
WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL

MINUTES 16 JULY 2009

Minutes of a meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge on Thursday 16 July 2009 commencing at 10.05am.

1 PRESENT

Roy Dench – Chairperson
Waipa District Councillors, Hazel Barnes and Bruce Thomas
Bill Garland – Rotorangi and Karapiro District
Laurie Hoverd - Kakepuku and Te Awamutu District
Pieter van Dongen - Koromatua and Rukuhia District
Martin Watson – Kaipaki and Cambridge District
Kevin Christie – EcoFX Pest Solution representative [from 10.08am]
John Gumbley – Department of Conservation

In attendance

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

2 APOLOGIES

AGREED

That the apologies for non attendance from His Worship the Mayor, A Livingston, D Findlay, A Hall & T Tauroa be received.

Thomas / Watson

3 LATE ITEMS

There were no late items.

4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING

AGREED

That the order of the meeting be confirmed.

Dench / Thomas

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of meeting held on 21 May 2009 were included in the agenda.

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council held on 21 May be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Garland / Thomas

Matters Arising –

Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning updated members on the National Wetlands Trust proposed Wetland Centre at Lake Serpentine.

K Christie joined the meeting at 10.08am.

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6 WAIPA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL - OFFICER'S REPORT

6.1 Heritage Awards Evening

Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning updated members on the nominations received and planning progress towards the presentation evening.

6.2 Peat Lakes

Lake Serpentine: He advised members that Council's Policy Committee had recommended to Council to purchase land to increase the buffer around North Lake of the Lake Serpentine wetland complex. Council would likely confirm this purchase on Tuesday 21 July.

Councillor Barnes joined the meeting from 10.17am.

Lake Maungakaware: Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning said that recent spraying of willows in the buffer zone would allow supplementary planting and noted the importance of the historical component of the lake and Maori settlement to the District.

Lake Ruatuna: He said that Council staff are working with landowners to secure money for development work and noted the expansion of the western margin to 50m parts of which will be retired and planted in appropriate trees and shrubs.

Lake Ngaroto: Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning updated members on the monitoring work and subsequent recommendations required prior to the review of the resource consent. He commented on land use practice and the balance between phytoplankton, zooplankton and fish species and how the control of pest fish could result in the reduction of algal blooms. In response to a question, he said that Council needed to drive a change in the parties represented on the Lake Users Group in order to engage landowners, and promote change in land use practices within the Lake catchment. Land use changes were required to reduce nutrient levels flowing into the lake.

In response to an additional question, he said that the only native fish in the lake would be eels, common bully and potentially smelt, although there were no recent confirmed sightings.

6.3 Maungatautari Restoration Project

Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning updated members on the commitment by both the regional and district councils to assist in the management of the restoration project and specifically the fence and mammalian pest control. He said that the contract for service agreement with MEIT was progressing and it was likely to be signed in the next week or two. Further, Council were expected to confirm the operative status of Plan Change 56 on Tuesday 21 July.

AGREED

That the report of Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning dated 7 July 2009 be received.

Dench / Garland

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7 MEMBERS REPORTS

7.1 Councillors Hazel Barnes and Bruce Thomas

Councillor Barnes commented on the Enviroschools programme and noted the inclusion of funding in Council's 10-year Plan. Councillor Thomas commented on local land care groups which have been working in a gully on his property.

7.2 Mayor Alan Livingston

Mayor Livingston was not in attendance.

7.3 Laurie Hoverd

Councillor Hoverd said that due to his recent holiday, he had nothing in particular to report.

7.4 Ted Tauroa

T Tauroa was not in attendance.

7.5 Bill Garland

B Garland commented on restorative planting and whether it was appropriate to consider species that would respond to global warming. If the temperature warms, as it has done before, species like puriri and kohekohe were likely to be more successful.

7.6 David Findlay

D Findlay was not in attendance.

7.7 Martin Watson

M Watson commented on the invasive weed 'Storks Bill' which can go unrecognised until well established. B Garland commented that this weed can be introduced via off-farm produced silage. M Watson said that once established the weed is hard to remove and becomes a major competitor with pasture grasses. He said that the weed had a variegated leaf and puts up a head with long seeds and purplish flowers. The weed starts flat on the ground but bulks up during the mature stage.

7.8 Pieter van Dongen

P van Dongen commented on the increase of the weed 'Pennyroyal' and the research to be undertaken by Catherine Tozer on sustainable "pasture-based" farming. He also commented on the very successful planting day at Lake Mangahia where 40 people took only 2 ½ hours to plant 1600 seedlings.

He then updated members on Jim Grayling, the new owner of the farm around Lake Millicich and the potential to conserve the pristine lake through mechanisms such as Environmental Protection Lots.

7.9 Roy Dench

R Dench commented on the recent purchase of native bush on the Hope property adjoining the Raglan Hamilton Roadway, by EW and the Native Forest Restoration Society.

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7.10 Alan Hall

A Hall was not in attendance.

7.11 Kevin Christie

K Christie commented on the retention of TB funding via regional rates and the HALO programme which now includes a larger area of Waipa. Both programme have considerable favourable outcomes for biodiversity.

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Biodiversity Projects – Yarndley’s Bush

Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning sought feedback from members that would be interested in the Biodiversity Council being formally involved in the project. Members debated the issue and felt that it would be appropriate for the Biodiversity Council to encourage broader community interest and involvement, beginning with the landowner.

ACTION POINT

PROJECT MANAGER HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT & RESERVES PLANNING TO LIAISE WITH MEMBERS AND THE LANDOWNER TO ARRANGE A MEETING, POSSIBLY AT THE NEXT MEETING WHICH COULD BE HELD AT THAT LOCATION.

8.2 ACRE Annual Field Trip Report

Members discussed the progress made since the field trip in 2007 and the work still to be progressed.

8.3 Securing Biodiversity at a District Level Report

Members considered the report recommendations. The apparent “mistrust” landowners appear to have of Council, is of concern. Members agreed that farmers talking to farmers is an effective method to promote conservation messages, and farmers that have been engaged in and support heritage work, should be used to encourage others. B Garland commented on the balance between public good and private interests. He stressed that ensuring a “partnership approach” in securing and managing heritage sites and features was very important, that of recent times, this has been neglected.

It is important that Council consider fully the implications of registering a protection mechanism on a property title if such mechanism are to be promoted to secure heritage features on private land. Landowners will (and have) become wary of such mechanisms because of potential to devalue land prices, plus without support, ongoing management responsibilities are onerous. In response to a question, Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning updated members on Council’s 221 Consent Notice. K Christie commented on the lack of an intermediate step between no protection and impacts of covenanting on future generations.

Members then discussed the recommendations in the report and Project Manager Heritage Development & Reserves Planning encouraged feedback from members on an individual basis should that be felt necessary.

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8.4 Objectives of the Waipa Biodiversity Council

R Dench supported the introduction of a term for the Chair and members are to consider the discussion paper in preparation for further discussion at the September meeting.

M Watson offered to move to a role similar to K Christie in light of his specialist knowledge regarding weeds which, would allow a new representative for the Cambridge / Kaipaki area. This will also be discussed further at the September meeting.

10 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 by phone on 07 872 0030 or by email at sharyn.king@waipadc.govt.nz

11 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Waipa Biodiversity Council will be held on 20 August 2009 in the Council Chambers, Waipa District Council, 101 Bank Street, Te Awamutu commencing at 10am.

Please note that this will be a joint meeting with the Waipa Heritage Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.18pm.

Completed and Dispatched: 17 July 2009.