

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 208th MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 30 MAY 2024 AT 11.00 AM**

Present

Crs. Debbie Oakley, Lindsay Lyons, Kevin Coutts, Mike Jarvie, Mark Sceats, Scott Nicol, and Murray Ferris.

In attendance

Arash Alaeinia, Kate Thompson, Mark Sherburn, Anthony van Dorp, Matt Osborne (Eastern Fish & Game); and Barry Roderick.

1.0 WELCOME AND KARAKIA

1.1 Cr Kevin Coutts opened the meeting at 11 am welcoming all present and Cr Mark Sceats followed with a karakia.

2.0 VOTING OF OFFICER FOR THE POSITION OF COUNCIL CHAIR

2.1 Deputy Chair Cr Kevin Coutts stepped down and Arash Alaeinia called for nominations for the position of Chair.

2.2 *Moved (Lindsay Lyons/Mike Jarvie) that Cr Mark Sceats be nominated for Council Chairman for the remaining term of Council. [24/05/2.2]*

2.3 There were no further nominations for the position of Chair.

2.4 *Moved (Kevin Coutts/Debbie Oakley) that nominations for the position of Chair be closed. [24/05/2.4]*

2.5 Cr Mark Sceats was duly appointed to the position of Chair and in taking up his position he thanked staff and Council. Mark believed the staff and Council are a team who are here for the benefit of our licence holders, and he hoped to move things forward in a positive manner.

3.0 APOLOGIES

3.1 Apologies were received from Crs. Jay Tapsell, and Alan Simmonds.

3.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Scott Nicol) that the apologies for the 208th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [24/05/3.2]*

4.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (4 APRIL 2024)

4.1 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [24/04/4.1]*

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY

No items were identified for inclusion in Council policy from the minutes of the meeting held 4 April 2024.

4.3 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held 4 April 2024.

5.0 RECONFIRMATION OF LETTER SENT TO NZC

5.1 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Mike Jarvie) that Council confirms letter sent by the Council to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council regarding access to Lake Okataina. [24/05/5.1]*

6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS

Mike Jarvie - Website

Lindsay Lyons - Marketing

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER

- 7.1 Councillors were asked to inform the chair of any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were recorded.
- 7.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons wanted to reiterate to Council that there is nothing wrong with having a conflict. We need to record potential conflicts to be transparent, it doesn't mean that the person with a conflict cannot participate in discussion.
- 7.3 Cr Mark Sceats noted the information on Conflict of Interest distributed with this meeting's papers from the Office of the Auditor General and commented that perception of a conflict is equally important as having an actual conflict.

8.0 HEALTH & SAFETY

- 8.1 Health and Safety Report – Arash Alaeinia was pleased to report that there were no health and safety concerns for this season's Game opening weekend ranging and acknowledged the work and preparation undertaken by Anthony van Dorp in the lead up to opening. Cr Kevin Coutts queried whether there had been any alcohol related incidents? Anthony confirmed that there had been no issues with alcohol, or aggressive and belligerent hunters. Overall, he said it was a very good opening weekend.
- 8.2 Cr Mark Sceats queried the reported issue at Whirinaki Arm and Anthony briefed Council on this.
- 8.3 *Agreed (Kevin Coutts/Murray Ferris) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [24/05/8.3]*

9.0 ANGLERS NOTICE REVIEW

- 9.1 Arash Alaeinia confirmed that no further proposals had been received for the 2024-2025 Anglers Notice review and requested Council concludes the anglers notice process.
- 9.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Lindsay Lyons) that Council concludes the Anglers Notice Process for the upcoming 2024-2025 angling season. [24/05/9.2]*

10.0 2024-2025 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN

- 10.1 Arash Alaeinia informed Council that this update to the draft 2024-25 Operational Workplan incorporated adjustments for NZC approved contestable funding bids, and for staff hours with the most significant movement in time being for himself by reallocating his time from "General" to areas such as Public Interface, Council and R3. While this draft was still subject to the approval of licence fees by the Minister of Conservation Arash Alaeinia sought approval to distribute to other parties for comment.
- 10.2 *Agreed (Mike Jarvie/Kevin Coutts) that Council receives the second draft of the 2024-2025 OWP and approves it for circulation to other parties for comment. [24/05/10.2]*

11.0 2024-2025 LICENCE FEE RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 Arash Alaeinia spoke to the item noting Council's prior concerns with increasing licence fees. However, he wanted Council to bear in mind the rising costs for the organisation as is occurring in all aspects of life in NZ. With our primary source of revenue being from licence fees, if costs rise and we don't increase revenue to match we are not able to undertake our mandated work to the same level. We have no profit margin to squeeze as might occur in other corporate businesses. Arash highlighted that this Region runs on a very conservative budget and inflationary increases for 2024-25 have been met by reducing project expenditure.
- 11.2 Council discussion/comments included:
- Difficult to address this as licence holders don't see our increased costs, they just see that the licence fee has gone up.
 - An increase is not going to bring in new participants.

- Inflation is at 5% at present, this represents an increase of approx. \$7, but will this deter more people from participating?
- Hard call to operate on same budget when costs go up, costs are going up for everyone and a small increase is insignificant over 12 months.
- So much of the work we do is not seen by our stakeholders, more public awareness is needed.
- Perception – a cup of coffee costs this much, but there are people out there that are really struggling.
- Social licence.
- Potential for savings to be had – Future Finance Committee looking to work better as a complete organisation. Review budget process and reserves held.

11.3 *Agreed (Debbie Oakley/Lindsay Lyons) that the Eastern Fish and Game Council supports the proposed licence fees for 2024-2025 of \$153 (GST inclusive) for the Adult Whole Season Fishing licence, and \$113 (GST inclusive) for the Adult Whole Season Game licence (which includes \$5 for the Game Bird Habitat Trust), and supports the Sea Run Salmon licence endorsement of \$5 and the Designated Waters Licence as a \$5 annual licence per region for residents and \$40 per day for non-residents. [24/05/11.3]*

11.4 *Agreed (Debbie Oakley/Lindsay Lyons) that Council accepts the proposed National LEQ target for 2024-25 for Fish of 72,826 and Game 31,340. [24/05/11.4]*

12.0 REDUCTION OF EASTERN FISH AND GAME COUNCILLOR NUMBERS

12.1 Arash Alaeinia informed Council that within the current legislation there is a maximum number of Councillors stipulated but no minimum. He said that the Ministerial Review had highlighted that Fish & Game was made up of 74 staff and 124 Councillors. Arash believed that a smaller group lead to better engagement and asked whether Council supported this view.

12.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons believed that a reduction in numbers would more likely generate an election. He said that with no election you are there of right rather than being voted in by your stakeholders.

12.3 Council discussed the impact on Council operation should numbers be reduced to eight in terms quorum and resignations and the processes that would need to be followed in these instances.

12.4 Secondment and voting powers of these positions was raised.

12.5 Expectations on Councillors and informing people of what it's all about was also discussed.

12.6 Cr Mark Sceats preferred the status quo as with the higher number you get greater diversity and he believed that with 12 a balance of both fishers and hunters was more likely.

12.7 Cr Debbie Oakley commented on the options for coopting to bring in expertise.

12.8 *Agreed (Kevin Coutts/Lindsay Lyons) that Council adopts a reduction in its elected members for the October 2024 election from 12 to eight members. Six in favour, one against, Cr Mark Sceats wished to record his opposition to the motion. [24/05/12.8]*

13.0 WAIKAREMOANA SPORTS FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND

13.1 Arash Alaeinia detailed the proposed drawdown from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund for 2024-25 to offset staff time and expenses associated with monitoring, access and buoy related work in the Wairoa catchment.

13.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council approves the application for funding from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund of \$6,500 for the 2024-25 operational year. [25/05/13.2]*

14.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS

Finance Report

14.1 Cr Linday Lyons queried an expense paid for PB2 training. Anthony van Dorp advised that this related to Power Boat Level 2 training, and briefly detailed Maritime NZ requirements.

14.2 *Agreed (Debbie Oakley/Scott Nicol) that Council receives the finance report approves payments for March and April 2024 totalling \$295,102.68. [24//05/14.2]*

Management Report

14.3 Council discussion focussed on HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) and the need to be vigilant, ensuring that our stakeholders were aware of what to look out for. Arash Alaeinia informed Council that Fish & Game are working on a management plan which Matthew McDougall has been involved with, and that information was provided initially in the Fish & Game magazine and there will be a stronger presence in communications moving forward.

14.4 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Kevin Coutts) that Council receives the Management Report. [24//05/14.4]*

Licence Sales Report

14.5 Arash Alaeinia provided a summary of the licence sales report and acknowledged Kate Thompson's work in providing the licence sales updates for this Council and for the National summaries she provides on a regular basis.

14.6 Cr Murray Ferris commented that recent informative meetings attended by staff in Gisborne had quietened the grumbles about licence fees and supported doing these more regularly. Cr Mark Sceats agreed it is about perception and licence holders seeing the work that Fish & Game does for them.

14.7 Barry Roderick asked how Eastern's licence sales compared to DoC Taupo being a primarily boat-based fishery. Cr Debbie Oakley responded providing an update on Taupo sales as provided in the recent TFAC meeting.

14.8 *Agreed (Mark Sceats/Debbie Oakley) that Council receives the Licence Sales Report. [24/05/14.8]*

15.0 Council adjourned for lunch at 12.15pm.

16.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS

16.1 *Report from Bay of Plenty Conservation Board*
No Report

16.2 *Report from Department of Conservation*
No Report

16.3 *Report from New Zealand Council*
Cr Debbie Oakley's report covered:

- Update from TFAC meeting of 11th April
- Interim update regarding letter sent to NZC
- Update from last meeting emailed to all Councillors
- Final report from workshops for Future Finance and Future Structure working groups.
- Update on Gary Crawford's report

17.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

17.1 Website

Cr Mike Jarvie had noted some items needed updating on the Eastern pages of the website. Arash Alaeinia confirmed that we would address these.

17.2 Tauranga Anglers Ladies Fly Fishing Workshop

Mike also wanted to compliment Mark Sherburn on his contribution to the Tauranga Anglers Ladies Fly Fishing Workshop and added that Rachel McNae (NZ Women's Fly-Fishing Team) was keen to do more in this space.

17.3 Marketing

Cr Lindsay Lyons raised the need to reconsider some of the phraseology we use in our marketing campaigns and provided example's, ie., hunting instead of shooting, harvesting instead sport fishing.

17.4 Lindsay also highlighted an opportunity to market for coarse fishing which will be attractive to the Asian market in the Auckland/Waikato region and to push more for Women angling opportunities.

17.4 Future Plan

Lindsay was also keen for Council to get together to strategise where we want to be in 5 years' time, a round table on threats and opportunities. Cr Mark Sceats suggested a short workshop after the next meeting to get this started.

18.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION

18.1 Agreed (Mark Sceats/Scott Nicol) that pursuant to Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded at 1.07 pm from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, to confirm the minutes of 4 April 2024 Public Excluded discussion. [24/05/18.1]

18.2 Agreed (Mark Sceats/Lindsay Lyons) that Council moves out of Public Excluded at 1.20 pm. [24/05/18.2]

19.0 MEETING CLOSED

19.1 Cr Mark Sceats closed the meeting 1.20 pm.



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Mark Sceats
Chairman

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

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