

**MINUTES OF THE 197<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EASTERN FISH AND GAME  
COUNCIL, HELD AT THE ROTORUA OFFICES OF FISH & GAME NEW  
ZEALAND ON THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2022 AT 11.00AM**

**Present**

Crs Ngahi Bidois, Murray Ferris, Kevin Coutts, Debbie Oakley, Geoff Thomas, Lindsay Lyons, Mike Jarvie, Scott Nicol, Mark Sceats, and Alan Simmons (arrived 11.17am).

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Arash Alaeinia, Kate Thompson, Matthew Osborne, Anthony Van Dorp, Matt McDougall, Eben Herbert (Eastern Fish & Game); Carmel Veitch (New Zealand Fish and Game Council); and Barry Roderick.

**1.0 WELCOME AND KARAKIA**

1.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois (Chairman) opened the meeting at 11.05am with a karakia and welcomed all present.

**APOLOGIES**

2.1 Apologies were received from Crs. Jay Tapsell and Ken Coombes.

2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that the apologies for the 197<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [22/08/2.2]*

**3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (9 JUNE 2022)**

3.1 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [22/08/3.1]*

**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 Kevin Coutts queried item 15.8 and particularly Cr Ngahi Bidois' response to Kevin's question regarding whether the iwi groups from Northland, Auckland/Waikato, and Eastern Region could work together. After some discussion Council acknowledge that there could be difficulties in various iwi groups working together however ultimately this would be an area which could be worked through. No change to the minutes was required.

5.2 Cr Ngahi Bidois requested an updated from Arash Alaeinia on item 10.9 regarding the funding of ongoing costs relating to the Fish and Game Governance Review. Arash informed Council that the recommendation was sent to the New Zealand Council, and he has been advised by the acting CE that it was in progress. Arash confirmed that he would follow up once again to ensure that the suggested letter is forwarded to the Minister of Conservation.

5.3 Cr Ngahi Bidois also wished to confirm item 15.25 where Council's resolution on the proposed mergers would be reported back to the Implementation Steering Group (ISG). Arash Alaeinia confirmed that Council's resolution along with information on the reasons for the decisions made was reported to the ISG within the required time frame.

5.4 Cr Lindsay Lyons commented on the acknowledgement recorded on page 7 of the minutes regarding Cr Debbie Oakley's representation of Eastern Fish & Game at the New Zealand Fish and Game Council table. Lindsay wished to remind Council that Cr

Debbie Oakley's position with the New Zealand Council is as an appointee from the Eastern region and not a representation of the Eastern Fish and Game Council. He advised that as a New Zealand Council appointee, your role is a Councillor for hunters and anglers all over NZ, you are not there to represent your own Council's views or agenda. Cr Debbie Oakley said that it was known that she was appointed and not a representative and asked whether Lindsay wanted the minutes to be altered to acknowledge this. Lindsay agreed no change was necessary and that it would be appropriate in future to ensure we recognise the position as an appointment.

- 5.5 Cr Lindsay Lyons queried item 15.24 where it was noted that Lindsay had informed Council of some of the views of the Hawke's Bay Council. Lindsay wished to clarify that he did not provide views of the Hawke's Bay Council rather questioned whether we had contacted the Hawke's Bay Council. Cr Ngahi Bidois confirmed his comment that Lindsay had a view of the Hawke's Bay Council after he had informed Council of their wish to engage with this Council about the proposal for an Eastern/Hawke's Bay merger. It was agreed there was no need to alter the minutes.

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

- Cr Ngahi Bidois - Pat Swift letter to Council
- Cr Ngahi Bidois - Cr Geoff Thomas email to Council
- Arash Alaeinia - Keeping Relevant paper
- Mark Sceats - Gisborne meeting
- Kevin Coutts - Timing of receiving minutes
- Kevin Coutts - Items relating to amalgamations in PIF's

## **7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGISTER**

- 7.1 Councillors were asked to inform the chair of any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were recorded.
- 7.2 Cr Mark Sceats questioned whether payment to Council members for travel expenses could be seen as a conflict of interest particularly if discussion occurs around these reimbursements. Council agreed that this was not a conflict as reimbursement travel expenses were based on IRD mileage rates and were Council policy.

## **8.0 OPERATIONAL REPORTS**

- 8.1 *Health and Safety Report* – Arash Alaeinia highlighted that the team operate at a high level of Health & Safety with no incidents since the last meeting of Council. He confirmed that the cable which had caused the injury reported at the June meeting had since been buried underground. Health & Safety was discussed at every Monday morning staff meeting and he commented on the types of potential risks that were raised at those meetings.
- 8.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [22/08/8.2]*
- 8.3 *Finance Report* – No questions were raised and a minor correction to the wording for income invoiced was suggested.
- 8.4 *Agreed (Alan Simmonds/Geoff Thomas) that Council receives the Finance Report and approves payments for May and June 2022 totalling \$330,976.66. [22/08/8.4]*
- 8.5 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Lindsay Lyons) that Council confirms the removal of Andy Garrick, Cr Lindsay Lyons, and past Cr Neal Hawes as signatories to the bank accounts held in the name of Eastern Fish and Game Council with the Bank of New*

- Zealand and Westpac Bank and approves the addition of Arash Alaeinia, Chief Executive to replace Andy Garrick as signatory to these accounts. [22/08/8.5]***
- 8.6 Barry Roderick raised a concern over prior managers continuing to provide assistance past their leaving date and requested that any payments that the Eastern Fish and Game Council make in this regard are transparent. Arash Alaeinia informed Council that any consultant payments are made by way of an invoice for work completed and Carmel Veitch confirmed that these would appear on the transaction reports provided to Council within the agenda.
- 8.7 ***Agreed (Scott Nicol/Mark Sceats) that Council reconfirms that the signing rules for the Eastern Fish and Game Council bank accounts and online banking facilities will comprise a combination of any two of the named signatories. All signatories will, however, be authorised to make enquiries in bank accounts and term deposits independently. [22/08/8.7]***
- 8.8 *Management Report* – Cr Scott Nicol commented on the Environmental Code of Practice reported on page 35 of the management report and advised that he would be happy to assist if needed.
- 8.9 *Licence Sales Report* – Kate Thompson advised that the 2021/22 fish licence sales are still a little behind last season, and she attributed this to the Covid lockdowns for Auckland and Waikato at the beginning of the season as most other regions apart from the upper North Island were reporting sales higher than last season for the same period. She said that the budget for the year was likely to have been achieved at the time of the meeting.
- 8.10 Cr Ngahi Bidois provided a brief overview of the ballot held by Te Arawa Lakes Trust annually which provided opportunity for its members to obtain a fishing licence at a discounted price with the Trust subsidising 50% of the cost.
- 8.11 Arash Alaeinia informed Council of his recent meeting with the marketing manager of RotoruaNZ (previously Destination Rotorua). The relationship with them was initiated by Andy Garrick two years ago but work to promote fishing opportunities was stalled due to Covid. Arash advised that on reengaging with them RotoruaNZ have since completed a review and have seen that fishing is quite an important aspect of promoting our lakes. Arash advised that they were looking to produce a short video to promote fishing and that he was happy to receive information that Council may have. Cr Geoff Thomas suggested he may be able to assist with some footage on the lakes fishing and he would liaise with Arash about this.
- 9.0 2022-23 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN**
- 9.1 Arash Alaeinia confirmed that there had been no feedback received following the distribution of the draft 2022-23 Operational Work Plan to clubs and stakeholders.
- 9.2 ***Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council approves the proposed Operational Work Plan for the 2022-23 year. [22/08/9.2]***
- 9.3 Arash Alaeinia informed Council that the Council's 10-year plan comes to an end in 2024 and advised that he would like to commence the review of this in the new year.
- 9.4 ***Agreed (Debbie Oakley/Geoff Thomas) that Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve expenditure during the year as set out in the Council approved Operational Work Plan and Budget. [20/08/9.4]***

## **10.0 PRESENTATION**

10.1 Matt McDougall provided a 30-minute presentation to Council on methods used for assessing the population size of mallards.

11.0 Council broke for a 15 min lunch break at 12.30pm. returning at 12.45pm.

## **12.0 FISH AND GAME NZ COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2022**

12.1 Arash Alaeinia had shared the FGNZ Communications Strategy 2022 within the Papers for Information and advised that this first draft of the strategy was presented for consultation. He provided Council with the opportunity to discuss or alternatively to email him with any comments or feedback they might wish to provide.

12.2 Some initial feedback included:

- Fish & Game appears to maintain relatively good communications with our existing licence holders through social media platforms and magazines however communications with the general public who know little of Fish & Game needed more attention.
- There was opportunity to improve public communications through the R3 programme and the proposed joint promotion with RotoruaNZ.
- Fish & Game also needed to educate current licence holders as many anglers and hunters are unaware of the role of Fish & Game and what goes on behind the scenes.
- Fish & Game is not particularly good at public relations and marketing. Seen as more of an administrative operation.
- Survey of licence holders conducted 5 years ago had shown that many licence holders saw Fish & Game as an organisation such as DOC or MPI.
- Engagement with licence holders has been lacking for a very long time and this document aims to improve that through various channels.

12.3 Arash Alaeinia added that it's easier to retain existing licence holders than going out and finding new people. Not everyone is a hunter or angler and most usually become interested through the connections that come from friends and family. He felt that this communications strategy ticks the boxes and gives us an opportunity to build on and needs to be coupled with a marketing strategy and what our ideas are going to be for licence sales, added value and experience.

## **13.0 LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS**

### **13.1 *Report from the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board.***

Arash Alaeinia advised that Sarah Cowley was unable to attend today's meeting and relayed her emailed report to Council. Sarah had also supplied a report from DOC which was distributed to Council. Cr Geoff Thomas had noted the report on the community groups undertaking pest control in the Rotorua district and informed Council of the Lake Tarawera community-based pest control programme. He said that volunteers were maintaining 430 bait stations for rats from the top of Spencer Road to end with the support of the Regional Council providing the baits and commented on the significant increase in birds in the area now as a result of the trapping programme.

### **13.2 *Report from the New Zealand Council***

Cr Debbie Oakley provided an update from the New Zealand Council (NZC).

- The June meeting was via Zoom, the primary topic was the confirmation of licence fees.

- The Implementation Strategy Group were due to provide an update shortly, they have met with the new Minister and DOC officials.
- The Remuneration Committee continues its work with Strategic Pay however there have been some delays due to Covid.
- Policy setting for consistency within the regions.
- Proposing to review the financial system including the licence revenue and grants and levies systems.
- Strategic Planning meeting is scheduled for September.
- Richard McIntyre has been appointed to the Chair of the dairy division of NZ Federated Farmers and has resigned from the Executive Committee but will retain his position on the New Zealand Council.

#### 14.0 PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION

**14.1 Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that pursuant to Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the public be excluded at 1.00pm from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, to approve draft meeting minutes of the Public Excluded session for the Council Meeting of 9 June 2022. [22/08/14.1]**

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 the 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
Confirmation of public excluded minutes from Council meetings on 9 December 2021 and 7 April 2022.	Good reason to withhold exists under section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on 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 that Act 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 ACT	SECTION	PLAIN ENGLISH REASON
Protect the privacy of natural persons.	Sec. 9(2)(a)	Information provided identifies a particular person or can easily be connected with a particular person.	Once the person to whom the information relates consents to its disclosure.
Protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence ... where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	Sec 9(2)(ba)(i)	Disclosing the information would jeopardise the relationship with the supplier because the supplier may no longer trust the Council to hold its information in confidence.	Not unless there is a public interest in disclosure of the specific information.

Note:

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.”

**14.2** *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council moves out of public excluded at 1.10 pm. [22/08/14.2]*

**14.3** *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that the public be re-admitted to the meeting at 1.11pm. [22/08/14.3]*

## **15.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**

15.1 Cr Ngahi Bidois suggested that Council take Pat Swifts letter as information at this point due to the item he raised being proposed for discussion at the October meeting of Council. However, he advised that Geoff Thomas’ communication via email related in part to that letter and due to Geoff being unavailable for the October meeting he wanted to provide Geoff with the opportunity to speak to his email now.

15.2 Cr Geoff Thomas acknowledged the comments submitted by Pat Swift and put forward a question he had thought about for a long time, that being “why do we have a closed season on the lakes at all”? If there was no scientific reason for closing the lakes for winter, why not leave them open? It was unlikely that there would be a huge number of people fishing over winter as the weather was often too poor for boating. Leaving the lakes open would mean there was no official opening, but Geoff suggested there was no reason why anglers could not still celebrate the opening of the new season. Geoff asked Council for their thoughts and if they supported the idea then the next step would be to progress to public submissions and discussions. Council was generally supportive of the proposal with the following comments noted:

- Council had amended the open dates for Lake Waikaremoana to all year around and initially there was an uproar, but it is now long forgotten, people still celebrate the 1 October start of season.
- No issues providing there is no scientific evidence against the proposal.
- Increased opportunity and potential to increase licence revenue.
- Resting of the lake over winter.
- Needs to go out for consultation and we need to listen to what anglers want and vote accordingly.
- Opening on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October has always provided a good marketing opportunity at the commencement of the fishing season.

Council requested Arash and his team prepare a discussion paper for consideration at the October meeting of Council.

15.3 Cr Mark Sceats asked for Council support to have staff and maybe a few Councillors host a public meeting one evening in mid to late September in Gisborne. The background for his request was to provide opportunity for licence holders and potentially new participants to come and see what Fish & Game is about and to provide some background to some of the decisions we make and to give Fish & Game a face in Gisborne and listen to their feedback and concerns. Council was supportive of Mark’s suggestion and Arash Alaeinia would liaise with him about suitable dates.

- 15.4 Council discussed the draft paper “Keeping Fish & Game Relevant” supplied in the papers for information. Arash Alaeinia felt that it was an excellent report written by the team in Wellington in consultation with the regions. He said the document highlighted all the valuable work that Fish & Game has achieved and want to continue to achieve, and the organisations strengths and opportunities. He acknowledged that there would always be areas for improvement which would not be dissimilar to other Government organisations in the environmental forefront. Arash advised that he had received staff feedback and invited Council to do the same and he would collate and forward to the New Zealand Council office. It was highlighted by some Councillors the work that Fish & Game does in advocating for freshwater and the costs of doing so was borne by licence holders, yet the outcomes would generally benefit all members of the public who use the resource and even those who don’t. They felt that we needed to promote sharing the costs with the likes of the Regional Councils and the DOC Taupo fisheries who manage Lake Taupo.
- 15.5 Cr Kevin Coutts requested that the draft meeting minutes be distributed to Council earlier than the current 5-6 week turnaround. Arash Alaeinia after consulting with Kate Thompson agreed that we will aim to have a draft available for review within 3-4 weeks of the meeting or sooner if time permitted.
- 15.6 Cr Kevin Coutts questioned the papers submitted to the Implementation Steering Group (ISG) on the proposed amalgamation options as the two papers presented very different views. Cr Ngahi Bidois advised that one paper was submitted from a governance perspective whilst the other was from management, and he felt it was important to provide both views as the more information that was made available the better. Kevin was surprised that the report written by Arash Alaeinia implied that Council did not listen to staff feedback regarding the proposed options and that the paper Ngahi supplied seemed to indicate that Council was against amalgamation with anyone due to the potential for iwi groups being unable to work with each other and questioned whether it was Te Arawa’s wish not to work with other iwi groups? Ngahi advised that the iwi relationships were only a small part of the document he presented, and he asked Arash to provide background to his paper. Arash advised that at the prior meeting Council was asked what its approach would be to the amalgamation proposals presented. He said Council agreed that in the first instance the preference would be to stand alone and secondly, if required, to amalgamate with the Hawke’s Bay region. When this information was relayed to the ISG they asked for the reasons for Council’s decisions. Arash therefore put together a pros and cons paper on the proposal to stand alone and highlighted to the ISG the previous feedback which had already been supplied by Andy Garrick and Kate Thompson with regard to the earlier options which were to merge with the Auckland/Waikato and Northland regions or with the Hawke’s Bay region. Arash also supplied Council with a report of his view of the process adding that although that was his view, he would be committed to carry out our Council’s wishes. Arash Alaeinia added the cultural aspects certainly needed consideration as in some areas there could be potential for issues and Cr Murray Ferris agreed but at a governance level it is more about tikanga as individuals will always have their personal views. Kevin asked whether a there was a timeline for a decision to be made? Cr Debbie Oakley advised that while there was a lot that could be completed now, the legislation would hold up the formal amalgamation of regions. Carmel Veitch confirmed that some regions could amalgamate prior to legislation going through as the legislation provided for up to 12 regions, however this would result in significant legal costs associated with changes to ownership of assets etc whereas these costs would not be incurred once the

legislation had been updated. Cr Alan Simmonds was concerned that our licence holders had not been part of this process. Cr Debbie Oakley advised that once the options were agreed on the paper would go to the Department of Conservation and once accepted would go out for public consultation and it was the New Zealand Council's aim to have this part of the process underway by December.

- 15.7 Cr Ngahi Bidois asked for closing comments of which many believed that it was extremely important to consult with our licence holders on the proposed amalgamations and the draft communications strategy was a great step in the right direction to informing our licence holders of who we are and what we do. Many long-standing licence holders are still unaware that Councillors are volunteers and Fish & Game does not receive any form of Government funding.

**16.0 MEETING CLOSED**

The meeting closed at 2pm with a karakia by Cr Ngahi Bidois.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ngahi Bidois', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

**Ngahi Bidois**  
**Chairman**



## SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS

### APOLOGIES

2.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that the apologies for the 197th meeting of the Eastern Region Fish and Game Council be sustained. [22/08/2.2]*

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (9 JUNE 2022)

3.1 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Debbie Oakley) that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record. [22/08/3.1]*

### OPERATIONAL REPORTS

8.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mark Sceats) that Council receives the Health and Safety report. [22/08/8.2]*

8.4 *Agreed (Alan Simmonds/Geoff Thomas) that Council receives the Finance Report and approves payments for May and June 2022 totalling \$330,976.66. [22/08/8.4]*

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### 2022-23 OPERATIONAL WORK PLAN

9.2 *Agreed (Murray Ferris/Mike Jarvie) that Council approves the proposed Operational Work Plan for the 2022-23 year. [22/08/9.2]*

9.4 *Agreed (Debbie Oakley/Geoff Thomas) that Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve expenditure during the year as set out in the Council approved Operational Work Plan and Budget. [20/08/9.4]*

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		connected with a particular person.	consents to its disclosure.
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