NORTHLAND FISH & GAME COUNCIL CONFIRMED MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT THE NORTHLAND FISH & GAME OFFICE NELL PLACE, WHANGAREI 6.30 PM FRIDAY 5th JUNE 2020

PRESENT:

Chairman: Phil Durham

Councillors: Kris Batelaan, Mark Bell, Noel Birchall, Chris Lynch, Mike Newson,

Cameron Shanks, John Skeates.

Staff: Rudi Hoetjes (Manager), Fay Stodart (Administrator)

The Council meeting planned for 27th March 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid-19 lockdown and the restrictions New Zealand was facing at the time. The council will discuss items from the 27th March agenda for this meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors. The Conflict of Interest register was circulated around the table for all councillors to sign and declare any conflicts.

APOLOGIES: Russell Daniels, Darryl Reardon, Wayne Pepper, Stefan Seitzer, Ross

Atkinson (Department of Conservation)

The Department of Conservation offices are still closed due to Covid-19 and the representative, Ross Atkinson was instructed not to attend the council meeting.

It was moved: That those apologies are accepted.

Kris Batelaan/John Skeates CARRIED.

Previous Minutes

It was resolved: <u>That the minutes of the meeting held on the</u> 31st January 2020 are

confirmed as true and correct.

Mike Newson/Cameron Shanks CARRIED.

Matters Arising

The R3 advertising programme has been delayed due to the Covid-19 lockdown. All Fish & Game regions are accepting the programme in promoting more participants into the sport.

Governance Councillor Performance Review Evaluations

Governance Policy 11.3.2 states that "The Council shall every 12 months carry out a review of its performance" The Council's Performance Evaluation Review is on an annual basis which will be held at the first meeting of each calendar year.

The summary of the 2019-2020 Council's performance evaluation was circulated to all councillors and there was no discussion.

Financial Report for period ending 29 February 2020

There were no queries on the financial report ending on the 29th February 2020.

It was moved: <u>That the Financial Report to the 29th February 2020 is adopted.</u>

Noel Birchall/Mike Newson

CARRIED.

Correspondence

The following correspondence that was received late and needs addressing is:

- Flaxmill Wetland Access to wetlands
- Kai Iwi Lakes Trout Liberations
- Wage Subsidy

Manager's Report

1171 Anglers Notice

An error was made in the 2019-2020 Fishing regulation booklets where the daily bag limit was changed to two trout taken in the Victoria and Waipapa Rivers. Councillor Batelaan stated that he wished to have the daily bag limit reinstated to one trout taken per day for these two catchments.

Theft of Gas Gun

A bird scaring gas gun was stolen from a farm in the Kaitaia region. The councillors instructed the manager to invoice the farmer as he was hiring the gun at the time and should reimburse Fish & Game for the stolen gun.

It was moved: That the Manager Activity Report is received.

John Skeates/Cameron Shanks

CARRIED.

Field Officer Reports

The Council considered the Field Officers' reports briefly. The staff made comments on the attitude of some stand holders within the Jack Bisset Wetland. The councillors wished to review the Jack Bisset wetland stand holders committee at the end of the current game bird season.

Councillor John Skeates queried the option to choose the region when purchasing a Fish & Game licence. The administrator said the option is already available when purchasing online but not through the agent.

The councillor discussed the repairs completed at Waitangi and will address the management of the Waitangi Wetlands at a later council meeting.

The councillors discussed the use of fibre wads in the Te Hiku/Summit Forest as a condition of the access permit. The manager praised John Macpherson for regaining access to Te Paki Station and TeWerahi Wetlands and the Landcorp farm on Cape Karikari.

It was moved: <u>That the Field Officers' Activity Reports are received.</u>

Kris Batelaan/Mike Newson

CARRIED.

Flaxmill Wetland – Access to wetlands

An email was received by the manager from a prospective purchaser of the Nichols farm adjacent to the Flaxmill Wetland in Dargaville. The farm is on the market and the Nichols has

received an offer subject to repairs to a bridge over which Fish & Game has an easement for access into the Flaxmill Wetland. There is substantial rust to the beams and is now considered dangerous to use for heavy machinery. The purchaser of the property requires a formalised agreement between Northland Fish & Game and himself to pay 50% of the repairs. An estimated repair cost is approximately \$50,000. These repairs to the bridge will occur next summer at the earliest.

The council discussed the reserves for this wetland and agreed upon the following:

It was moved: <u>That Northland Fish & Game Council agree to pay no more than 50%</u>

of the costs to a maximum of \$25,000 for building repairs to the bridge

suitable for Fish & Game purposes.

Kris Batelaan/Cameron Shanks CARRIED.

The manager will notify NZ Council that Northland Fish & Game will use some of their reserves for these repairs.

Kai Iwi Lakes Trout Fishing Competition Proposal

Field Officer Graham Gallaghan prepared a proposal to run the Kai Iwi Lakes trout fishing competition in a new format. The competition dates would be moved to October to promote the new fishing season, have early bird pricing for the competition tickets and also simplify the prize categories and trophies.

It was moved: The council adopts this proposal to change the format of the trout

fishing competition.

Kris Batelaan/Chris Lynch CARRIED.

Ratification of Licence Fee Recommendations and Season Lengths for 2020-2021

During Covid-19 lockdown and travel restrictions, the manager and the chairman made the following recommendations regarding the 2020 game bird season length and the 2021 game bird licence fees.

It was moved: The council ratified the amended season length for the 2020 game bird

season and that there should be no change to the 2021 game bird

licence fee for the 2020-2021 financial year.

Chris Lynch/Mark Bell CARRIED.

Kai Iwi Lakes Trout Liberations

A decision to permit the release of trout into the Kai Iwi Lakes for the 2020 liberations was declined by the Taharoa Domain Governance Committee with no reason or explanation. The councillors discussed the economic consequences of this decision and agreed that the manager and the chairman meet with the Kaipara District Council Mayor, Jason Smith. Northland Fish & Game had to order the trout last year and are obliged to pay for these trout. The council agreed that under the Conservation Act, they did not need their approval to release trout into the lakes

and it is up to KDC to take legal action to stop Fish & Game releasing trout into the lakes. The councillors discussed the releasing of trout with no approval.

It was moved: <u>That the manager and the chairman meet with the Mayor of Kaipara</u>

District Council to discuss the trout liberations into the Kai Iwi Lakes.

Chris Lynch/Cameron Shanks

CARRIED.

NZFG Updates

Councillor Birchall has attended many Zoom teleconferences during the Covid-19 lockdown. All minutes and videos of these meetings are recorded on the Fish & Game website. Councillor Birchall gave a brief update on the following:

- Change of Chairman. Paul Shortis is now the NZ Council Chairman
- Strategic finance committee is set up to review resources for all regions
- Projections of possible income with no non-residents licence sales due to the borders being closed
- A possible 25% decline in game bird licence sales experienced by all regions
- Most contestable funding applications have been deferred
- All regions were asked to cut 5% in their 2020-2021 budget
- No regions to drop under 20% in their reserves
- New election for the Executive Committee. The committee consists of Bill O'Leary, Noel Birchall, Dan Isbister and the Chairman, Paul Shortis

The Chairman thanked and acknowledged Noel for attending these meetings by Zoom and for all the work he has done on the licencing committee.

Licence System and Business Admin Agreement

The licencing subcommittee has developed a new licence system contract with all of the 12 Fish & Game regions, the NZ Fish & Game and Eyede. All regions were asked to review and sign the contract.

It was moved: That the Council adopts the new Licence and Business Admin

Agreement and supports any amendments from other regions.

Chris Lynch/John Skeates CARRIED.

Draft Communications Strategy recommendations

The council considered the draft communications strategy plan and decided that the plan needed a review clause.

It was moved: That the Northland Fish & Game Council approves the Draft

Communications Strategy Plan with a review clause after 12 months.

Mike Newson/Mark Bell CARRIED.

Wage Subsidy

During the Covid-19 lockdown, Northland Fish & Game applied and received the wage subsidy. The council qualified for the subsidy as there was more than 30% decline in licence sales for the month of April. A comparison of April 2019 and April 2020 sales was circulated to the councillors showing nearly 400% drop in sales. The manager sought advice from BDO Auditors on whether the council should keep the subsidy as the licence sales have increased in the month of May. The councillors agreed that the council qualified for the subsidy and should keep the funds as the council paid all staff their 20 plus or 40 hours per week during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Councillor Cameron Shanks opposed to keeping the wage subsidy.

2020-2021 Revised Budget

NZ Council has asked all regions to reduce their budgets by 5% for the upcoming financial year because of the licence sales decline and the economic recession the country will be facing. The councillors considered the revised budget and requested that the meals and travel reimbursement are reinstated back into the budget for the councillors. The manager asked the councillors where other reductions can be made in the budget to achieve this. The councillors advised the manager to reduce the asset replacement fund. The interest income has been calculated at 2% interest but NZ Council has reduced this to 1.7%.

It was moved: The council accepts the recommendations of the manager for the 2020-

2021 draft budget.

Chris Lynch/Cameron Shanks CARRIED.

9.30pm: John Skeates left the meeting

Health and Safety Report

Northland Fish & Game is required to give a Health & Safety report at each Council meeting. During the Covid-19 lockdown, the Health & Safety officer, Rachael Quin updated the H&S Manual and policy to include a pandemic clause as per the government and health professional's recommendations. The Chairman signed the updated version.

It was moved: <u>That the Health and Safety Report is received.</u>

Mike Newson/Mark Bell CARRIED.

Executive Limitations Report

It was moved: <u>That the Executive Limitations Report is received.</u>

Kris Batelaan/Chris Lynch CARRIED.

Financial Report for period ending 30 April 2020

The most recent fish and game bird licence sales spread sheet was circulated to the councillors. The financial administrator gave a brief summary on the financial report.

It was moved: That the Financial Report to the 30th April 2020 is adopted.

General Business

The council currently owns two tandem trailers and the Council had indicated several months earlier to sell one of the trailers. The manager asked the council whether he could purchase one of these tandem trailers for his personal use. The manager obtained a written valuation from Turners Car Auction with a current value of \$2,000 including GST, less auction and administration fees. The manager offered \$2,200 to purchase the trailer. This trailer will still be available for Fish & Game's use for field work.

It was moved:

The Council accepts the manager's offer of \$2,200 to purchase the tandem trailer.

Cameron Shanks/Kris Batelaan

CARRIED.

The manager informed the council of a \$1.1 billion investment by the government to create 11,000 environment jobs and there may be an opportunity for Northland Fish & Game to create more wetlands. The council agreed that the manager pursue this prospect.

The chairman wished Barbara, the manager's wife a speedy recovery and advised him to take leave when needed.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Phil Durham Chairman

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