

# NORTH CANTERBURY FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Council Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 October 2018 At 595 Johns Road, Harewood Commencing at 6.30 pm

### 1. Present:

**Councillors:** Trevor Isitt (Chair), Peter Robinson, Chris Brankin, Alan Strong, Denis Kelliher, Bruce Kelly, Ken Lee, Daniel Maxwell, Ron Stuart, Phillip Musson, Craig Maylam

**Staff:** Rod Cullinane, Debbie Ambler, Tony Hawker, Scott Pearson, Steve Terry, Dirk Barr, Richard Cosgrove

**In Attendance:** Martin Taylor (CEO Fish and Game NZ), Grant Robertson (Auditor, RB Robertson Ltd)  
Approximately 40 public attendees

### 2. Apologies:

**Councillors:** Nil

**Staff:** Emily Arthur-Moore

**“That the apologies be accepted.”**

**Moved: Cr Stuart**

**Seconded: Cr Kelly**

**CARRIED**

### 3. Notification of General Business

Nil.

### 4. Conflict of Interest – Identify Items on This Meeting Agenda

Nil.

### 5a. Minutes from Previous Meeting:

**“That the minutes from 15 August 2018 be accepted”.**

**Moved: Cr Kelly**

**Seconded: Cr Kelliher**

**CARRIED**

### 5b. Matters Arising

Nil.

### 6. Health and Safety Update

CERT Training for the honorary rangers has been completed, with three rangers to complete training on 7 November 2018. All ranging lifejackets have been replaced.

## 7. Public Session

- 7a. Cr Isitt congratulated the newly elected North Canterbury Fish and Game Councillors and thanked the outgoing Councillors for their contribution over the past three years.
- 7b. **Presentation of Working With Nature Awards** – to be presented at the Annual General Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December.
- 7c. K Hunter requested discussion with M Taylor (CEO Fish and Game NZ) when he arrived.
- 7d. **Discussion on the Draft Audit Report of North Canterbury Fish and Game**

Cr Isitt opened the conversation by stating the Draft Audit was still confidential as the audit process was yet to be completed and that full discussion would not be entered into until the final report was made public.

Cr Isitt then read a personal statement to the meeting.

“As the North Canterbury Audit was still subject to an independent process, I consider it inappropriate to enter into detailed discussion about the bequest and it is was my personal understanding that no bequest funds had been used for the building. I look forward to this being confirmed through the audit process and that all Councillors will be fully updated on this development in due course. The annual accounts were now under normal external audit review, in addition to the current audit process initiated by the NZ Fish and Game Council”.

Points raised in general discussion:

- question raised as to when the in-committee minutes would be released? Cr Isitt replied the minutes would be discussed in-committee where a decision would be made to release for general viewing;
- R Tobin stated there were two sides to every argument and his personal opinion was that he disagreed with Cr Isitt’s explanation;
- the draft Audit Report required feed-back from North Canterbury prior to the final Audit Report being presented to the New Zealand Council meeting in November;
- it was reported by Cr Isitt that the North Canterbury end of year internal audit report will clearly show the Bequest funds were still intact;
- P Hodgson asked why a New Zealand Salmon Anglers Association (NZSAA) representative was not present when discussing the Bequest and why NZSAA was not involved from the beginning. In reply Cr Isitt stated that NCF&G thought it was not in the best interest to involve the public until the probate period had passed. At this point P Musson stated that he felt that Cr Isitt’s statement misled the meeting and therefore called for his resignation;

- accusations from P Watts toward Cr Isitt occurred with Cr Isitt reiterating that the total amount of the Bequest was still intact and Cr Musson reminded the meeting that NC Councillors voted to give a year's interest from the Bequest to the WWHT;
- Cr Kelliher reminded the meeting that Cr Isitt's statement was not on behalf of councillors. That he would be happy to explain council decisions if something was wrong once both the external and internal audit process had been completed. He saw a problem with NZSAA not being consulted regarding the Bequest. He thought the intent was good but the execution not so;
- Cr Isitt explained that the use of Reserves had to be approved by NZC and that having a small budget contributed to cost overruns within the hatchery. He stated that when the Contact contract was lost, the problems with cost overruns within the hatchery started;
- Cr Isitt explained the background to how the Youth Programme was funded, which was mainly by sponsorship;
- Cr Kelliher suggested that once the final Audit Report was out, a public meeting be held to present findings and decide on a way forward. That a presentation about the WWHT also be made;
- L Burke was disappointed that consultation with anglers was not sought regarding the current state of the hatchery and that NC failed to ask for help from anglers. Cr Isitt reminded the meeting that council meetings were open to the public and any one could attend and that minutes from these meetings were a matter of public record and were available on the NCF&G web site;
- Cr Kelliher suggested "Survey Monkey" be used as a means to engage anglers.

M Taylor (CEO NZC) and B Robertson (Auditor) joined the meeting at 7.14pm.

## **8. Meeting Business**

### **8a i Application to Hold a Fishing Competition – Rakaia River Fishing Promotions (RRFP)**

P Musson was concerned about the potential for a large number of fish being caught at this competition given the current state of the fishery. Cr Lee stated RRFP had made the decision to request participants have a voluntary bag limit of one fish per day throughout the competition and only one fish be accepted for weigh in. Cr Isitt thanked RRFP for altering the bag limit.

**“That the RRFP application to hold their annual fishing competition from 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be accepted on the proviso that the voluntary bag limit over the period of the competition be one fish per day”.**

**Moved: P Musson**

**Seconded: Cr Stuart**

**CARRIED**

### **8b i 2018 National Gamebird Harvest Survey**

S Terry summarised the Report by reporting that after 27 years of data there were trends beginning to form. Some variability between seasons were due to climatic and environmental factors and with change

in land use. Gamebird licence sales have trended up but hunter harvest has trended down. The creation of large irrigation storage ponds throughout Canterbury continues to create an increasing number of un-hunted refuge areas for gamebirds.

In general discussion, the problems associated with herbicides and pesticides along with avian botulism was of real concern. S Pearson reported the Waimakariri District Council agreed to move sludge out of the Kaiapoi sewerage ponds. A programme to clear ponds and drains of sediment and to find out what is actually causing the sediment was raised at Zone Committee meetings and with ECan. Funding was required to further this. It was also recognised that bees and bee hives were also a problem.

Cr Isitt acknowledged the tireless work Michal Baigent does in this area.

**“That the 2018 National Gamebird Harvest Survey be accepted”.**

**Moved: Cr Isitt**

**Seconded: Cr Kelly**

**CARRIED**

#### **8bii 2018 Salmon Management Report**

It was reported the 2017/18 was one of the poorest salmon fishing seasons ever. Some reasons for this was that returning salmon numbers were low, rivers were running less than 50% during the main fishing season and the unknown variables that occur at sea especially the sea temperature was a factor.

Survival of salmon in the main river streams is also under threat from water abstraction, and the long-term cumulative degradation of habitat and water quality, and ineffective fish screens. However, F&G is pleased with ECan’s fish screen compliance, where a list of priority screens to be checked were given by North Canterbury and Central South Island F&G.

ECan was looking at addressing issues surrounding degradation to streams due to intensive farming. A simple answer offered by M Baigent was stop fertilizing.

S Terry finished by stating if F&G want to survey more rivers for more accurate data, then more funding would be required.

**“That the 2018 Salmon Management Plan be accepted”.**

**Moved: P Musson**

**Seconded: Cr Lee**

**CARRIED**

#### **8biii 2018 Annual Aerial Trend Count of Paradise Shelduck, Black Swan, Mallard Duck, Shoveler Duck, White Swan and Canadian Geese**

D Barr reported that there would be no requirement for any regulation changes to bag limits for next season and that no species being monitored had dramatically increased in numbers. He was happy with the consistency in the count method with 95% accuracy. D Barr stated black swan numbers were increasing. Canadian geese were included in this report as NCF&G assist in counting populations and provide data to the Christchurch Airport Authority.

It was commented that the Game Reserve sign should be taken down at the Bromley ponds.

**“That the 2018 Annual Aerial Trend Count be accepted with minor revision being made”.**

**Moved: P Musson**

**Seconded: Cr Kelly**

**CARRIED**

#### **8bvi Whitebait Recommendation to DoC**

Cr Stuart stated that gathering whitebait was uncontrolled and raised the question of supporting DoC going forward by suggesting;

- limit daily catch;
- transferring ranging of whitebait to F&G;
- encourage individuals to take note of what is going on.

Restoring habitat to encourage fish back to the rivers was seen as a priority.

#### **8b v Letter Addressing Recurrence of Botulism Outbreaks in the Kaiapoi Oxidation Ponds**

Discussed in 8b i.

#### **8b vi Fresh Water Amendment Bill**

T Hawker outlined that the Bill sought better protection for indigenous freshwater fish which F&G support, but the Bill in particular Clause 5 and 6 would be at the expense of trout and other freshwater sports fish. He stated an email to anglers from NCF&G would be sent to remind anglers to provide a submission and sign the petition to stop the Bill going through.

M Taylor, CEO Fish and Game NZ, stated he was very pleased by the response of anglers and stated that the Minister for Conservation was not keen to keep the Bill going given the responses received to date. He stated it was imperative to make sure the second and third readings would not be heard.

### **9. Reports**

#### **9 a Chairman’s Report**

Cr Isitt advised the meeting he had been active with the Braided Rivers group and encouraged councillors to attend such meetings. He stated the Rangers group had achieved and excelled with their ranging targets and was proud of the group.

#### **9 b Staff Report**

D Barr outlined the Winnemem Wintu project for the benefit of public attendees. In summary the project was to collect genetic samples for winter run salmon including samples from the Central South Island region. To date 100 samples had been collected and sent to the USA. Focus has now turned to sampling

landlocked salmon and D Barr asked anglers to assist in the collection over the opening weekend of the high country lakes.

**9 c Financial Report**

R Cullinane advised the end of year accounts were currently with the external auditors and that a new accounting system is currently being implemented that would align with the accounting systems nationally.

**9 d NZC Report**

R Stuart advised the content would be discussed in the public excluded session.

**9 e National Sea Run Salmon Committee**

Cr Musson tabled a paper on the ideal returning rate for future salmon returns (actual v ideal).

**“That the table on future salmon returns be approved and presented to the NSRS Committee ”.**

**Moved: Cr Isitt**

**Seconded: Cr Kelly**

**CARRIED**

**10 General Business**

K Hunter questioned M Taylor as to why the current elections for the new Council took place instead of being deferred when NC was under audit and with all the media attention possibly swayed the results. M Taylor responded that the election process was carried out under an Act of Parliament and F&G could not be seen to be interfering with the process. He advised K Hunter to wait until the final Audit report was released before he could make further comment.

Cr Isitt advised the meeting would now proceed into public excluded.

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting:

1. Discussion on Draft Audit Report;
2. Confirmation of Public Excluded Meeting Dated 15 August 2018

**“To move into Public Excluded session of the meeting at 8.10 pm”**

**Moved: Cr Isitt**

**Seconded: Cr**

**CARRIED**

*Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987*

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for passing of this resolution are as follows:

General Subject of Each Matter to be Considered	Reason for Passing this Resolution in Relation to Each Matter	Ground(s) Under Section 48(1) for the Passing of this Resolution
Draft Audit Report	Matter is confidential and relates to governance issues	S48(1)(d)

This resolution is made in reliance of Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

Item	Reason Under the Official Information Act 1982	Section	Plain English Reason	When Report Can Be Released
	Relates to Governance Issues	S9(2)	Commercial Sensitivity	No intention to release

Section 48(4) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides as follows:

“(4) Every resolution to exclude the public shall be put at a time when the meeting is open to the public, and the text of that resolution (or copies thereof):

- a. Shall be available to any member of the public who is present; and
- b. Shall form part of the minutes of the Council.”

**“That the meeting move out of public excluded session at 10.30pm.”**

**Moved: Cr Isitt**

**Seconded: Cr Stuart**

**CARRIED**

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.30 pm.**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Next Meeting:**

**14 November 2018**

**595 Johns Road, Harewood**

**6.30pm**