

**MINUTES OF THE HAWKE'S BAY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE GAME FARM ON TUESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> February 2020 AT 6.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Bates (Chairman), Niblett, Lumsden, MacKay, Hern, Duley, Bowcock and Elstone.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Jesse Friedlander (Regional Manager)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

Steve Perfect, Red Hooper

**1.0 WELCOME**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.00pm and welcomed staff, councillors and members of the public. He informed everyone that the meeting would be recorded.

**2.0 APOLOGIES:**

Apologies received from Cr.s Williams, Hickmott and Nimon

**3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (3 December 2019)**

Cr. Niblett had stated that his business had been threatened and therefore he would not accept a nomination to hold the position of Hawke's Bay Fish and Game Council appointee to the NZ Council. This was stated in the public section of the meeting and should be recorded as such and not in public excluded.

Cr. Hickmott had submitted his apologies which were not recorded in the minutes.

If mallard bag limits are reduced to 3 or 4 birds, the rule has always been that staff should consult Council before making this decision. This was not recorded in the minutes but has always been the case. There had also been discussion around whether counting of paradise shelduck was accurate enough to make management decisions from.

*That the minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 are a true and accurate record of the meeting with the above amendments made.*

*Bowcock/Mackay*

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

No items of general business were tabled.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**

Cr. Niblett declared his conflict of interest in relation to the **Policy on Releasing Gamebirds** agenda item. He also mentioned that he is no longer director of Tuna Nui Gamebirds.

## **COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

Cr. Bates talked about the importance of setting the annual priorities and asked if anyone had anything they would like to change from the current priorities. It was pointed out that the audit process had been very disruptive, and it was now time to move forward in a positive direction.

The development of the Game Farm site would cover a number of the current priorities if done well.

Cr. Lumsden stated that the release of small numbers of gamebirds by landowners should be encouraged and is aligned with protecting and enhancing the resource.

It was questioned where we are at with getting the sports management plan signed off. This has been sent to DOC head office; however, we have not heard further since then.

Beach raking is also a long-standing issue in Hawke's Bay and could be addressed with the proposed study.

Council would like to understand where the national mallard research strategy is at. Hawke's Bay should have some involvement with this, and this could be a priority.

More Council involvement and governor-governor meetings would tie in with our previous priority 'The right to fish and hunt'. There is connectivity between our staff and DOC, Local Iwi and Regional Council, however it would be beneficial for Councillors to meet with MP's and Regional Councillors. Hosting Councillors at the Game Farm could be a good way to build local relationships.

Discussion centred around potential collaboration with Councils on predator trapping programmes on our lowland rivers. Jesse informed Council that he had spoken with Regional Council staff about setting up trapping networks along certain areas of river margin designated for upland game hunting.

## **EVALUATION OF COUNCIL**

Cr. Bates explained to Council that if they wanted to make any changes it was up to Council to implement these. The evaluation found that Council would like a greater diversity of viewpoints and a focus on the future direction. Cr. conduct was an issue that was brought up. Due to the audit process, it has been important to let everyone speak. This time is now over, and Council needs to be stricter and more professional.

## **POLICY ON RELEASING GAMEBIRDS**

Council decided unanimously that Cr. Niblett should stay and contribute to this discussion despite his conflicts of interest over this matter. Jesse explained to Council that he had received feedback from members of the public who had applied for permits from DOC to release small numbers of gamebirds on their properties. In some cases this process had taken up to 18 months and cost \$400. Jesse has approached DOC and asked whether it is possible for Hawke's Bay Fish and Game to get our own delegated authority to authorise releases of small numbers of gamebirds in order to streamline this process. There is no NZC policy on this and no policy in any of the regions that we are aware of. Most people want to release 20-50 birds; however, Council agrees that Jesse approaches DOC and requests delegated authority for greater numbers than this. This would mean any requests would come through us and so they could then be reviewed. If staff are successful in getting delegated authority from DOC, policy will then need to be drawn up.

*That Council supports releases of small numbers of gamebirds in the Hawke's Bay region and instructs staff to request delegated authority from DOC to issue permits to private landowners*

*Lumsden/Bowcock*

## **REQUEST FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL TO USE WILDLIFE FUND MONEY**

Cr. Duley informed Council that he had been in contact with Mike Parsons and he is prepared to go with a majority vote on the use of the fund. Mike, Cr. Duley and Cr. Niblett are the trustees of the Wildlife Fund.

Jesse gave an update on quotes received for 'Stage 2' of the proposed wetland development and costs including earthworks, pond lining and beautification of the site. Total upfront costs would total \$94,000 plus GST. It is expected that the money for beautification of the education site would come from external sources that could be applied for. A rundown of ongoing costs was also given which included trout, trout food and increased grounds maintenance. We would also lose the current income we receive from renting the paddock also. This effectively totals \$11,000 pa.

Staff have not yet applied for external funding as the full project including 'Stage 2' is yet to be approved.

This could be a good opportunity for our Council to discuss collaboration on this project with Regional and Napier City Councillors. Future funding could also be sourced via guided fly fishing courses for those arriving on cruise ships. The ultimate aim, however, is to educate

more children, novice anglers/hunters and landowners. We are already running courses on fly fishing and there is a demand for further courses.

Discussion centred around timing of contestable funding rounds necessary to take money from our own reserves and the possibility of lining the main dam a year later, once we know whether lining is necessary. The water may hold in the dam regardless.

Some large Hawke's Bay businesses may be interested in sponsoring this project. This is something that could be followed up on.

It was reiterated that if this project was to go ahead, staff will need to promote the use of the facilities by educational facilities. We need to be proactive in promoting and using the facility.

It was brought up that as this is a serious commitment and four councillors are not present, should this decision be held off? It was decided that since all Councillors had the meeting papers and agenda and no communication about this project had been received, that if a unanimous vote was received at this meeting it was prudent to go ahead.

***That Council approves staff approaching external agencies to look for funding for the remainder of this project***

***Elstone/Hern***

***That Council approves the use of the Wildlife Fund money for the digging of the main pond (Stage 2).***

***Hern/Bowcock***

***That if external funding is not available, staff are authorised to apply for the remainder of costs from the Hawke's Bay reserves through the contestable funding round.***

***Duley/Hern***

#### **POLICY ON PROVIDING PLANTS AND PREDATOR TRAPS**

Council are happy with the level of flexibility provided for in this policy. This will enable the manager to use his discretion when providing these items but also imposes limits.

Steve Perfect questioned whether traps could be provided to Waitangi Shooters.

***That Council adopts the policy on the Providing of Plants and Predator Traps***

***Duley/Lumsden***

## **OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

### **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Jesse informed the Council that staff had just finished banding for the season with a total of 775 birds banded.

Swan and paradise duck trend counts are scheduled for the following week.

Jesse informed Council that staff have been in contact with HBRC staff. There is a new compliance ranger position at HBRC. We are currently working on getting the ranger a warrant to check fishing licences while he is out on the local rivers. This will increase our presence and will be great for overall compliance in the region. Staff wish to thank HBRC for the chance to work together on this.

A Field Officer (Nick Page) has been employed on a permanent contract. Nick has undertaken two temporary contracts for us previously and staff are confident that he will be a great addition to the team.

We also have a Regional Scientist (Dan Fake) helping out on our drift diving this year. This will be great to collaborate with HBRC with this and will save some money in contracting.

Cr. Bates talked about the proposed study on river works in Hawke's Bay. This will give us some data to show what effect this work is having on our regions fisheries.

Discussion centred around how much money we could use from our current budget for this project. The rest could come from reserves.

The proposed steering committee for the beach raking study and subsequent work consists of Cr.s Hern and Lumsden.

*That Council approves the proposed study on river works and the associated costs which will be applied for from Hawke's Bay reserves*

*Elstone/Duley*

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

*That Council accept the Health and Safety report*

*Niblett/Lumsden*

### **FINANCE REPORT**

*That Council accepts the Finance Report*

*Duley/Bowcock*

### **LICENCE REPORT**

*That Council accepts the licence report*

*Niblett/Lumsden*

**PUBLIC EXCLUDED SECTION**

**8:10pm**

***That the public are to be excluded from the following parts of the meeting  
Elstone/Mackay***

***That the Public Meeting resumes  
Lumsden/Hern***

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:45pm.**

  
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**Chairman – Bruce Bates**

*14 April 2020*  
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**Date**