

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE 178<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND  
GAME COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW  
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 17<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019 AT 12.00PM**

**Present**

Crs Murray Ferris, Barry Roderick, Lindsay Lyons, David Woolner, Adam Rayner, and Alan Baird.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy Garrick, Kate Thompson, Matt McDougall, Anthony van Dorp, Lynne Sands, Mark Sherburn, Matt Osborne, and Lloyd Gledhill (Eastern Fish & Game); Debbie Oakley.

**1.0 WELCOME AND KARAKIA**

1.1 Cr Murray Ferris (Chairman) opened the meeting at 12.20pm, and welcomed all present introducing Debbie Oakley from Te Puke who he said had expressed an interest in joining the Council, and had come to sit in on today's meeting.

**2.0 APOLOGIES**

2.1 Apologies were received from Crs Laurance Tamati, Ngahi Bidois, Geoff Thomas, and Ken Coombes; John Meikle, Eben Herbert, Nigel Simpson, and Carmel Veitch (Eastern Fish & Game).

2.2 *Agreed (Adam Rayner/Alan Baird) that the apologies for the 178<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [19/10/2.2]*

**3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 AUGUST 2019)**

3.1 *Agreed (David Woolner/Alan Baird) that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 August 2019 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [19/10/3.1]*

**4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN COUNCIL POLICY**

4.1 No items were identified for inclusion in Council policy.

**5.0 MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 Cr David Woolner noted that the presentation from Carmel Veitch that was to have occurred at the previous meeting had been deferred until this meeting but it was not on today's agenda. Andy Garrick advised that due to Carmel's commitments with the New Zealand Council office in Wellington she was unavailable for this meeting, but her presentation would be included in a later agenda.

5.2 Cr Barry Roderick advised that one of the private sponsors for the Fish for Gold promotion wished to continue his sponsorship. Andy Garrick acknowledged this kind offer and advised that he would formalise this with the sponsor.

5.3 Barry asked if staff could provide an update on the recent aquatic biosecurity meeting convened by the Lakes Water Quality Society to discuss the merits of its "Clean Boat Self Certification" proposal and other means of reducing the risk of catfish and other aquatic pests being transferred to other lakes. Anthony van Dorp advised that the meeting had been well attended by other agencies, and it had been a constructive meeting. The downsides to the proposal (e.g. legal issues, ability to enforce, practicalities and effectiveness) were discussed at some length, and it was noted that Regional Council already had rules in place and more effort could be put into enforcing those. A self-certification process might however, be a useful advocacy tool. The topic

would be further discussed at the Lakes Water Quality Symposium to be held on 7-8 November which Fish & Game would also be attending.

- 5.4 Barry suggested that perhaps boats should be encouraged or restricted to visiting only one lake per day to make it more likely that they were thoroughly inspected and cleaned before being launched in another waterbody. Andy Garrick noted that Eastern Fish & Game had developed its own protocols in relation to minimising risk of catfish being transferred, and one of these was if a visit was intended to Rotoiti or Rotorua these locations would be the last to be visited on any given day if the intention was to get out onto other lakes on the same day.

## **6.0 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR GENERAL BUSINESS**

There were no items of general business.

## **7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**

- 7.1 No conflicts of interest were identified.

## **8.0 2020 GAME SEASON CONDITIONS**

- 8.1 Andy Garrick advised that the purpose of this agenda item was to provide an opportunity to discuss or seek clarification around any of the information that had been provided with it, and to identify any other items or issues Council might wish to receive information on for consideration at its December meeting.
- 8.2 Andy brought to the attention of Council that there were items in the gazetted First and Second Schedules of the 2019 Game Season provided in Appendix 1 that had not been clearly portrayed or had been omitted in error. The first of these related to text included in Condition 6 of the First Schedule on page 22 which should have read that hunters were encouraged not to use lead shot in shotguns with a bore smaller than 12g in the first part of the 2019 game season up to and including 31 August 2019, but thereafter from 1 September 2019 through to 31 August 2020 it would be mandatory in all Department of Conservation and Fish & Game administered wetlands; and from 1 September 2020 onwards it could not be used within 200m of any waterways or wetlands whether these be public or private. The gazetted condition also failed to note that .410 gauge shotguns were excluded from these restrictions.

Under Second Schedule Special Conditions on page 25 Andy advised that an additional condition, 5(5), had been overlooked in the initial gazettal process but had subsequently been formalised via an amendment to the 2019 game season conditions as reproduced over the page (refer p26). Similarly, Condition 6 "Upland Game Properties with Special Conditions" listing the Pirini Family Trust had been omitted from the gazette notice.

- 8.3 Matt McDougall expanded on item 6 on page 18 relating to brown quail and noted that this is something he would draw to the attention of clubs for comment.
- 8.4 Debbie Oakley advised she had been asked to query the low bag limit for mallards in the Reporoa area, and the reliability of the methods used to determine that the duck population is struggling in that area. Matt McDougall provided a brief run down on the monitoring programmes undertaken and the methods used to estimate game bird populations. He said that aerial transect counts had been undertaken for four years within the Reporoa area, and what was consistently obvious each time a count was taken, was how few ponds there are in that area and how very few of those were holding ducks. There were small pockets that held good numbers, but there were much larger areas that didn't. In response to a suggestion that maybe the bag limit within that area

could be increased for opening weekend only to make it more worthwhile for hunters to get out hunting there, Andy advised that Council had considered a similar proposal last year to do the same more widely, but Council had rejected that for a number of reasons. Andy was happy to supply the minutes and background to that discussion for further information if anyone wished to know more.

## **9.0 2019 UPLAND GAME PROPERTIES REPORT**

9.1 Council received the 2019 Upland Game Properties Report and acknowledged the lower number of returns currently required to be submitted following the reclassification of pheasants and red legged partridges from Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1953 to Schedule 3 within the boundaries of four of the five previously gazetted upland game properties.

## **10.0 DRAFT 2018-2019 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

10.1 Council had received a copy of the draft performance report prior to the meeting. Andy Garrick advised that the report was currently being audited and the final copy would be presented to the next meeting of Council along with an overview of variances against the Operational Work Plan and budget. Andy informed Council that since printing of the draft, a reserve had been created for the Fish for Gold Promotion, the intention being to transfer what had been allocated within the Operational Work Plan for insuring the promotion (if an underwriter had been found) to a reserve in which a pool of funds could be accumulated to support the major prize in the event that a suitable sponsor was not available. Andy wanted Council to be aware of this, and was keen for feedback from Council if they felt that this was inappropriate. No concerns were raised by Council.

10.2 Cr Barry Roderick questioned an item in Table 11 on page 19 of the performance report, regarding our involvement with the Waipaoa Catchment Plan as it was his impression that this catchment held no sports fisheries values. Andy Garrick advised that with the Gisborne District Council now turning its attention to individual catchments, it was important to have an oversight into all catchment plans as planning provisions made in one or more of these could have precedent setting consequences for other areas/waters that are of interest to us.

## **11.0 WAIKAREMOANA SPORTS FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FUND**

11.1 Andy Garrick provided an overview of how funds that had been approved from the Waikaremoana Sports Fish Habitat Fund, had been utilised during the year. He also informed Council of contributions received from Genesis Energy and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council towards the repairs to the water quality monitoring buoy.

11.2 Cr Murray Ferris queried how long Council should carry over the \$12k it had set aside for the installation of navigation markers which had been requested by the Waikaremoana Boating and Fishing Association? Murray advised that he had recently been in contact with them and had been informed that they were no closer to gaining approval from iwi than they had been three years ago. Andy Garrick advised he would write to the Association for an update.

11.3 Cr Barry Roderick noted the low interest returns currently available on term deposits and questioned whether it would be worth looking at investment options such as bonds? Debbie Oakley, having had experience with unit trust type investments, informed Council that there were low risk unit trusts available that were similar in risk to term investments but these were subject to fees. Lynne Sands who looks after the re-

investment of funds for the Council advised that we always seek the best rate available at the time, and usually the longer terms provided a better return. Council supported leaving the Waikaremoana Sport Fish Habitat Enhancement Fund funds in low risk term investments for the meantime and confirmed the update as having been received.

## **12.0 LICENCE FEES AND BUDGETS**

12.1 Andy Garrick provided some background to Southland Fish and Game Council's proposal to reduce licence fee increases by encouraging regions to reduce their Operational Work Plan budgets for 2020-2021 by 1%, and how this might affect Eastern Region's already tight budget and the minimal savings to be gained should that occur. Andy provided an overview of the current costs and revenue generated by this region from other sources, and asked Council if they felt there was merit in what the Southland Council was proposing, and if so in what area of the Operational Work Plan it considered a reduction could be accommodated.

12.2 Discussion on the proposal included:

- if a cut in budget was made and there was no increase to fees or these did not keep pace with inflation, there may be a need to catch up at some point as had occurred when the Minister of Conservation declined a proposed increase in licence fees for the 2009/10 Fish Season;
- this region does not waste licence holder funds and runs a pretty tight and well monitored budget, so something substantial would probably need to be foregone should a reduction to the budget be imposed;
- R3 programmes are getting underway with the primary goal of increasing participation which will in turn take the pressure off increasing licence fees, as will changes to the licence administration system, the proposal for a digital licence in place of a plastic card, savings made on the cost of producing magazines, and the development of additional sources of income with the recent appointment of a national Business Development Manager.

12.3 Council requested Andy respond to the Southland Council's request congratulating them on their initiative and informing them that while Council acknowledges there is an issue with unjustified and unreasonable increases in licence fees, it considered a 1% reduction in the total Fish & Game budget would have a minimal impact on licence fees but would negatively impact on an already tight budget in this region. Councillors felt that R3 and business development initiatives along with savings made in licencing costs and elsewhere should take the pressure off licence fees.

## **13.0 ARMS LEGISLATION BILL**

13.1 Prior to considering the prepared agenda item and the NZC draft submission to the Select Committee more recently circulated, Councillors and staff spent some time frankly discussing concerns they had in relation to some of the actions that had been taken by the NZC in regards to the Bill and publicity around it over the past couple of weeks. This had come to a head two days earlier when NZC staff had released a media statement responding to a claim in an email from the Council of Licenced Firearms Owners to its supporters, that steel shot cartridges may have become a prohibited item under the Arms (Prohibited Ammunition) Order that had come into effect on 1 October. The email contained a substantive legal opinion indicating poorly worded provisions and lack of clarity in the Order which needed to be fixed. The NZC media response was totally dismissive and took an unnecessary swipe at COLFO which generated an immediate backlash from members of the firearms community including Fish & Game

- licence holders. Concerns were expressed about other statements made and positions taken with little consultation with regional Fish & Game Councils or specialist staff within the wider organisation, not only in relation to Arms reform but in regard to other matters also. The Arms Legislation is incredibly complex, and comment was made that the recent survey of licence holders did not provide, nor could it, sufficient information to licence holders for the majority of them to make informed decisions. and concern was raised as to how the results would be interpreted and used.
- 13.2 Cr Lindsay Lyons commented that everything happens at great speed within the New Zealand Council and it was not always feasible to work through the usual channels. He agreed however, that there are some well qualified staff within the organisation that should be involved in matters such as these. In the case of the Arms Bill the primary aim in the first instance was to look after the interests of duck hunters. Since then other issues had come into play also. Lindsay suggested that Council should relay its concerns about communications and media statements to the New Zealand Council.
- 13.3 Cr Barry Roderick felt that Lindsay had handled the situation very well from the outset and thanked him for his efforts in getting licence holders through the duck shooting season during this tumultuous time. He suggested that this Council should write to the NZC requesting that staff with appropriate expertise are consulted on matters such as these in the future.
- 13.4 Returning to the main agenda item, Andy Garrick advised that staff were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft submission and had done so. Many of the concerns staff had raised had been recognised and incorporated into the final draft of the NZC submission, and he wished to acknowledge this. He noted that some of the points raised in the NZC submission could have, in Eastern Region staff's opinion, been more forcefully presented, while an effectively neutral stance was taken on others. Andy advised that the NZC was holding off from finalising its submission until tomorrow morning to enable the Eastern Fish and Game Council to provide its feedback on it, and added that in addition to providing the NZC draft to Council to review, Councillors might wish to consider edits Eastern staff had proposed which were incorporated into the other document they'd been provided with. Andy added that two of the Councillors not present today, Crs Geoff Thomas and Ken Coombes, had emailed him confirming their support for the submission with edits proposed.
- 13.5 Cr Barry Roderick suggested that the word "generally" be incorporated into point 34 to read "Fish & Game generally supports...".
- 13.6 Anthony van Dorp highlighted some of the areas which needed to be discussed:
- does the proposed legislation improve public safety?
  - determination of who is fit and proper
  - notification to registry when firearm is moved from home
  - reduction of licence period to 5 years
  - police inspection at any time for law abiding firearms owners
  - costs to cover additional requirements may hinder safe practice
- 13.7 ***Agreed (Barry Roderick/Murray Ferris) that Council supports the NZC draft submission with Eastern Fish and Game Council edits, and requests the manager to forward the proposed amendments to the New Zealand Council. [19/10/13.7]***
- 13.8 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Lindsay Lyons) that Council requests the manager prepare and forward a submission to the Select Committee on behalf of the Eastern Fish & Game Council expressing similar sentiments. [19/10/13.8]***

**14.0** *Agreed (Alan Baird/Adam Rayner) that this meeting be extended for one hour to cover outstanding business. [19/10/14.0]*

**15.0 NOMINATIONS FOR NZ GAME BIRD HABITAT TRUST**

15.1 Council briefly discussed and supported the nomination of ex-Eastern Fish & Game Councillor Steve Scragg for appointment to the NZ Game Bird Habitat Trust Board. Cr Lindsay Lyons asked Andy to request that he include a resume with his application.

**15.2** *Agreed (Lindsay Lyons/David Woolner) that Council supports the nomination of past Councillor Steve Scragg to the NZ Game Bird Habitat Trust. [19/10/15.2]*

**16.0 DATES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS IN 2020**

16.1 Andy Garrick pointed out issues with the proposed NZC meeting dates and the implications for this region's deadlines and meeting schedules in 2020. Andy had identified some minor amendments to the NZC schedule which he believed would remedy this and work for all parties concerned. Cr Lindsay Lyons suggested that Andy write to the New Zealand Council to highlight the issues this Council has with the NZC's dates and provide his proposed resolution.

**16.2** *Agreed (David Woolner/Adam Rayner) that the manager write to the New Zealand Council highlighting issues arising from some of the dates contained within the New Zealand Council's proposed budget and meeting schedule for 2020, and include with this, his suggested resolution. [19/10/16.2]*

**17.0 SPECIES MONITORING REPORTS**

17.1 Council received the species monitoring summaries for the 2018-19 Summer Creel Survey and the 2019 National Shoveler Count.

**18.0 LIAISON OFFICERS REPORTS**

**17.1** *Tongariro-Taupo Conservation Board*

No report.

**17.2** *Bay of Plenty Conservation Board*

No report.

**17.3** *Department of Conservation*

No report.

**17.4** *New Zealand Fish and Game Council*

Cr Lindsay Lyons informed Council of the appointment of Business Development Manager, Steve Doughty, who had been employed to roll out the R3 programme and look at opportunities for increasing income revenue from sources other than licence sales. The Hawke's Bay audit and issues arising from this had been taking up a lot of time and is currently ongoing. Lindsay felt that the NZ Council was working cohesively and commented on the three sub-committees set up to review Licence Administration System, Remuneration, and Financial Strategy which also involved input from several staff. Andy Garrick queried what progress had been made with developing a draft national communications strategy, and Lindsay advised that this was still in the hands of an external provider but will be put out for consultation with regions as soon as is possible.

**18.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

18.1 Andy Garrick provided a brief overview on the Fish for Gold Promotion which was held for the first two weeks of the new season, and informed Council that two of the 30

fish with promotional tags had been caught during the promotional period. Mark Sherburn provided some background on the two successful anglers and the results following the opening of the promotion's prize envelopes. He said that while the tags caught were not the big prize-winning tags, both participants received prizes valued at \$200 each.

**18.2** *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Adam Rayner) that Council receives the Health and Safety Report, Management Report and Licence Sales Report. [19/08/18.2]*

**18.3** *Agreed (Barry Roderick/Adam Rayner) that Council receives the Finance Report and approves payments for July and August totalling \$295,811.50. [19/10/18.3]*

**19.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**

**19.1** Cr Murray Ferris invited Debbie Oakley to speak to Council, advising that her CV had been included within the Papers for Information accompanying the agenda for this meeting.

**19.2** Debbie gave Council a brief overview of her background and experience, and what she believed she could contribute to this Council. Given her background in banking, and the governance roles she held within the horticulture industry, coupled with her passion for angling and hunting she felt that she would be a good candidate to be a member of Council. She noted that shortly after Fish & Game had been established, she had assisted Dave Stack, Eastern Region's first manager, to put staff in place.

**20.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION**

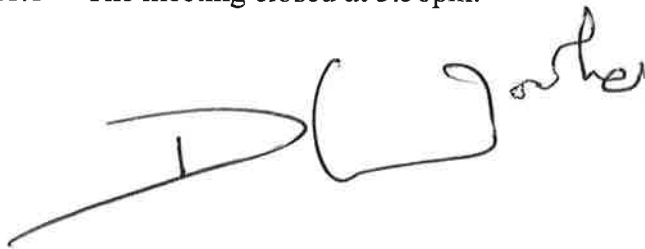
**20.1** *Agreed (Murray Ferris/David Woolner) that pursuant to Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded at 2.55pm from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:*

- *Confirmation of public excluded minutes from the meeting on 1 November 2018;*
- *Licence Administration Sub Committee Report;*
- *Manager's annual performance review;*
- *Council's self-appraisal review;*
- *Vacancies on Eastern Fish and Game Council. [19/10/17.1]*

**20.2** *Agreed (BR/DW) that the public be re-admitted to the meeting at 3.55pm. [19/10/20.2]*

**21.0 MEETING CLOSED**

**21.1** The meeting closed at 3.56pm.



.....  
**David Woolner**  
**Deputy Chairman**

## SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

### 2.0 APOLOGIES

- 2.2 *Agreed (Adam Rayner/Alan Baird) that the apologies for the 178<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [19/10/2.2]*

### 3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 AUGUST 2019)

- 3.1 *Agreed (David Woolner/Alan Baird) that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 August 2019 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [19/10/3.1]*

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