

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council Held at  
the Game Farm on Tuesday the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 6:00pm**

**Councillors:** Bates, Nimon, Williams, Hern, Bowcock, Lumsden, Niblett, Elstone, Mackay,  
Pinker

**Present:** NZF&GC Chair Paul Shortis, Wayne Taylor (East Coast Conservation Board  
member), Jesse Friedlander (Regional Manager), Blair Slavin

**Apologies Received:** Crs. Duley and Hickmott

**Welcome (6.00 PM)**

Cr. Bates welcomed councillors and guests to the meeting and informed everyone that the meeting would be audio recorded.

**Minutes of the previous meeting (11 August 2020)**

*That the minutes of the meeting of the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council held on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 are a true and accurate record. (20/10/3.1)*

*Niblett/Mackay*

**Matters Arising**

Nothing tabled.

**Conflict of Interest Register**

The conflict of interest register was signed by all councillors. No conflicts tabled.

Cr. Bates thanked Wayne Taylor and Paul Shortis for attending the meeting and suggested that they give their presentations at the beginning of the meeting.

**East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board Report**

Wayne Taylor provided an update from the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board. A conservation management strategy is being drafted currently and input will be welcomed from Fish and Game. Background was provided on Treaty settlement processes throughout Hawkes Bay including processes that may affect Fish and Game. Wayne was thanked for his attendance and input to our meeting.

**Presentation by NZC Chair Paul Shortis**

NZ Fish and Game Council Chair Paul Shortis provided an update from New Zealand Council. The audit of the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council effectively reached a stalemate and should not have dragged on this long. Paul apologised for this. Paul has met with Cr. Bates and Cr. Niblett. Both of these Councillors attended the previous NZ F&G Council meeting. The audit process is now progressing thanks to these discussions.

Hawke's Bay Councillors stated that the Council would like to move forward, however policy needs to be implemented at NZC level to make sure the same mistakes aren't repeated including a complaints procedure policy. All three recent audits of Fish and Game Councils were instigated in slightly different ways. The audit process has been difficult for Councillors and staff.

Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council will appoint a governance advisor who will attend our meetings as recommended by the NZF&G Council.

Discussion around the importance of an independent advisor. Paul Shortis is happy to appoint an advisor. There was general agreement on this.

It was suggested that Paul return for another HBF&G Council meeting after the ministerial review is completed to discuss policy gaps at NZC level and the recommendations of the review. It is thought that the learnings from the three recent audits will form the basis for many of the ministerial review recommendations.

There is still a lot of misleading information online regarding the audit of the HBF&G Council. Councillors asked Paul whether this would be cleared up via a media release from NZC. This is unlikely.

It was noted that neither the NZ F&G Council or the HBF&G Council had provided a submission to DOC reviewers. As both Councils had met with the reviewers face to face, this was considered unnecessary.

At this point it was decided to change the order of agenda items as Paul Shortis could provide context on some of the issues to be discussed.

### **National Policy on the Accumulation, Management and Application of Reserves**

Paul Shortis provided context on the policy. This is still a discussion document. There are varying levels of reserves held by F&G Councils throughout New Zealand. Going forward there needs to be a better way of managing reserves.

Concern was voiced on the 30-50% reserve level dictated by the draft policy. Hawke's Bay has high reserves due to frugality and increasing licence sales. There is a big difference between a region with a large operating budget holding 30-50% and a smaller region such as Hawke's Bay.

Covid-19 highlighted the fact that Fish and Game had become reliant on overseas angler funds and has brought about sooner the issues we face in decreasing revenue. We cannot continue to increase the licence fee and therefore need to be prudent with our budgets.

*That Council agrees to discuss the National Policy on the Accumulation, Management and Application of Reserves again at its December meeting and provide feedback to NZC. (20/10/18.1)*

*Hern/Elstone*

### **Strengthening Iwi and Hapū engagement**

We need to develop better relationships with Iwi and Hapū within the Hawke's Bay Region. HBRC and DOC have Iwi Liaison Officers who may be able to help us in developing these relationships. Included in the TOR of the current DOC review of F&G is the meeting of our obligations under section 4 of the Conservation Act.

By asking someone to sit in on our meetings in an advisory capacity, look at our organisation and potentially attend some meetings with the manager, we could improve our external relationships. Most people are very busy, and we may have to pay someone. This is no different to paying an external governance expert.

*That Council authorises the Manager to approach people from the community who could be considered by Council for employment in an advisory capacity in order to strengthen relationships with Iwi and Hapū. (20/10/12.1)*

*Mackay/Bowcock*

At this point, a member of the public, Blair Slavin, requested to speak. He questioned Paul Shortis on the NZC Council decision on pheasant preserves. The vote was to recommend that the status quo remain (Pheasants within a preserve remain on schedule 3 of the Wildlife Act). This is not an erosion of free public access. At the moment there is no provision for more upland game preserves, only those currently in existence.

Captive reared mallards cannot be released to be hunted on commercial preserves.

### **2021 Game Season Conditions**

Discussion centred around reliability of banding data and the timing of breeding/pairing up of mallard ducks. Timing of breeding is dictated by day length and therefore the timing of the hunting season is important to avoid harvesting breeding stock. The season could be run earlier; however it is important we have a consistent country-wide opening weekend.

We also need to be cognisant of perceived value for money for those buying a licence.

All suggestions for game season condition changes for the 2021 season will be emailed to the Manager prior to the next meeting.

*That Council identifies any other game season condition matters it would like further information on, or consultation with hunters about, before the December Council meeting. (20/10/8.1)*

*Mackay/Williams*

**Information for the 2019-2020 Draft Annual Report**

Discussion centred around capitalisation of the Game Farm wetland development project and related expenditure. Should this be capitalised or shown as an expense? Jesse will discuss this with our accountant and provide further information to Council.

Any further suggestions can be emailed to the Manager prior to the December meeting.

*That Council receives the draft reports comprising the Statement of Service Performance, Chairman's reports and draft Financial Statements for the 2019-2020 year, and identifies any changes required before finalising the Performance Report for the 2019-2020 year. (20/10/9.1)*

*Hern/Niblett*

**Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council Meeting Dates for the 2021 year**

*That the council approves the proposed meeting schedule and dates for the six regular meetings and one annual general meeting for 2021. (20/10/10.1)*

*Williams/Hern*

**Theft and Fraud Prevention Policy**

Discussion around stealing of intellectual property. This is not covered by the policy but may be covered elsewhere and may be included in employment contracts. Jesse will check this. Cr. Nimon will send his policy from work covering IP to the Manager as an example.

*That Council agrees to review the Theft and Fraud Prevention Policy again at the next meeting once further information is provided. (20/10/11.1)*

*Elstone/Hern*

**Commercial Origin Salmon Release Policy**

*That Council approves the Commercial Origin Salmon Release Policy and will provide feedback to NZC accordingly. (20/10/13.1)*

*Lumsden/Williams*

### **Video Recording of Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council Meetings**

Council discussed how the video would be used and the risk of putting video into the public forum that could be edited or taken out of context.

Recording of meetings could foster greater licenceholder engagement and make sure councillors are accountable for their behaviour.

A vote was held with three councillors in favour of video recording meetings. Since there is not enough support, Council meetings will not be video recorded, however this can be revisited in the future.

### **Evaluation of Council**

Cr. Bates suggested that this agenda item be discussed at the next meeting as it would be beneficial to have advice from the independent governance advisor. There was general agreement on this.

### **Wage Subsidy**

Discussion centred around the need to keep the money. We are entitled to keep the money and most other Fish and Game Regions have opted to keep the subsidy, however some Councillors believe we have a moral obligation to pay it back if we can. We have an operating budget surplus in the 2019/20 financial year however we may need the extra money in the future with a predicted drop in licence sales.

*That Council agrees to review its decision to keep the Government covid-19 wage subsidy at its December meeting.(20/10/16.1)*

*Lumsden/Bowcock*

### **Customs Import Prohibition (Trout) Order**

*That Council approves the continuation of the Customs Import Prohibition (Trout) Order and is totally opposed to the import of trout or any product derived from trout into New Zealand. (20/10/17.1)*

*Lumsden/Mackay*

### **Operational Reports**

Jesse provide Council with an update on the Lake Tūtira fishery and recent fish stranding.

### **Health and Safety Report**

*That Council receives this H&S report. (20/10/20.2)*

*Niblett/Mackay*

## Finance Report

*That the payments for 1 July to 31 August 2020 totalling \$90,703.66 be approved as per Tables 4 and 5. (20/10/20.3.1)*

*20.3.2 The Finance report be accepted for the 12 months ended 31 August 2020. Mackay/Lumsden (20/10/20.3.2)*

## Licence Sales Report

*That Council accepts this licence sales report (20/10/20.4)*

*Elstone/Bowcock (20/10/21.1)*

*That Council agrees to exclude members of the public from the following parts of the meeting in order to verify the minutes of the previous public excluded meeting, discuss the results of the annual review of the managers performance and the current situation with regard to the audit of the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council. Council also request Jesse Friedlander (Regional Manager) to remain in attendance.*

*Elstone/Mackay (20/10/21.2)*

*8.45pm*

*That the Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council resumes its public meeting*

*Williams/Hern*

*9.15pm*

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.**



Bruce Bates

HBFG Chairman

*8 Dec 2020*

Date