
WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

MINUTES 21 AUGUST 2008

Minutes of a meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge on 21 August 2008, commencing at 10.00am.

1 PRESENT

Roy Dench - Chairperson

His Worship the Mayor Alan Livingston - Te Pahu and Karamu District

David Findlay – Whitehall and Te Miro District

Laurie Hoverd - Kakepuku and Te Awamutu District

Pieter van Dongen - Koromatua and Rukuhia District

Martin Watson – Kaipaki and Cambridge District

Shannon Fergie – Department of Conservation

In Attendance

Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning, T Roxburgh; Committee Secretary, S King.

2 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED

That the apologies for non attendance from Kevin Christie, Bill Garland and Alan Hall are received.

The members agreed to receive the apologies.

3 LATE ITEMS

There were no late items.

4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING

RESOLVED

That the order of the meeting be confirmed

The members agreed to the order of the meeting, subject to Item 11 to be taken before Item 5.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of meeting held on 19 June 2008 were included in the agenda.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held on 19 June 2008 be received.

The members agreed to receive the minutes of previous meeting.

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6 WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL - OFFICER'S REPORT

Report of Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning dated 8 August 2008 was included in the agenda.

MATTERS ARISING

Water Quality

During a recent address to the Rotorua Lakes symposium, Prof. Eric Jeppesen commented on voluntary and government regulation changes to reduce the use of artificial fertilisers to improve water quality in Denmark. From 1980 to the mid 1990's, the government relied on landowner to voluntarily change land use practise to improve water quality, however this did not work. Once government regulation was implemented in the mid 1990's, the water quality has improved to levels not seen since the 1950's and 1960's and production has continued.

Project Manager, T Roxburgh has requested a copy of the presentation which will then be circulated to members.

Peat Lake Accord

The purchase of land by Council that is significant to secure peat lakes, and in particular Lake Ngaroto, was discussed. The Lake Ngaroto Recreation Reserve Management Plan includes provisions that encourage the purchase of land should the opportunity arise. However it was acknowledged that a reduction in the inflow of contaminants from the catchment will also be required to improve lake quality.

Maungatautari Plan Change

Mr Roxburgh advised that Council have approved for public notification, the Plan Change to acknowledge the contribution adjoining landowners have made to the restoration project by enabling Council to award subdivision entitlements. Mayor Livingston noted that all of the predator proof fence is on private land except for a short span. Land owners wishing to realise an entitlement, will be required to covenant the land offered on their title.

The access to the fence has raised some concern. This requires negotiation between MEIT and the landowners. Council's concern is that the perimeter fence remains secure and that MEIT and the landowner concerned must negotiate the terms and conditions of access to enable maintenance and repairs to the fence.

The planned ground based poison programme to support the aerial applications will commence shortly. The small Talon baits now being used appear to be more effective to removing mice. Impact on invertebrates was raised. Mr Roxburgh responded saying that research indicate that invertebrate are not as susceptible to the active anti-coagulant ingredient in Talon, than vertebrates.

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One point of concern is that Morepork and possibly the Australasian Harrier and NZ Falcon, may take live mice back to the nest inside the predator proof fence. This has potential to re-introduce mice.

RESOLVED

That the report be received.

The members agreed to receive the report.

7 MEMBERS REPORTS

This item enables members to bring up issues in relation to the organisation/district they represent on the Biodiversity Council.

7.1 Councillors Hazel Barnes and Bruce Thomas

Not present.

7.2 Mayor Alan Livingston

Not present.

7.3 Laurie Hoverd

Lake Ngaroto

The Lake Ngaroto catchment includes an area where 2200 plants will be planted. This initiative has been organised by the Lake Ngaroto Care Users Group with assistance from EW's Clean Streams programme.

It appears that a scout group have approached nurseries for plants for Lake Ngaroto.

Action: Project Manager, Mr Roxburgh will investigate.

Yarndley's Bush

Development on Yarndleys Farms was discussed. This included the construction of a large settlement pond and various landscape works. The owner intends to make a showcase of the property.

It was noted that the current provisions in the District Plan do not differentiate between large and small earthworks and the work was on the upper end of the scale. A land use consent has been issued for the works.

Mangapiko Stream

The Mangapiko Stream Care Group have received funds from Fonterra to plant the Mangapiko Stream margins. However, the current flooding has impeding progress. There has also been complaints from adjoining land owner of domestic waste floating down the stream.

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Project Halo

There have been many reports of Tui in Hamilton. This increase in bird abundance can be attributed to the Project Halo and various other pest control initiatives. This highlights that with pest control, bird populations will recover and move into urban areas.

Recycling

Farmers in the Waipa have been using the blue bins. Red Bins are available for all the items that can't be put into the blue bins. However, in rural areas they are only available if enough people are willing to use them. Due to the increase in scrap steel prices, there has been a significant reduction in the number of items being put into rubbish holes.

7.4 Ted Tauroa

Not present.

7.5 Bill Garland

Not present.

7.6 David Findlay

QE II Representative

There is a need for a higher profile of the QE II representative.

Action: Mr Roxburgh will contact QE II for information so that it is available for members and the public.

Storm Damage

There have been many slips noted in the District and a lot of storm damage. The Maungatautari predator fence has been affected by slips and fallen trees. There has been a lot of water coming down the mountainside. At Roto-o-rangi the large volumes of water are causing problems.

7.7 Martin Watson

MEIT Nursery

On a recent visit to the nursery and depot management by the Wetland Enhancement Team (WET), Mr Watson found the staff very helpful with competitively priced plants.

He advised that Pat Williams the WET representative will go out to farms and help work out which plants are required, along with the quantity.

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7.8 Pieter van Dongen

Natural Heritage Awards

Mr van Dongen thanked Mr Roxburgh for organising the Awards Evening.

7.9 Roy Dench

Presentation by Ag Research

Mr Dench apologised for the late addition to the agenda. He noted that the use of nitrogen is having an impact on soil life and that the project would be beneficial to protect soil diversity.

Mr Dench tabled a letter provided to the AgResearch scientists.

7.10 Alan Hall

Not present.

7.11 Kevin Christie

Not present.

7.12 Shannon Fergie

Lake Serpentine

The Department of Conservation regard Lake Serpentine as a high priority area. In two weeks, the Rudd control project will commence. This annual netting programme will be followed in October by the recovery project. Planting days are coming up in the next few months. Also, during spring weed control at the site will begin.

Minister of Conservation visited Lake Serpentine last week, and DOC and Mr Roxburgh updated the Minister on the history, current work and future aspirations of the site.

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Biodiversity Projects – Yarndley’s Bush

The issue of enlarging the Scenic Reserve by re-locating the fence around Yarndley’s Bush is continuing to be discussed with the landowners and the farm’s operation manager.

The owner has indicated he is keen to pursue two Environmental Protection Lots (EPL). One for the additional land and the second for re-aligning the drain which currently flows through the Kahikatea stand. An application for two allotments would need to go to the Regulatory Committee for approval.

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A small number of members were sought to progress the drainage project.

RESOLVED

That the Waipa Biodiversity Council form a sub-committee to progress the Yarndley's Bush proposal.

The members agreed to form a sub-committee. Mr Dench, Mr Hoverd and Mr van Dongen will form a sub-committee to progress the proposal.

9.2 Natural Heritage Awards

Members felt that the speaker was good and added breadth to the evening. However, at the next Awards Evening more emphasis would be placed on the people who won the awards. Background information as to why they received the award would be provided.

The evening had a good turnout, with environmentalists travelling to attend. The turnout was down slightly than expected. Members felt the categories have been well covered, but would like to see volunteers who have contributed in exceptional ways outside the criteria for the other categories acknowledged.

RESOLVED

That the Waipa Biodiversity Council express their gratitude to the Waipa District Council staff for the Natural Heritage Awards evening in a letter.

The members agreed to send their appreciation in a letter.

A small photo and article in Cambridge Edition on the Awards Evening has been printed. Members felt that there was a need to improve communication to the media. A report on the event would be useful for local papers and possibly the Waikato Times. It was noted that the Te Awamutu Courier will have the Awards Evening included shortly.

Information should have been in the Courier and the Edition on the Lake Serpentine visit by the Minister. The possibility of using a freelance journalist was discussed.

RESOLVED

That the Waipa Biodiversity Council recommend to the Waipa District Council that in light of the significance and achievements in natural environmental areas, that Council support be given to media promotion of the projects and activities that are taking place in the District.

The members agreed to recommend to Council.

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9.3 Lake Ngaroto Management Plan

Project Manager, Mr Roxburgh advised that Council have approved the Lake Ngaroto Management Plan for adoption, subject to the outcome from the settlement of claims from Waikato-Tainui lodged with the Treaty of Waitangi office.

9 ITEMS FOR NEXT WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING

Items for the next meeting to be provided to the secretary 14 days before each meeting. This can be done by writing to Waipa District Council (attention Sharyn King) or phoning her on 07 872 0030 or emailing her on sharyn.king@waipadc.govt.nz

10 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council will be held on 16 October 2008 in Committee Room 2, Waipa District Council, 101 Bank Street, Te Awamutu, commencing at 10.00am.

11 PRESENTATION BY KATHERINE TOZER AND SHARON WOODWARD

The focus of the presentation is to submit an application to the Farming Fund as a joint project.

The project would bring specialised people together and integrate their research. This would result in simple themes to advocate to the wider public.

The Waipa Biodiversity Council would be the umbrella organisation in the funding application and would distribute the money as it is required.

The members felt that this would be endorsing the project. Members were advised that Council are mindful of creating a precedent in situations such as these. The members considered whether the number of variables makes it difficult to result in something of practical value to the farming community.

The members felt that the NZ Landcare Trust would perhaps be a more appropriate umbrella organisation.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.58am.