

MINUTES

NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION MEETING

9:30am, 1 August 2011

NZWAC Boardroom, Revera House

WELLINGTON

Board Members: J Forbes (Chair), P Brown, J Aspinall, M Bayfield and M Barnett.

In attendance: M Neeson (Chief Executive), H Barker (Corporate Services Manager), R Cullinane (Operations Manager); Debbie Parker (MAF) from 11:50am.

Opening Comments

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

1. Apologies

B Stephenson

Conflict of Interest Register

Prior to the board meeting the board held a workshop on the mapping system and the links with cycle trails and Te Araroa Trust during which M Barnett declared a possible conflict of interest due to his business interests in certain cycle trails.

Confirm Agenda

The Board confirmed the agenda for the meeting.

2. Declarations of interest

The chair reminded members that their annual declarations of interest were overdue and to send them to the chief executive as quickly as possible.

3. Chief executive performance review

The Board resolved to go into committee to discuss the chief executive's performance.

Moved John Forbes **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

The board came out of committee and resolved that the matters agreed in committee be confirmed.

Moved Maggie Bayfield **Seconded** John Forbes **Carried**

4. Draft Annual Report 2010-2011

The board discussed the draft annual report and made several amendments. The chairman congratulated the staff on the quality of the report. As part of that discussion

the board reviewed questions from Audit NZ on fraud for governing bodies and senior management and agreed a response.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the Commission's draft Annual Report for the period ending 30 June 2011;
- b) **noted** that additional material may be added following advice from the auditors and staff review and that the text is subject to further editing; and

Moved Peter Brown **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

- c) **agreed** on a response to questions from Audit NZ on fraud for governing bodies and senior management.

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Mike Barnett **Carried**

5. **Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS): Stage 2 - business case**

The Board considered a proposed business case and project plan for further enhancing of the WAMS. It noted that the **vision** for the WAMS, and in particular the TAPS layer (when implemented), is that the system is the preferred entry point for outdoor recreation access information for all New Zealand and complements the information, messaging and IT platforms of other agencies and groups.

The board also noted the project **goals** for WAMS 2. The system is increasingly used by external partners whose work processes, data and information is enabled in or accessible from WAMS. WAMS becomes a platform and/or container for selected partners, and increased usage and awareness of WAMS produces a strong base for future revenue and development consistent with the objectives of the Commission.

The board was also advised that a list of enhancements was being compiled for WAMS 3 and the board would need to consider how best to fund further development.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the business case for WAMS 2; and
- b) **agreed** to fund the resourcing of the WAMS 2 up to \$250,000.

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Peter Brown **Carried**

6. **Proposed compliance and enforcement policy**

The board considered a paper which reported on the results of consultation with the main controlling authorities on the operational implications of draft guidelines for managing compliance and enforcement for gazetted walkways. The Department of Conservation and Fish and Game NZ are the primary enforcement authorities and support the guidelines. The department's main concern is the need for an efficient reporting process and Fish and Game NZ offered to work with our regional field

advisors, the department and the Police. The draft guidelines had also been discussed with the Police

The chief executive commented that the topic had been considered by the board on several occasions and the guidelines are a concise and practical approach to an issue in which there were no recorded enforcement problems since walkways were created in 1975.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the guidelines for managing compliance and enforcement for gazetted walkways; and
- b) **noted** that the four local authorities that administer walkways will be advised of the guidelines and a low-level monitoring relationship established with them.

Moved Maggie Bayfield **Seconded** Mike Barnett **Carried**

7. **Baseline survey**

The Board discussed and approved the release of the results of a public on-line survey by Colmar Brunton about the Commission and its work undertaken in February and March 2011. The purpose of the survey was to inform the Statement of Intent process in particular, setting baselines and performance measures, and to inform the implementation of the Commission's communications strategy.

The board noted that the survey will be valuable to researchers and organisations and agencies interested in outdoor recreation and rural/urban interaction and views.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that the data in a baseline survey undertaken by Colmar Brunton about the NZ Walking Access Commission has been used to establish baseline measures for the Commission's 2011-2016 Statement of Intent and will inform the implementation of Commission's communication programme;
- b) **noted** that the survey methodology could be refined to improve the value of future surveys;
- c) **agreed** to repeat the survey in early 2013 and thereafter at 2-yearly intervals;
- d) **agreed** that the Chairman advises the Minister of Agriculture of the results of the survey; and
- e) **agreed** that the survey be published on the Commission's website with an explanatory statement covering its purpose and limitations.

Moved Maggie Bayfield **Seconded** John Aspinall **Carried**

8. **"Extraordinary" application to the Enhanced Access Fund**

The Board discussed a paper and an "out of time" application to the Enhanced Access Fund (EAF) by the Te Araroa Wellington Trust (TAWT) for \$32,027.50 (\$27,850

excluding GST). The funding would assist the TAWT to prepare applications for planning and resource consents for the Paekakariki to Pukerua Bay walkway now that it has agreement in principle from OnTrack (now KiwiRail) to construct the trail on land owned by the company.

The board was advised that the external evaluation panel considered the application and the panel considered that it compared very favourably to the earlier applications received in the 2011 EAF round.

The board noted the reasons for the late application. The Board was concerned particularly with the precedent the application might create and, after considerable discussion, agreed to fund the project. It concluded that the application was linked clearly to an earlier (2010) application which was declined and that the applicants had completed actions needed before the board could consider the project further. The board also noted that timing was critical to secure funding from a national fund held by Te Araroa Trust for the balance of the project.

The board approved the application but made it clear that doing so was because of very exceptional circumstances.

The application prompted a discussion on whether the Commission should focus on easements and obtaining legal access rather than track building as track building may not be sustainable in the long term. The board agreed to review the objectives and criteria of the EAF at a workshop in November.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** an out of time application by the Te Araroa Wellington Trust for funding from the Enhanced Access Fund of \$32,027.50 (\$27,850 excluding GST) for design phases 1 and 2 and for the preparation of planning and resource consents for the proposed Paekakariki to Pukerua Bay Escarpment Walkway.

Moved Maggie Bayfield **Seconded** Peter Brown **Carried**

9. **Confirm minutes**

Action: The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 30 May 2011 as being a true and correct record.

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

10. **Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) user survey**

The Board noted and discussed a paper on the results of an online survey of the WAMS beta-testers conducted in May 2011. The survey was undertaken by Q and A Research Ltd. The objectives of the survey were to gauge user satisfaction and to develop baseline performance and impact measures for reporting purposes. The WAMS was rated very highly by respondents. The main suggested improvements were to provide more detailed and accurate public access information, and to make WAMS faster and more user friendly.

The board noted that the responses were used to select the enhancements in WAMS 2.

The board asked the chief executive to promote the WAMS in appropriate media.

R Cullinane noted that the WAMS is not a “standalone” system; the system is integral to fulfilling the Commission’s functions and that the Commission’s staff are needed to interpret the data it holds – people like working with the “warm bodies” behind the software.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the results of an independent survey of the WAMS beta-testers conducted in May 2011.

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Peter Brown **Carried**

11. Quarterly report - 4th quarter

The board noted the Commission’s quarterly report for the period to 30 June 2011 as sent to the Minister of Agriculture. The chief executive commented that while the achievements were for the quarter, the financial outcome was cumulative. H Barker advised that the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) asked that the financials be for the quarter.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission’s Quarterly Report for the period ending 30 June 2011.

Moved Mike Barnett **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

12. Chief executive’s report (August 2011)

The chief executive reported verbally on progress with researching the legal status of Acheron Road, relationship development with SPARC, local government, the NZ Community Trust and others and access issues in the Central North Island forests region.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Chief Executive’s report for August 2011.

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

13. Access in the Central North Island Forests

This item was covered under the CE’s oral report.

14. Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS): Performance – 23 December 2010 to 30 July 2011

The chairman and chief executive briefed the board on the release of the WAMS at a media briefing on 21 July. The board discussed the impact of the event and noted the increase in use of the site (almost double) and that the perceived risks of WAMS had been well managed and had not eventuated. The board discussed possible avenues for further promotion of the WAMS.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the summary of the Walking Access Mapping System technical performance for the period 23 December 2010 to 30 July 2011.

Moved Mike Barnett **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

15. **Regional field advisors: review**

The board discussed a paper on performance and activities of the Commission's regional field advisors (RFA) from September 2010 to 30 June 2011 and the management priorities for 2011-2012. The report also covered stakeholders' attitudes towards the Commission and RFAs.

The chairman thanked the staff for a very useful report and asked that the board receive a quarterly report in a similar style. The chief executive commented that the establishment of the RFA network had been very successful and is helping to cement in recognition of the Commission. The Board discussed other relationships that the RFA's could develop and noted that currently, the RFA's priority was to respond to immediate pressures.

M Barnett suggested that the Commission prepare a booklet/guidelines on access negotiations for the RFAs and others.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the review of regional field advisor performance and activities, stakeholders' attitudes towards the Commission and RFAs, and the management priorities for 2011/12; and
- b) **requested** a quarterly report of regional field advisor performance and activities

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Peter Brown **Carried**

16. **Overseas Investment Act (caveats)**

The Board noted progress on a report on the scope for walking access conditions in Overseas Investments Act approvals to be protected by the lodging of caveats over land that is intended to be used for a walkway. The board considered whether it would be desirable and feasible for all Overseas Investment Act applications to be reviewed by the Commission due to other agencies not always recognising the access issues and opportunities in specific applications.

The chief executive advised that he would discuss the process with the Overseas Investment Office.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** a progress report on the scope for walking access conditions in Overseas Investments Act approvals to be protected by the lodging of caveats over land that is intended to be used for a walkway.

Moved Peter Brown **Seconded** Mike Barnett **Carried**

17. Schedule of Significant Correspondence

Items of significant correspondence were noted and three additional items were tabled: letter's to Hon Carter – re NZ Walking Access Commission Baseline Survey and re Third Party Revenue and Working with Other Agencies; and letter from SPARC about access and the outdoor recreation strategy.

Action: The Board received the schedule of significant correspondence

Moved John Aspinall **Seconded** Maggie Bayfield **Carried**

The Chair commended the staff on the quality of information the Board is receiving and recommended that the board receive, as appropriate and feasible, email copies of larger appended documents where the appended documents were not essential to a paper.

Mr Aspinall asked that the board review the priority for developing access-related material for schools and whether to include this work in the next Statement of Intent. The chief executive said this would be included in a strategic planning workshop later in the year.

The meeting closed at 1pm.



J Forbes
Chairperson
01/08/11

