curriculum support in conjunction with other regions and NZ F&GC

**7. NZ Council Business – NZ Council Meeting 18 -20 March 2016**

Councillor Morris outlined discussion by NZ Council regarding lower licence sales in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15 – the latter year being particularly good for licence sales across the country. The changes in licence categories available for fishing 2015/16 season had not appeared to reduce the churn which is in the 25-30% range. Don Adams recounted other data from U.S. hunting clubs and recreational users that have a similar turnover of up to 30% each year. Councillor Morris further noted that a lapsed participant survey was proposed to be undertaken to update previous surveys' findings. Councillor Waechter also noted that there were a possible purchasing behavioural changes based on age cohorts/generations where licences are tactically purchased for specific areas such as Taupo rather than NZ wide.

Councillor Morris noted that there was increasing awareness of the need to ensure provisions of Water Conservation Orders are being implemented appropriately – such as lakes Ellesmere and Wairarapa. It was further noted that Local Water Conservation Notices (such as Mangatainoka River) still stand under law but regional planning mechanisms should account for them (as the One Plan Regional Plan does have regard to).

Councillor Morris noted that the health and safety legislation was discussed by NZ Council. Possible proactive measures to promote good gun safe practices – including the merits of possible initiatives such as seminars prior to getting a licence to hunt waterfowl. Councillor Johnson noted that the long term effectiveness of programmes in the US and Europe were uncertain or not effective. Discussion ensued on potential partnerships with Deerstalkers Association and/or Mountain Safety Council and whether there is any assumed liability of providing such programmes. Councillor Francis noted that the biggest barrier in NZ to changes in culture relating to health and safety is attitude – and this had occurred in several similar countries overseas seeing accident rates a quarter in the UK and about half in Australia compared to NZ.

Councillor Morris noted that there had been a presentation given by Martin Unwin (NIWA) on the National Anger Survey. A further study undertaken by a researcher (Stu Hayes) from Otago University of Non-Resident anglers which indicated lowland fisheries were often focused for use (easy access) and that the economic value of a non-resident licence holder (\$5,800) was

over twice that of a 'average' tourist (\$2,700). Mr Teal undertook to circulate the final research report.

Mr Pansters arrived at 4:00pm.

Councillor Morris clarified expectations of any declaration including any financial interest that might affect Fish & Game either actual or perceived – to be noted at the start of the each term and updated accordingly. It would be up to individual councillors to note whether they considered they had an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Councillor Morris noted that NZ Council discussed how regions should approach issues that may impinge on other regions – with the example given of the carp transfer for commercial use or breeding and releasing of mallard. He noted that the NZ Council Chairman would be writing to all regions to ensure consideration is given to make decision that are not to the potential detriment of neighbouring regions. Councillor Johnson considered there could be a checklist of how consideration of a proposal may affect another region and any precedent it may set – especially if it was commercial or controversial. Chairman Cotsilinis further clarified that the carp transfer proposal had not proceeded.

It was then moved that

***The report from the NZ Council appointee Andrew Morris for the meeting held on 18-20 March 2016 be received***

**Brad Johnson/Malcolm Francis**

Carried

Mr Teal noted that following the NZ Council meeting, options for basing the Environmental Manager from NZ F&GC were being actively considered.

**8. Public Participation**

Chairman Cotsilinis welcomed members of the public and offered an opportunity to address Council on any issues. No specific issues were discussed.

**9. 2016/17 Draft Annual Plan – Draft Budget**

Mr Teal explained the budget process and the principal purpose of defining a draft budget was to define any new or materially different projects to be considered; determine if internal re-organisation of projects is feasible, and define any resources that require a contestable fund application to the Managers Meeting in April, and NZ Council meeting. This in turn allows a licence fee recommendation to be considered by the Minister of Conservation. Review projects to confirm relevance and potentially add new

projects that fulfil strategic direction. He further reiterated that expansion of existing projects and adding new projects must be done cognisant that staff resources and external costs are fully allocated.

After considerable discussion it was moved that

***contestable funding application be prepared for additional staff resources (~0.5FTE) to allow for expansion and effective management of the Fish in Schools project***

**Simon Muckley/Brad Johnson**

Carried

After further discussion on the Lake Omanu Hunter Training Programme it was moved that

***Contestable funding application be prepared for health and safety purposes such as small row boats for hunters involved in the Lake Omanu Hunter Training Programme***

**Malcolm Francis/Dan Waechter**

Carried

After confirming that appropriate employer responsibilities for OSH and salary reviews be taken into account it was then moved that

***the draft budget be approved for internal budgeting processes and licence fee setting exercise***

**Jim Cook/Don Scott**

Carried

#### **10. Strategic Planning Exercise**

Each Councillor was invited to provide up to five longer term outcomes – the ‘ends’ - rather than how to get there – the ‘means’ to set the strategic direction of Wellington Fish & Game region.

Councillors provided up to five key goals (or achievements) they would like to see in the next three year term and beyond. Mr Teal was requested to summarise Councillors contributions to be discussed at the August 2016 meeting.

#### **11. Planned Rangitikei River Works Project**

Mr Teal provided a brief summary of works planned by the Massey University research fellow to be completed in this financial year. The main purpose is to examine the data currently collected and assess if this is enough to detect change in land use/intensification.

- Compile current trout drift dive data, otolith assessment and other data within Wellington Fish & Game on the Rangitikei River.

- Compile current data on water quality and ecological health in the study section of the Rangitikei River.
- Undertake an assessment of the current ecological health of the study section of the Rangitikei River.
- Assess and report on present and potential future trends in ecological health and trout density on the Rangitikei River between Springvale and Vinegar Hill.

**12. Wairarapa Water Use Project Update**

Mr Teal provided an overview of the planned project streams being undertaken by project directors. A brief update was given on the progress of the Wairarapa Water Storage project – following the announcement by Government to allocate additional funding via the Accelerated Irrigation Fund to complete the investigations to an “investor ready” situation. While the public statements might be currently to provide the project to external funders – there are continuing funding issues and how these contributions might be recouped by the regional council.

**13. Lake Wairarapa Update**

Mr Teal provided an update on the Lake Wairarapa Treaty settlement process. Mr Don Adams noted that the Wellington Region Conservation Management Strategy was due at the end of July and would be of interest to Fish & Game.

**14. Junior Novice Angling/Hunting Programme Update**

Mr Carnachan provided an update of the Fish In Schools project and the curriculum development being undertaken by Lift Education and he had taken an initial lead role in liaising with them for other regions but now being run by NZ F&GC

**15. General Business Item – Brought forward**

Councillor Don Scott provided a written commentary on water quality issues and management – which would be included in the Manawatu Freshwater Anglers newsletter.

Councillor Scott left the meeting at 5:45pm

**16. Mallard Research Update**

Mr Teal noted that the mallard research project had progressed and the analysis of data starts in earnest but initial take home messages were to target a whole suite of predators.

Councillor Morris noted that the research project had created interest amongst US researchers and a keenness to come to NZ to continue research.

Mr Teal noted that there would be a presentation at the “Duck Night” in Palmerston North in late April where David Klee (AWFG) would provide a summary of project goals and initial findings. Blood samples for heavy metals to see if there are any effect on hens in terms of productivity effects.

**17. Management Report 1 February – 31 March 2016**

Mr Teal noted that the diligent efforts by staff in undertaking the summer fieldwork programme which was endorsed by Council

After discussion it was moved that

***The management report for 1 February 2016– 31 March 2016 be received.***

**Jim Cook/Marc Flaws**

Carried

**18. Fishing Licence Report**

Mr Teal noted that fish licence sales on LEQs (full licence equivalents) was lower than the two previous years and was relatively consistent across the country. Overall across the country LEQ sales were consistent with 2012/13 and 2013/14 fishing licence sales. Despite the licence sales being 91% of 2015/16 budget compares favourably with 92% at the same stage as 2014/15 budget period – there are more sales through agency on line which provide almost real-time sales estimates.

Councillor Morris indicated that NZ Council committed for two more years of having the licence category options implemented

After brief discussion it was moved that

***The Fish Licence Sales report as at 24 March 2016 be received.***

**Paul Shortis/Brad Johnson**

Carried

**19. Expenditure Report**

After discussion it was moved that

***the Expenditure Report for 29 February 2016 and Financial Transactions for January and February 2016 be approved***

**Malcolm Francis/ Andrew Morris**

Carried

Mr Teal informed Council that the accounting system had changed to *Xero* from *Moneyworks* – which might afford an opportunity to adjust the financial reporting relatively easily.

Chairman Cotsilinis noted that the expenditure was being managed conservatively in response to lower than expected licence sales and in line with budgeted figures.

**20. Correspondence and Media**

After brief discussion it was moved that

***Correspondence and Media reports for January – February be received***

**Jim Cook/ Dan Waechter**

Carried

**21. General Business**

Don Adams noted from his perspective on the Conservation Board commended the good working relationships between DOC and Fish & Game at the staff level.

**22. One Plan Implementation**

The Council agreed ***to move into Public Excluded session (at 6.15pm)***

**Strato Cotsilinis/Jim Cook**

Carried

***That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting namely the agenda item:***

***One Plan Regional Plan Implementation***

***The withholding of information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by councillors or officers and to maintain legal professional privilege and potentially commercially sensitive information.***

***This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a)(II) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public***

***Wellington F&GC move out of committee (at 6.20pm) and that the public be invited to return to the meeting.***

**Strato Cotsilinis/Jim Cook**

Carried

There were no resolutions resulting from in-committee discussions.

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



Next Meeting to be held: Hotel Coachman, 140 Fitzherbert Avenue,  
Palmerston North, Tuesday 7 June 2016 at 3.00pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

