

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL, HELD ON
TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2017 AT 3.05PM AT UPPER HUTT COSMOPOLITAN CLUB, 11 LOGAN
STREET, UPPER HUTT**

1. Present:

Chairman Strato Cotsilinis, Councillors Simon Muckley, Brad Johnson, Marc Flaws, Chris O'Meara, Don Scott, Dan Waechter.

2. In Attendance:

Staff: Phil Teal (Manager), Hamish Carnachan, Matt Kavermann

Graeme McKenzie (Licenceholder)

3. Apologies:

Councillors Andy Tannock, Andrew Morris, Jim Cook, Eric Neumann, Paul Shortis, Malcolm Francis.

Staff: Peter Wilson

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 4 April 2017

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the Minutes of the Meeting of Wellington Fish & Game Council of 4 April 2017 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Don Scott/Dan Waechter

Carried

6. Minutes of Previous In-Committee Meeting of 4 April 2017

After a brief discussion it was moved that:

the In-Committee Minutes of the Meeting of Wellington Fish & Game Council of 4 April 2017 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Dan Waechter/Chris O'Meara

Carried

7. **Matters Arising**

It was noted that a Stokes Valley school had taken up the opportunity for involvement in the Fish In Schools programme by taking a tank and appeared to be incorporate well into their current environmental curriculum.

8. **NZ Council Business**

An update was made by Mr Teal for the NZ Council meeting held on 19 and 20 May 2017 using summary notes provided by NZ Council staff.

It was noted that observers to the meeting (Chris O'Meara and Marc Flaws (Wellington Councillors) were not afforded speaking rights at the meeting.

There was a proposal from an external source to seek extra funding to investigate options for didymo control using phosphorus dosing. After discussion it was agreed that this proposal was contingent on other funding sources, and options to get extra funding from within Fish & Game system were limited given the quantum required.

After further discussion it was agreed to send a letter to MPI requesting continued vigilance to prevent its transfer to the North Island and support a long term plan and commitment to control its spread.

It was moved that:

the report of the Meeting of NZ Fish & Game Council of 19-20 May 2017 be received.

Marc Flaws/Chris O'Meara

Carried

9. **Public Participation**

Chairman Cotsilinis invited members of the public to speak on any particular issues – with Graeme McKenzie introducing himself as a licenceholder but no specific issues were forthcoming.

10. **Health & Safety Update**

Mr Teal provided an overview of the Health & Safety report.

It was agreed that for future years, schools would organise for all electrical equipment used in the Fish in Schools programme would be checked and tagged by a registered electrician.

It was then moved that

The Health and Safety Report for April and May be received

Simon Muckley/Dan Waechter

Carried

11. Licence Fee Recommendation

Council considered and discussed the paper prepared by Alison Lyall (NZ Council Finance Manager) dated 26 May 2017 entitled “**2017/18 Licence Fee Recommendation**”.

It was then moved that

The licence fee recommended by NZ Council be supported, namely a \$2 increase to the Adult Whole Season Fish Licence Fee (from \$125 to \$127) and a \$1 increase to the Adult Wholeseason Game Licence Fee (from \$93 to \$94 inclusive of a \$3 contribution to the Game Bird Habitat Stamp).

Chris O’Meara/Marc Flaws

Carried

12. Anglers Notice 2017/18

There were no specific remits for changes to the Anglers Notice received from Fish & Game Clubs or individuals.

Dr Kavermann noted that from the drift dive results there were nothing to warrant significant changes to the previous season conditions. There would need to be a check to ensure clarity of regulation booklet and Anglers Notice as noted by Robert Sowman (Planning & Policy Manager NZ Council) email dated 28 May 2017.

It was then moved

There are no significant changes to the Anglers Notice 2017/18 and the recommended Anglers Notice be sent to the Minister of Conservation for approval

Don Scott/Dan Waechter

Carried

13. Rangitikei River Catchment Trout Monitoring Report

The report prepared by Dr Kavermann dated May 2017 “**Rangitikei River Catchment Trout Monitoring**” was considered and discussed.

It was then moved

That the report on the Rangitikei River Trout Monitoring be received and be able to be released to Genesis Energy

Brad Johnson/Dan Waechter

Carried

Mr Teal noted that the otolith collection from adult and juvenile trout would be sampled in summer 2018.

14. River Control Fishery Assessment Report

The report prepared by Dr Kavermann dated May 2017 ***Hutt, Waikanae and Otaki Rivers Sportsfish Monitoring Results 1999-2017*** was considered and discussed.

Dr Kavermann gave an overview of results and confirmed the data analysis showed that changes to harvest regulations were not required. He noted that the Hutt River fishery was stable to slight increasing over the last 18 years, and the Waikanae River fishery was stable. It did not appear that the extent of cross-blading in the Hutt River was not significantly affecting the trout population given its current intensity.

It was also noted that for these rivers that additional monitoring was planned to confirm spawning areas in the catchments using microchemistry analysis of trout otoliths and potentially eDNA for presence of spawning trout.

It was then moved

That the report on the Hutt, Waikanae and Otaki Rivers Sportsfish Monitoring Results 1999-2017 be received and be able to be released to Greater Wellington Regional Council

Dan Waechter /Brad Johnson

Carried

15. Western Greater Wellington River Management - Update

There was brief discussion on the submission for the resource consent applications for the global consent GWRC (Flood Protection) which covered the Hutt, Wainuiomata, Otaki, and Waikanae rivers. It was confirmed that assistance was offered to angling to ensure effective submissions were developed by due date in mid April.

Mr Teal noted that the Code of Practice was an important management tool that would require peer review to ensure activities covered by the document were suitable in maintaining desirable environmental outcomes.

16. One Plan Implementation Case - Update

Mr Teal gave a brief overview of the decision of the Environment Court which was released on 3 April 2017. Discussion ensued on the potential implications of decisions/judicial declarations made and course of actions available to Horizons Regional Council and Fish & Game NZ.

Council considered a letter from Horizons Regional Council chairman dated 26 May 2017 to set up a meeting of governors on 8 June 2017. It was considered that Fish & Game were still seeking an adequate response to its letter of 8 May 2017 (and also given many councillors were not available on that date) and adding a political dimension to proceedings would not be helpful at this stage.

It was then moved that

A letter be sent to Horizons Regional Council chairman declining the request for a meeting on 8 June 2017 and confirm Wellington Fish & Game is awaiting a formal response to the letter of 8 May 2017.

Chris O'Meara/Marc Flaws

Carried

17. Wairarapa Water Update

Mr Carnachan gave a brief overview of recent media releases and confirmed that the GWRC Council may be formally considering the issue of continued funding for Wairarapa Water by the Crown Irrigation Funder from MPI. He outlined Wairarapa Water's media strategy and outlined responses made to this. Chairman Cotsilinis commended the work of Mr Carnachan in undertaking the media responses to this issue.

18. Lake Wairarapa Moana Update

Mr Teal gave an overview of the actions by DoC to continue a control programme on Barton's Lagoon without continued collaboration with Fish & Game – including 'assumed' approval for a control programme beyond research. It was agreed that

Staff would provide comments on the DOC commissioned report on fish removal research and meet with DoC to voice disappointment on lack of collaboration

Don Scott/Dan Waechter

Carried

19. Mallard Research Project

Mr Teal gave a brief overview of progress by the PhD candidate in completing the work at the Waikato and Southland sites –and would aim to be finished by the end of August.

Discussion ensued on Erin Garrick's paper on duckling survival of mallard ducks in Southland which confirmed the important of ephemeral wetlands from the nest site to the open water areas traditionally associated with brood rearing. After discussion it was moved

To receive the update on the mallard research

Brad Johnson/Don Scott

Carried

20. Junior Angler Participation – Fish in Schools

Mr Carnachan gave a brief overview of project that the ova from Ngongotaha hatchery had arrived in early June and there were eight tanks in operation. Mr Carnachan commended the assistance given by Dr Kavermann in setting up some Manawatu schools, which was endorsed by Mr Teal who had received positive feedback of all staff involved.

Discussion ensued on the potential for Fish In Schools aquarium stickers to be used for branding and use in the programme.

Discussion ensued on future efforts with Councillor Muckley favouring a considered and focused approach to education with specific messaging of food origin - noting the difference between urban and rural upbringings.

21. Recognition of Contributions

Mr Teal confirmed that an order of Fish & Game medals had been made as the preferred option to recognise contribution of volunteer and service providers - and that honorary rangers who had contributed their time over an extended period (over five years) be considered for recognition medals.

It was agreed that an appropriate plaque citation be included for picture of Haywards Pond that had been framed for landowner Jane Donald.

22. Wetlands in Rural Landscape – Proposal Paper

Mr Teal reiterated the purpose of the proposal to gain funding from the Ministry for the Environment Freshwater Improvement Fund (Clean Up Fund v.2.0) to achieve the overall goal, actions to involve education of the benefits of wetlands in landscapes, provision of technically sound practical advice on how to undertake actions to restore wetlands, use of reference wetlands within properties and drainage schemes, and providing subsidy for work undertaken on private and public land for restoring wetlands. Discussion ensued on how Fish & Game could progress such projects in the future where regional councils' goals do not dominate funding opportunities. It was then moved to

Receive the update report on wetland proposals

Brad Johnson/Chris O'Meara

Carried

23. Angler Access – Ruamahanga River Update

Mr Carnachan and Chairman Cotsilinis gave an overview of the situation regarding access at the confluence of the Waiohine and Ruamahanga rivers by the gliding club – with clarification being sought from the District Council on what options are available to ensure practical access for anglers. South Wairarapa DC CEO had further indicated that he would prefer that Fish & Game fund an alternative route around the airfield but would want this available to increase all public access rather than anglers only.

If options to progress resolving the issue are not forthcoming, it was agreed that a letter from CE to CE in first instance and Chairman to Mayor be considered at a later time.

After discussion it was moved that

In order to progress resolving the issue that a letter from CE to CE seeking resolution of access issue be undertaken in first instance, and that consideration of a letter to the Mayor from the Chairman be made if resolution does not progress

Don Scott/Dan Waechter

Carried

24. Management Report 1 April – 31 May 2017

Mr Teal noted that summer field work was completed and acknowledged the work of staff especially Hamish Carnachan and Colin Shore who undertook the drift dive and banding programmes respectively. Mr Teal was commended for overseeing the work programme to ensure it was completed on time and adequately resourced.

After further discussion it was moved that

The management report for 1 April – 31 May 2017 be received.

Chris O'Meara/Brad Johnson

Carried

25. Fish & Game Licence Sales

Mr Teal gave overview of the licence sales for fish were approximately 7% down on previous year's sales at the same period, and there were several reasons postulated included inclement weather conditions causing a delay in purchase or no purchase.

The licence sales for game were approximately the same as previous year's sales at the same period.

After further discussion it was moved

The Fish Licence Sales report and Game Licence Sales Report as at 17 May 2017 be received

Brad Johnson/Marc Flaws

Carried

26. Expenditure Report

Mr Teal noted that the expenditure for RMA legal cases would be separated out to provide clarity on budget progress and comparisons for variance reporting.

After discussion it was moved that

the Expenditure Report for 30 April 2017 and Financial Transactions for March and April 2017 be approved

Simon Muckley/Brad Johnson

Carried

Councillor Scott left at 5:10pm

27. Correspondence and Media

Discussion ensued on the opinion piece by Neil Hayes in the Wairarapa media which had significant factual errors and false claims – which was an on going approach. Discussion ensued on when to refute claims or counter with the habitat protection record and positive commentary that Fish & Game had established.

Discussion ensued on the openly hostile opinion piece by Chris Allen (Federated Farmers National Board member) regarding the One Plan legal action and his accusations its hostility to rural communities.

28. General Business

It was noted from comments from hunters using Pukepuke Lagoon that there was a requirement to undertaken more work around the lagoon to ensure some form of improvement beyond the hunting stand and immediate environs – e.g. organisation of working bees and commitment to involvement.

Discussion on the issue of lead shot in fishing was introduced by Councillor O'Meara – equating that similar issues existed in issues of spent lead shot from subgauge shotguns and lead in the environment, and use of split lead shot for fishing. Discussion continued regarding proving a detrimental effect of lead from fishing and possibility of uptake by waterfowl.

Mr Teal noted that Horizons Regional Council had requested Cawthron Institute to undertake a review of Fish & Game data on trout monitoring and requested sharing of all data. Horizons were considering an MOU for

sharing data including IP (delays noted that MOU was first requested in February).

Mr Teal noted that the Otaihanga East pond site (Otauroa Reserve) was still a real possibility for a fish out site for the Kapiti Coast and that discussions with Kapiti Coast DC were continuing.

Mr Teal confirmed that he received regular requests by those interested in Aquaponics to hold fish. It was requested that NZ Council to look at policy for holding sports fish.

Mr Teal noted that additional requests to remove sportsfish from sites are likely to occur and that Zealandia Trust (Karori Sanctuary) are likely to request eradication of perch from the site (lower reservoir). It was requested that NZ Council clarify policy on removing sports fish from water bodies so that unintentional precedents are not created.

Mr Teal confirmed that the contestable fund for predator control project was successful and a project brief would be developed in the next financial year. Discussion ensued on trap technology and lure performance

There was brief discussion regarding confirming an itinerary for the November Meeting including Wairarapa overview and WWTP sites. This would be discussed in detail at the August meeting regarding logistics and involvement.

Bryce Johnson (CE NZF&GC) arrived at 5.45pm and gave an overview of several issues.

He considered that Horizons Council would likely take an approach of trying to confirm that the One Plan was impractical to implement – even though there is knowledge that some examples exist where they can meet the Plan's rules. He considered there would be a deliberate attempt to get into the 'politics' of implementation which would deflect away from the technical information. He confirmed that Fish & Game had fairly put questions to the Regional Council and it was an entirely reasonable expectation not to meet them until this response had been received - even if not final response is not conclusive (i.e. best endeavours made). Mr Johnson confirmed that legal advice has indicated they must act in a certain way and despite support from central government they must perform their tasks as set out in legislation.

There being no further business the meeting was concluded at 6.15pm.

Next Meeting to be held: Coachman Hotel,140 Fitzherbert Avenue,
Palmerston North, Tuesday 22 August 2017 at 3.00pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____