

*Minutes of a meeting of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee held in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge on Wednesday 14 September 2005 commencing at 9.00am.*

## **1 PRESENT**

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Councillor RJ Cooper - Chairperson

### **Members**

S Mackinder (Landowner representative), JB Mylchreest (Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust), T Roxburgh (Department of Conservation), R Smith (Parawera Marae) – from item 7, B Townend (Landowner representative)

### **In Attendance**

Strategic Planning & Development Manager (A McFarlane), Asset Manager Recreation (M Ward), Committee Secretary (C Plowright)

## **2 APOLOGIES**

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### **RESOLVED**

10/05/27

*That apologies for absence be received from Mayor Livingston, Councillor Flay and Peter Tairi.*

B Townend/J Mylchreest

## **3 LATE ITEMS**

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Nil.

## **4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING**

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File: 01-85-26

### **RESOLVED**

10/05/28

*That the order of the meeting be confirmed.*

J Mylchreest/T Roxburgh

## **5 VISITORS**

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Nil.

## **6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

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File: 01-85-26

**Minutes of meetings held on 8 June and 6 July 2005 were included in the agenda.**

**RESOLVED**

10/05/29

*That the minutes of the meetings of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee held on 8 June and 6 July 2005 be received.*

S Mackinder/J Mylchreest

[Rose Smith joined the meeting at 9.08am.]

## **7 MAUNGATAUTARI RESERVE COMMITTEE – OFFICER’S REPORT**

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File: 01-85-26

**Report of Strategic Planning and Development Manager dated 6 September 2005 was included in the agenda.**

**RESOLVED**

10/05/30

*That the report of the Strategic Planning and Development Manager dated 6 September 2005 be received.*

T Roxburgh/J Mylchreest

Strategic Planning and Development Manager, Andrew McFarlane, advised that the Policy Committee heard submissions on the draft Maungatautari Reserve Management Plan in July, which resulted in some minor amendments to the draft plan. He said the Iwi Consultative Committee was given the opportunity for a final chance to comment on the draft plan at its 7 September meeting and no major issues were raised. He said the draft plan would be presented to the 27 September Council meeting for approval and would then be sent to the Minister of Conservation for sign off.

Andrew said the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been approved by Council and is ready to be signed off by both parties. Jim Mylchreest said it would be preferable to leave the sign off until the end of September when David Wallace is available.

Andrew asked the Committee for its views on the use of a bylaw to manage activities within the reserve and the “buffer” between the perimeter of the reserve and the fence.

Andrew said it would be useful to include some new provisions in the District Plan, when it is reviewed in 2007, to recognise the Maungatautari Ecological Island and the activities that take place there but in the meantime those activities could be covered by a bylaw. Andrew suggested that a bylaw could include the exclusion of domestic and farm animals, limitations on access, fixing of charges, rangers and hunting and shooting.

### **Exclusion of Domestic and Farm Animals**

Andrew said the bylaw needed a means of excluding animals which is consistent with the Reserve Management Plan. Jim said the definition for animals should be all encompassing and a different definition is used in the Reserves Act. Andrew said he would check to ensure that the suggested wording is consistent with what has been used in the draft Reserve Management Plan.

### **Limitations on Access**

Andrew said it was questioned whether 24 hour free access should be available to all parts of the reserve or whether it should be restricted for security purposes.

Jim said this would not be totally controllable as there will be access points to the reserve from the back of most farms. He said MEIT has only ever talked about trying to control access to the enclosures but it might be advisable to place restrictions on night time access to the balance of the reserve, particularly after species such as Kakapo have been released. Tony Roxburgh said the Wildlife Act covers protected species and the key issue will be security of the site. He said he foresaw some difficulties MEIT might have with access by adjoining landowners and that a potential security breach is a real risk. He said that while the current landowners are trustworthy and supportive it might be different with future landowners.

Rose Smith emphasised the importance of discussing this issue with the Maori landowners adjoining the reserve and Tony said it should be explained to them that MEIT are not denying access to the reserve but trying to manage it. He said MEIT need to have confidence that all access points will be safeguarded. Jim suggested that some clear guidelines should be established to ensure gates are not left open and bags are checked before people gain entry to the reserve.

Chairperson Cooper said he thought 90% of visitors would access the reserve through the main entry points, where it would be easier to enforce security arrangements, and Selwyn Mackinder said he felt most people would visit the enclosures because of the attractions that will be on offer. Tony he said he still felt there should be periods when the gates are locked.

Jim said the project has been driven by the community and has the support of everyone involved. He said restricting public access would be a negative step and access issues should be resolved through discussion so that everyone is comfortable with the solution.

Andrew said a bylaw would only control access on the reserve and it was questioned how access arrangements on the land between the fence and reserve could be managed. It was felt the provisions of the Local Government Act could cover this area or it might be that MEIT has to have an agreement with each landowner. Andrew said it was likely a bylaw would be an interim measure as the only genuine enforceable mechanism would be through a change to the District Plan.

Andrew asked if Council would be held liable if visitors get lost on the maunga and whether this could be used as an argument for limiting night time access. Tony said provided the public are warned of that risk the onus would be with the individual.

### **Fixing of Charges**

Andrew said this would be necessary for MEIT to recover some funds to pay and maintain for the project's infrastructure. He said it would need to be made very clear what MEIT can and cannot charge for. Jim said he envisaged that MEIT would have the ability to make a nominal charge for entrance into the enclosures and concession type charges would be for the added value components such as guided tours. He said concessionaires would pay Council a concession and Council could then decide if it wishes to put that money back into the reserve. He said the entry fee would be the fence maintenance fee that could be set under the bylaw.

### **Rangers**

Andrew said Council would not be able to monitor the reserve on its own and, at some stage, would have to appoint rangers. He said they would be similar to Council's lake awards and would be reasonably simple to put in place.

### **Hunting and Shooting/Firearms**

Jim said it was unlikely this would be an issue as there will be no animals on the reserve to hunt. Andrew suggested that it could be a use of firearms issue to ensure there is no danger to the public or damage to the fence and other infrastructure.

Jim said it would be preferable to have the bylaw active by the time the fence is finished, particularly in terms of the fixing of charges. He said there were no other aspects that needed to be included in the bylaw. Andrew said he discuss the issue with Council's solicitor and bring a framework for the bylaw back to the next meeting.

Jim suggested that MEIT could circulate an explanatory newsletter on the bylaw to all landowners to make them aware it will be happening and to ask for feedback. Andrew asked that Council be kept advised on the newsletter. Rose spoke about the importance of involving Maori in the bylaw process and that it would be seen as a genuine partnership if it is developed with their support. Andrew said if the newsletter encouraged input from landowners it would help shape what is needed in the bylaw.

[The meeting adjourned at 10.00am and reconvened at 10.20am.]

## **8 PROGRESS REPORT FROM MAUNGATAUTARI ECOLOGICAL ISLAND TRUST**

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File: 01-85-26

**Progress Report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust dated 7 September 2005 was included in the agenda.**

### **RESOLVED**

1/05/30

*That the progress report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust dated 7 September 2005 be received.*

J Mylchreest/S Mackinder

Jim spoke about MEIT's continuing pest eradication programme, including a possible experiment being considered for the southern enclosure. He said the 8.5km western section of fence from the southern enclosure is nearing completion and good progress is also being made on the eastern side. He said progress with the fence would have to be slowed down if central government funding is not provided in the near future. He said strenuous efforts are underway to accelerate the decision making process but little is likely to happen until after the Election.

Jim said the four North Island Brown Kiwi released into the northern enclosure in July are doing well and have all put on weight. He said the birds are fit and healthy and are moving around the enclosure. He said two more birds are available from the Otorohanga Kiwi House and will be relocated to the southern enclosure once Maori protocols have been completed.

Asset Manager Recreation, Max Ward, said Council is continuing with track development and is looking to complete the metalling of all formed tracks, from the southern end, over the summer period. Jim said there needs to be provision for wheelchair access and MEIT would be talking to other groups, such as those representing the blind, to ensure the tracks are developed to meet their needs.

Tony advised that the Committee would have a new DOC representative as he is leaving their employment on 7 October and will be working for Council. Chairperson Cooper thanked Tony for the time he has devoted to the Committee and that his experience has been invaluable.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 11.08am.

**CONFIRMED**

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**CHAIRPERSON**

Next Meeting: 9.00 am Wednesday 2 November 2005 in the Committee Room, Cambridge