

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 166th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE TAURANGA SPORTS FISHING CLUB
ON THURSDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2017**

Present

Murray Ferris, Lindsay Lyons, Alan Baird, Barry Roderick, Laurance Tamati, Sandy Bull, and Annaka Davis (arrived 1.10pm).

IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Garrick, Matt McDougall, Carmel Veitch (minute taker), and Matt Osborne (Eastern Fish & Game); Owen Poad, Stu Vaughn (Tauranga Anglers Club), Helen Neale (Department of Conservation, arrived 2.15pm).

1.0 WELCOME

Cr Murray Ferris delayed opening of the meeting for three quarters of an hour until 12.46pm as Council was one member short of a quorum, but members of the Tauranga Anglers Club were present and they needed to be heard. He noted this was very disappointing given the same situation had arisen at the last meeting of Council. The six Councillors who were present decided that in the absence of a quorum the meeting should be commenced with a focus on items for discussion only in the hope that they would have a quorum soon after.

Cr Lindsay Lyons requested it be minuted his dismay at recent levels of attendance and that this was unacceptable. The cost of running a meeting, especially when it is an away meeting is very high, and disrespectful to everyone else, including visitors and members of the public. He commented that Council will need to look carefully at whether we have away meetings in the future and questioned some members level of commitment. Cr Barry Roderick agreed, but acknowledged that there were legitimate reasons, some health related, for the absence of some Councillors today. Similarly, health related issues along with road conditions meant some Councillors were late in arriving or unable to attend the previous meeting.

Murray welcomed Owen Poad and Stu Vaughn from the Tauranga Anglers Club.

2.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

- Himalayan balsam - Owen Poad and Stu Vaughn
- Captive-reared mallards – Cr Alan Baird
- Gisborne District Council appeal - Cr Sandy Bull
- Salmon Symposium - Cr Lindsay Lyons

The first two items were discussed at this point. Owen had recently returned from the UK where over a period of years he had observed the effects of a very invasive annual weed, Himalayan balsam weed, growing on the margins of watercourses that have been fenced off to prevent runoff from entering the waterway. Over winter the plant dies back leaving the soil bare and able to be washed into the river. Last year he observed this species growing on the banks of the Tahunaatra River and was very concerned that it might spread further. He had contacted the Waikato Regional Council and was told that it is a notifiable plant but was not noxious and was not seen

as a pest. Cr Murray Ferris suggested further lobbying might be appropriate, and Andy Garrick undertook to look further into it.

Cr Alan Baird asked for an update on the planned review of captive reared mallards. Andy advised that the topic was going to be on the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the New Zealand Council in November, and a comprehensive report prepared by Dr Murray Williams would be presented to the Council at that meeting. Following that it was likely the New Zealand Council would request comment from regional Fish and Game Councils in February.

The other two items proposed for general business were deferred until later in the agenda.

3.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS

3.1 Report from the New Zealand Council

Lindsay Lyons spoke about their recent meeting and the successful farewell to Bryce Johnson which included presentation to him of a painting of a scene at Molesworth Station close to Bryce's heart. He advised a Salmon Symposium was planned for next month in Ashburton, and that the new National Office CEO, Martin Taylor, starts on the 30th of this month. There is likely to be a restructure of the National Office in Wellington, Bryce will be contracted when required, and Martin will be going around the regions over the next few months. In July 2018 a Governors Forum will be held at the Turangi Hatchery, and Eastern Region will be the venue for the October 2018 meeting of the New Zealand Council.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 Barry Roderick suggested the Council continue its discussion raised by Cr Lindsay Lyons at its last meeting to develop an area(s) such as the Ruahihi Canal at McLarens along the lines of a stocked fish out pond as available in parts of the South Island. We should be adding this to our annual plan and enable bait fishing to provide opportunities for new anglers. Andy Garrick suggested that we make this an agenda item for a meeting early in the New Year, and have a good look at the issues and options. Lindsay wants strategic planning by the New Zealand Council to look specifically at ways of encouraging new and young anglers to trout fishing. Cr Murray Ferris agreed this was an opportunity and a way of future proofing our business. Lindsay commented that future proofing would be a focus of the Governors Forum at its meeting in July 2018.

4.2 Sandy Bull raised concern over the matter raised in 3.1 of the minutes referring to trout as "ferrets of the waterways". This is wrong and needs to be stopped. Lindsay said that this has been addressed at New Zealand Council level with Lou Sanson, and was being followed up with the Minister.

4.3 Barry Roderick noted that a long standing past Councillor, Ian Pirani, had passed away since the last meeting. Andy Garrick advised that a card had been sent to his family on behalf of staff and the Council.

5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

No conflicts of interest were identified.

Annaka Davis arrived at 1.10pm which enabled continuation of the meeting and agenda as planned, and meant Council now had a quorum.

6.0 APOLOGIES

6.1 Apologies were received from Crs Ken Coombes, Steve Scragg, Peter Storey, David Woolner and Neil Hawes, and Kate Thompson, Ken Raureti, and Dave Conley.

6.2 *Agreed Laurance Tamati/Lindsay Lyons that the apologies for the 166th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [17/10/6.2]*

7.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (10 AUGUST 2017)

7.1 *Agreed Laurance Tamati/Lindsay Lyons that the minutes of the 165th meeting held on 10 August 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [17/10/7.1]*

8.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY

8.1 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Alan Baird) that Item 12.3 relating to Council support for a levy for maintenance in Fish & Game managed wetlands [17/08/12.3], and Item 12.4 concerning the charge for the levy [17/08/12.4] be included in Council policy. [17/10/8.1]*

9.0 2018 GAME SEASON CONDITIONS

9.1 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Alan Baird) that if a special season was to be provided, it should be programmed for sometime in February (2019). [17/10/9.1]*

9.2 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) that the regulation applying to the hunting of game birds in the Eastern Region using Australasian harriers that was published in the 2017 Game Bird Seasons Gazette Notice be retained for the 2018 Game Season. [17/10/9.2]*

9.3 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that the novice only hunting access to the Waewaetutuki Wetland be retained for the 2018 season. [17/10/9.3]*

9.4 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Alan Baird) to support registration of an Upland Game Property at 123 Coates Road, Waikite Valley on the property owned by Mark and Sherie Stokman. [17/10/9.4]*

9.5 The application from Equine Estate Ltd (Agenda Item 3.7) to allow it to commence its Upland Game Property operation earlier in the season and enable shooting of pheasant and red-legged partridge from 1 April was discussed at some length. Cr Lindsay Lyons suggested we should stick to Eastern Region's policy [11/11/8.2] which previously rejected a similar application from another commercial operator. Cr Alan Baird posed the question "why not" allow this as it would have benefits for other hunters by dispersing birds beyond the boundary of the property. Comment was made that the wider game bird hunting community would not have an opportunity to hunt for another month meaning a small group of hunters would be advantaged over a much larger group. Cr Murray Ferris suggested consistency was required and Cr Annaka Davis added that this was not the time to debate this topic given that Upland Game Property guidelines were scheduled for review by the New Zealand Council in 2018. Andy Garrick noted that the application argued that mild winters meant August shooting was becoming more difficult as birds were spreading out in early spring and it was difficult to complete scheduled hunting days, and if this was the case did it mean an earlier end to the season would be acceptable if an earlier start was possible? Cr Barry Roderick agreed that Council should wait for the development of National

Policy in 2018. Cr Sandy Bull commented that the average licence holder would be unhappy with opening day being brought forward for the benefit of a relative few.

- 9.6 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Annaka Davis) there should be no change to conditions applying to the Equine Estate and Cropp Farms Upland Game Properties until national policy has been developed in 2018. [17/10/9.6]*
- 9.7 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lindsay Lyons) that Council re-affirms the current threshold levels, criteria, and conditions for regulation setting for grey duck/mallard, paradise shelduck and black swan. [17/10/9.7]*
- 9.8 With regard to Recommendation 4.2, Council did not identify any other game season condition matters it would like further information on, or consultation in relation to with hunters prior to its November meeting.

10.0 2016-2017 DRAFT PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 10.1 Andy Garrick presented the draft Performance Report and stated that the Audit team was due in the office on Tuesday 14 October. The draft Chairman's report was circulated separately. Andy asked if there were any questions or issues the Council would like to raise. Cr. Murray Ferris acknowledged the work of both the Council and the staff and what had been accomplished during the year. Andy noted that a lot had been achieved, but as usual there were a number of variances in both direct and indirect costs for a variety of reasons. Once the external audit has been completed and the accounts have been presented at the public AGM the report will be forwarded to the new Minister.
- 10.2 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Laurance Tamati) that the Council receives the draft report comprising the draft Statement of Service Performance and the draft Financial Statements for the 2016-2017 year. [17/10/10.2]*

11.0 NATIONAL BUDGET RESERVES POLICY

- 11.1 Carmel Veitch presented the paper prepared on the National Budget Reserves Policy and advised the Council on the reasoning behind the amendments that she proposed.
- 11.2 *Agreed (Sandy Bull/Alan Baird) that Council considers the draft revision of the National Budget Policy produced by the Financial Review Committee. [17/10/11.2]*
- 11.3 *Agreed (Sandy Bull/Alan Baird) that Council adopts the amendments staff have recommended to two policy statements for forwarding to the NZ Council for consideration at its November 2017 meeting, these being:*

(i) Policy 2.7.6 be reworded to read: "All expenditure will need to be identified as part of the budget round including expenditure to be funded from the bulk fund for the year, capital expenditure and from reserves", and

(ii) Policy 2.7.9 to be reworded to read: "All income (including interest from all reserves with the exception of Restricted Reserves that specify otherwise, and Land/Building Reserves (where the intent is to purchase new Land/Buildings) shall be brought into the budget". [17/10/11.3]

12.0 FISHERIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING FROM EASTERN FISH & GAME'S NON-RESIDENT LEVY RESERVES FUND

- 12.1 Andy Garrick detailed the background behind the non-resident levy, and referred to the discussions Council had had at its last meeting and the undertaking staff had made to refine a proposed framework and criteria for identifying and prioritising fisheries

eligible for project funding from this source. Staff had since put considerable time and effort into developing a process for doing this, in addition to defining attributes and a scoring system for evaluating the three key parameters collectively underlying the Minister of Conservation and New Zealand Council's directives in relation to use of the non-resident anglers levy. The three key parameters are:

- rivers or lakes that are popular with non-resident anglers;
- rivers or lakes that provide spectacular angler experiences; and
- fisheries that could be protected or enhanced.

12.2 Matt Osborne gave a PowerPoint presentation on how the proposed process and scoring system would work and Councillors discussed the concept. Andy emphasised that this was a tool only, its purpose being to objectively identify the priority fishery(ies) for which funds from the non-resident levy reserve might be allocated during the annual OWP process, and that it wasn't an exercise to permanently 'designate' Eastern Region fisheries. Our Non-Resident Levy Reserve Fund currently held c. \$45k.

12.3 Matt reinforced this, noting that changing circumstances or new information coming to hand each year could mean rankings change and the process would need to be repeated annually.

12.4 Cr Barry Roderick correctly pointed out an error in section 3.2.2 on page 33 of the agenda in which the scores for low numbers and high number of other users should have been the other way around.

12.5 Cr. Murray Ferris acknowledged the work of the staff in creating this simple but effective model.

12.6 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Murray Ferris) to proceed with this model to rank 'non-resident fisheries' within the Eastern Region [17/10/12.6].*

13.0 WAIKAREMOANA SPORTS FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND

13.1 *Agreed (Annaka Davis/Alan Baird) that Council receives the update and approves the application to carry over the unspent funds from 2016-17. [17/10/13.1]*

14.0 SPECIES MONITORING REPORTS

14.1 The Rotorua Lakes Summer Creel Survey was presented and discussed, and a summary of the 2017 Shoveler Trend Count was presented. Cr Barry Roderick commented that he does not believe that the high levels of angler satisfaction recorded in the creel survey accurately reflect the true situation given the high level of churn we see in licence sales. This needs to be followed up. Andy Garrick agreed and undertook to conduct a staff review of the wording of the questions put to anglers in relation to satisfaction prior to this summer's creel surveys being initiated.

14.2 Cr Sandy Bull paid tribute to the reports, and acknowledged the great deal of hard work and professionalism that goes into producing these. He thanked Matt Osborne and Matthew McDougall for the reports presented.

14.3 *Agreed (Sandy Bull/Barry Roderick) that the Council receives the 2016-2017 Executive Summary for the Rotorua Lakes Summer Creel Survey and a summary of the 2017 NZ Shoveler Trend Count. [17/10/14.3]*

Helen Neale (Department of Conservation) arrived at 2.15pm and was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

15.0 GUIDES LICENCE

This agenda item was prompted by Cr Peter Storey. As he was not present at this meeting it was decided to defer the item until the next meeting of Council in November so that he could contribute to the discussion and expand on what he was proposing.

16.0 LIAISON OFFICERS' REPORTS CONTINUED

16.1 Reports from other agencies

Department of Conservation

Helen Neale apologised for Ken Raureti (Bay of Plenty Conservation Board) being unavailable to attend this meeting. She outlined the Conservation Management Strategy process, which early next year will enter its pre- public notification of draft stage involving consultation with iwi. Fish & Game will also have this opportunity. Helen advised that nominations for vacancies on the Tongariro-Taupo Conservation Board and the East Coast/Hawkes Bay Conservation Board will be invited in early December, and that Dave Conley has been appointed the Fisheries Manager for Taupo. She noted that work was proceeding on the Tuwharetoa Settlement for Taupo.

17.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

- 17.1 Cr Barry Roderick noted in relation to game bird studies on page 46 that he and Ray Bushell had observed most broods this year in the paddocks rather than in the Kaituna wetland itself, or in the drains within its vicinity. He commented also, on the status of bitterns and the effects of habitat loss and predators on this species.
- 17.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons noted in relation to lake fisheries surveys on opening day on page 47, that eight fish he had caught and examined on Lake Tarawera had not had a single smelt in their stomachs, only bullies. These fish were down in condition. Andy Garrick acknowledged this, and commented that the research proposal staff have developed in conjunction with other parties to investigate why this is occurring and whether there are options for addressing the issues, is with Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff and we're awaiting their feedback on whether they'll help with funding for it.
- 17.3 Andy Garrick brought to Council's attention that Carmel and he had recently had a visit from a Worksafe Assessor to discuss our Health and Safety Plan and review our processes. The assessor was complimentary about the systems and procedures that we had put in place and this was encouraging.
- 17.4 *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Lyndsay Lyons) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [17/10/17.4]***
- 17.5 Cr Lindsay Lyons commented on the Tagged Trout Promotion and noted that it was our intention for this to be bigger and better next year.
- 17.6 *Agreed (Laurence Tamati/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Management, Finance, and Licence Sales reports, and approves payments for July and August 2017 totalling \$286,415.34. [17/10/17.6]***

18.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

- 18.1 Cr Sandy Bull advised that he had been advised of a small number of fingerlings observed stranded in a small re-entrant tributary of the Hopuruahine Stream and wished to bring it to staff's attention. Matt Osborne advised that it was not practical or

justifiable to undertake a special trip to salvage and transfer a small number of fish, but appreciated being advised of the situation.

- 18.2 Sandy also queried Fish & Game's involvement with the Gisborne Regional Fresh Water Plan. Andy Garrick advised staff had been actively involved in this from the outset having been a member of the Gisborne Fresh Water Advisory Group that scoped the Proposed Plan, through to lodging an extensive submission on it and presenting this at 4 or 5 hearings last year, and more recently, lodging an Appeal against the Decisions that had come out on the Plan. Just as of last week we had applied to join an appeal by the Federated Farmers as a s274 party which would probably go to mediation initially, but ultimately end up in the Environment Court. Andy noted that the matters Fish & Game had appealed are detailed in the documents he had recently forward to Sandy.
- 18.3 There was further discussion on the Salmon Symposium in Ashburton next month, and Andy noted that the online registration facility for this event had still not been put up on Fish & Game's website. Cr Lindsay Lyons said he would look into this.

19.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION

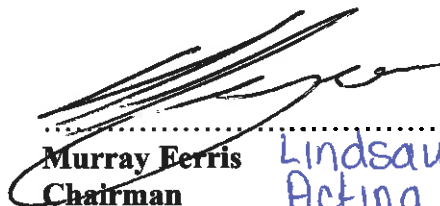
19.1 *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/Sandy Bull that Council move into a public excluded session to discuss the Manager's remuneration. [17/10/19.1]*

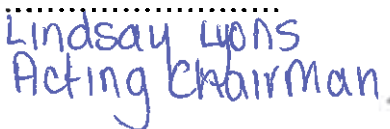
19.2 The meeting was adjourned at 2.43pm to enable this.

20.0 MEETING RESUMED AND CLOSED

20.1 The meeting resumed at 3.30pm.

20.2 After a short wait to invite any staff and visitors remaining in the building back into the room Cr Murray Ferris thanked the Council for their contribution at today's meetings and closed the meeting at 3.35pm.


.....
Murray Ferris
Chairman


.....
Lindsay Lyons
Acting Chairman.


.....
Date

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

6.0 APOLOGIES

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