

MINUTES
NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION MEETING
1:30pm, 04 August 2014
Revera House
Thorndon

Board Members: J Forbes (Chair), M Bayfield, P Brown, P Mudford, and B Stephenson.

In attendance: M Neeson (Chief Executive), R Cullinane (Operations Manager) and D Knott (Corporate Services Manager).

Opening Comments

The Chair welcomed attendees and invited Peter Brown to open the meeting with a karakia.

1. Apologies

An apology was received from M Barnett.

Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts advised.

Confirm Agenda

The board confirmed the Agenda for the meeting.

2. Confirm Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held in Greymouth on 19 May 2014 were circulated and read. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Action: The Board

- a) **confirmed** the minutes of the meeting of 19 May 2014 as being a true and correct record of the Meeting.

Moved B Stephenson **Seconded** M Bayfield **Carried**

3. Risk management

The board reviewed the risk management report.

M Neeson reported that KPMG had concluded their IT Risk Assessment in June, and that the report would be presented to the September meeting. M Neeson advised the meeting that this was an important report as the Commission relied entirely on third parties for its information technology requirements. M Bayfield requested that, having read the report, the Board may wish to have KPMG attend a Board Meeting to provide further explanation of their findings.

M Neeson advised that Risk 2: competing and multiple operational priorities was becoming an increasing concern for management and that additional human resources were being contemplated to assist with the increasing workloads.

M Neeson also reported that, with the upcoming election on 20 September, the Commission was closely following the State Services Commission's Guidance for the 2014 Election Period.

Action: The Board:

- a) **discussed** the risk report for August 2014; and
- b) **noted** that the schedule of risks has yet to be revised and an updated list will be used for the November report.

Moved P Brown **Seconded** P Mudford **Carried**

4. Draft Annual Report 2013-2014

The board reviewed the draft annual report 2013-2014, and associated board paper.

The general reaction by board members was that the draft report was more extensive than required. The board requested that the summary of achievements over the last five years be removed, but included on the website publications page. The board requested that management review the draft with a view of reducing its length whilst retaining a concise and informative review of the year, and the Commission's performance against its service performance measures.

M Neeson advised that, as the Annual Report will be required for Audit New Zealand's review in early September, and that changes would be circulated to board members for comment in the next two weeks. J Forbes requested that M Bayfield be the board's contact regarding any changes to the draft Annual Report. M Neeson also advised the board that they will be required to sign the Annual Report, Statement of Responsibility and financial statements at the September Board Meeting.

In response to a question from P Brown regarding the number of unresolved cases, R Cullinane responded that the general nature of enquires was becoming more complex. This was noted in the discussion regarding Agenda Item 2, as additional resources are now required to deal with some of this workload.

P Mudford suggested that the inclusion of a separate heading to bring together the Commission's activities with various cultural groups be considered rather than having it dispersed throughout the report.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** in principle the Commission's draft Annual Report for the period ending 30 June 2014;
- b) **noted** that additional material will be added over the next 4 weeks and following advice from the auditors and that editing will continue, and
- c) **noted** that the Board will be asked to approve the final report in September, 2014.

Moved P Mudford **Seconded** P Brown **Carried**

5. Recognising contributions to walking access

A report on recognising contributions to walking access was reviewed by the board.

M Neeson reported that nominations had been sought from across the community, and not just from Commission sources.

J Forbes thanked management for bringing nominations for recognition to the board; and expressed a view that the Commission should widely acknowledge contributions to walking access and that a letter from the Chair could be an appropriate acknowledgment in many cases.

M Bayfield suggested that the Commission should make presentations in appropriate fora so that the Commission could increase its awareness with its target audience.

Board members discussed the nominations and agreed that the following be recognised for their contributions to walking access: John Acland, Tasman District Council and the Te Araroa Trust. M Neeson undertook to liaise further with the board regarding presentation of award certificates.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** to award certificates to recognise the leadership, achievements and contributions of people and organisations who have or are working to enhance and strengthen walking access heritage, and
- b) **selected** John Acland, Tasman District Council and the Te Araroa Trust to receive awards.

Moved B Stephenson **Seconded** M Bayfield **Carried**

6. **Aspinall scholarship**

The board reviewed a paper on the proposed Aspinall Scholarship.

J Forbes thanked B Stephenson for the paper presented to the May board meeting.

Board members agreed that eligibility should not be limited to honours or postgraduate students but should have a wider pool of applicants, and that the value of the scholarship be set at \$5,000. Applications for the scholarship should be held annually for an initial period of three years, with a review thereafter.

M Neeson was requested to draft a framework for when and how applications would be sought, and from whom, what information would be required to support an application, how applications would be judged, and how payment would be made to the successful applicant.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** to create a scholarship to honour the memory of John Aspinall and the Aspinall family and encourage academic interest in access;
- b) **approved** the drafting of “regulations” based on this paper.

Moved P Brown **Seconded** B Stephenson **Carried**

7. **Glencoe and Coronet Peak Stations - Legal advice and public access mechanisms**

The board reviewed a paper on the legal advice and public access mechanisms for the Glencoe and Coronet Stations.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the progress being made to implement the walking access conditions in respect of Glencoe and Coronet Peak Stations;
- b) **noted** the key points made in the Crown Law Office advice relating to these cases;
- c) **noted** that a review may be needed concerning the range, nature and application of legal mechanisms that may be available to give effect to certain and enduring walking access, and
- d) **noted** the appended table of legal mechanisms to provide for public access.

Moved B Stephenson **Seconded** M Bayfield **Carried**

8. Enhanced Access Fund (EAF) & 2014 round (tranche 1)

The board reviewed a paper on the Enhanced Access Fund.

D Knott reported that the balance of the Enhanced Access Fund was less than the amount of monies held in EAF term investments. This had arisen because interest earned on EAF investments was largely compounded whereas grant payments were being made from the general fund bank account. On 12 August 2014, there is an EAF term investment maturing and a portion of this could be applied to reimbursing the general fund for the variance as at 30 June 2014.

D Knott also reported that there were 11 applications for grants as at the closing date for 2014 tranche 1 applications. A panel, consisting of Board members M Bayfield and P Mudford and Commission employees R Cullinane and D Knott, had reviewed all applications and recommended two for board consideration.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the transfer of \$84,272.91 from the EAF to General Funds;
- b) **approved** reinvestment of surplus EAF funds;
- c) **approved** funding for the successful applications, totalling \$16,000 (GST inclusive);
- d) **agreed** that the chief executive advises each applicant of the Board's decision and invites successful applicants to confirm agreement to any conditions set by the Board;
- e) **directed** the chief executive to consider appropriate timing of the release of decisions and participation by interested Board members and regional field advisors in local announcements, and
- f) **agreed** that the Chairman write to the Minister for Primary Industries advising him of the decisions.

Moved M Bayfield **Seconded** B Stephenson **Carried**

9. Quarterly report: Fourth Quarter 2013-2014

The board discussed the Quarterly report for the period ended 30 June 2014.

M Neeson reported that the notable achievements for the quarter included: the publishing of the 2014-2018 Statement of Intent and Statement of Performance Expectations; publishing of the case notes on the corporate website; an external assessment of the Commission's IT environment; major enhancements to the Both Sides of the Fence website; preparation for an upgrade to the WAMS server software; and a financial surplus for the year.

M Neeson also reported that management were concerned with the number of open cases (267) against a target of eighty. Greater effort will be applied to ensuring that this measure is managed down, and this may include the employment of additional human resources.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's Quarterly Report for the period ending 30 June 2014.

Moved B Stephenson **Seconded** J Forbes **Carried**

10. Chief executive's report

The board discussed the chief executive's report.

M Neeson reported that substantial effort had been applied to the proposed walkways on Coronet Peak, and arrangements with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust regarding controlling authority responsibilities.

The Commission had commenced preparation of a post-election briefing (PEB), a copy of which had been provided with the board papers. M Neeson invited board members to provide feedback so that the final version will reflect the Board's comments. With the election on Saturday 20 September, the PEB will be completed before the September board meeting scheduled for 29 September.

M Neeson advised the board that he had commenced development of a social media strategy. A draft strategy was provided with the board papers. M Neeson invited board comment and advised that a social media policy would be presented to the September board meeting.

R Cullinane advised that the case library on the website was already attracting interest and he was aware of cases being circulated amongst various interest groups.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the Chief Executive's report for August 2014, particularly items in paragraphs 2, 5 and 6; and
- b) **agreed** to appoint the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust to be the controlling authority of proposed walkways for Coronet and Glencoe Crown pastoral leases should the walking access easements progress.
- c) **agreed** that the September board meeting would be held in Wellington on Monday 29 September 2014, and that a stakeholder forum would not be held at this time due to the pending general election.

Moved M Bayfield **Seconded** P Brown **Carried**

11. Operations quarterly report: 1 April to 30 June 2014

The board discussed the operations report for the quarter ending 30 June 2014.

R Cullinane reported that the operations team were still busy, and although general enquiries were trending downward Overseas Investment Act cases were increasing. A trend was emerging with recent enquiries being more complex and taking longer to complete. As at 30 June, there were 41 cases on hold and 226 cases in progress.

The board discussed four representative cases which raised matters of principle or where board direction was sought. Board members noted the issues and encouraged management to continue to bring relevant cases to their attention, as required.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the operations quarterly report for the period 1 April to 30 June 2014;
- b) **noted** that the Statement of Intent sub-output of 80 Active cases will not be achieved, that this will be explained in the annual report;
- c) **noted** that resources are increasingly being consumed by Overseas Investment Act applications, and
- d) **discussed** identified cases and their implications for the Commission's work.

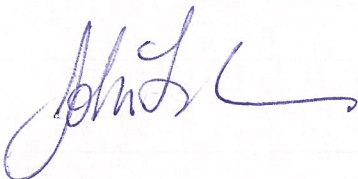
Moved P Mudford **Seconded** M Bayfield **Carried**

12. Schedule of Significant Correspondence

Action: The Board noted the schedule of significant correspondence.

The Chair invited Peter Brown to conclude the meeting with a karakia.

Meeting closed 5:05pm



J Forbes
Chairperson

Notes

1. Prior to the commencement of the board meeting, board members met to informally discuss the chief executive's performance review process.

