

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

**OF THE HEARINGS COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THIRD FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE WAITAKI DISTRICT  
COUNCIL , 20 THAMES STREET, OAMARU  
ON MONDAY, 12 MAY 2025 AT 10:46 AM UNDER THE RESERVES ACT**

**PRESENT:** Member Courtney Linwood, Member Jim Thomson, Member Jim Hopkins,  
Mayor Gary Kircher

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cr John McCone  
Heather McGregor (Waihemo Community Board Chairperson)  
Roger Cook (Heritage, Environment and Regulatory Group Manager)  
Lindsay Hyde (Recreation Specialist)  
Arlene Goss (Minutes)

**IN ATTENDANCE FOR SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS:**

The following submitters expressed a wish to speak in person at the hearing:

	Name	In person	Zoom
10.55am	Nicky & Greg Oliver	x	
11.00am	Ngaire Joyce	x	
11.05am	Neville Raymond Quested	x	
11.10am	Peter Lobb	x	
11.15am	Megan Curry		x
11.20am	Taranaki Smith	x	
11.25am	Puketapu Community Trust	x	
11.35am	Maria Jean Barta	x	
11.40am	Malcolm Charles Ross Mackay	x	
11.45am	Henrik Moller		x
11.50am	Robin Quigg		x
11.55am	Michael James Thorsen		x
12.00pm	Jamie Hickling		x

**MEETING OPEN**

THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING OPEN AT **10.46AM** AND WELCOMED EVERYONE PRESENT.

THIS MEETING WAS LIVE-STREAMED AND A RECORDING CAN BE VIEWED AT:  
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/LIVE/YGTG1BNKLOS?SI=Q9YIU2MW3SKZR-K](https://www.youtube.com/live/YGTG1BNKLOS?SI=Q9YIU2MW3SKZR-K)

## 1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3 REPORTS

### 3.1 WAIHEMO RECREATION RESERVE GRAZING LICENCE

The Hearings Committee is not delegated by Council to make decisions under the Reserves Act 1977. Therefore, the objective of this hearing is for the committee to listen to submissions and make recommendations to a future meeting of the full Council - who will make the final decision.

#### **RESOLVED HC 2025/001**

Moved: Member Jim Hopkins

Seconded: Member Courtney Linwood

That the Hearings Committee:

1. Receives the written and verbal submissions on the issuing of a grazing licence for the Waihemo Recreation Reserve.
2. Makes recommendations to Council on the issue of a grazing licence for the Waihemo Recreation Reserve.

#### **CARRIED**

Council advertised its intent in issuing a grazing licence for part of the Waihemo Recreation Reserve. This was publicly notified, which allows the community to have its say on this issue.

Council received 112 submissions during the consultation period. Of the submissions, 55 were for grazing and 55 were against, with 2 submitters not providing any view on this question. 15 of the submitters wish to speak to their submission at the hearing.

Recreation manager Lindsay Hyde introduced his report and provided background to the issues. He noted common themes that arose from the submission process.

Cr Thompson asked for clarification regarding a council decision to renew part of the lease. This was in response to a recommendation from the Waihemo Community Board.

Cr Hopkins asked for clarification regarding the size of the reserve, and the historical situation regarding grazing this reserve, including the introduction of deer in about 2007. The current grazing was on a month-by-month basis until a decision was made.

Cr Hopkins asked about references in some submissions to the need to build a fence. He asked who would pay for this? There were still discussions to be held, subject to the final decisions that would be made.

The chairman invited the first submitter, Nicky Oliver, to speak. She spoke on behalf of her family as the grazers of the land, in support of continuing the grazing licence. Questions were asked about the management of the land, including a situation when a dozer was on the land and the reasons for this.

Ngairé Joyce spoke in support of continuing the grazing licence. She objected to a project to restore the land due to the burden on volunteers and the costs involved.

Neville Quested spoke in support. He said there were already places for recreation in the area. He said fencing costs, noxious weed control, loss of income from the lease and forming a walking track would

place an undue burden on the ratepayers. He suggested other areas that he believed would be more suitable.

The Mayor asked for a site visit to be arranged for elected members.

Cr Hopkins asked if it was correct that staff had spent \$40,000 on consultants, as a submitter had asserted. Mr Hyde said these costs were incurred regarding work on the Puketapu walking track to the summit and were not related to the Waihemo Recreation Reserve. There was also a question about weed control. Mrs Oliver handed a printed copy of an email to the mayor regarding the incurred costs.

Submitter Peter Lobb had a speaking slot but was not in attendance. He sent some questions by email which are attached these minutes. Mr Hyde responded by email to Mr Lobb.

Megan Curry attended on Zoom and summarised her submission. Cr Hopkins asked for clarification on access to the reserve and tracks, and this was provided.

Taranaki Smith asked why council was not protecting biodiversity on land it owns, and other questions related to the council and community board's actions (or lack of actions). He suggested that Waihemo secede from the Waitaki District. Cr Hopkins gave the Community Board chair a chance to respond to allegations, but she deferred to Cr Thompson. He responded that allegations against the board were subjective rather than objective.

Mr Smith complained about not receiving a response to a request for information and a letter to the Mayor. The Mayor responded to assertions made by Mr Smith.

Hamish McFarlane from the Puketapu Community Trust came to the table and spoke against the issuing of the grazing licence. He called for the reserve to be used for the purpose it was gazetted, which was as a recreation reserve. He showed photos of the damage to seedlings in the reserve, caused by grazing.

He said the trust had received \$50,000 from the ORC Eco Fund, but the delay in the process had prevented them from going out for further funding.

Further questions included issues such as fire risk, the need for a reserve management plan, and the funds available to the trust.

Maria Barta spoke as the secretary of the Puketapu Community Trust. She called for the reserve to be open to public access. Questions were asked about whether the trust could find the volunteers and funding to manage the reserve long term.

Malcolm Mackay gave a power point presentation and circulated some photos. He argued that planting tree lucerne would prevent the area becoming weedy. He said this would create a canopy allowing natives to grow.

Henrik Moller joined the hearing on Teams at 12.20pm. He spoke in support of establishing a forest on the site and answered questions regarding the establishment of biodiversity on the land. He felt there was very low risk that this project could not succeed.

Robin Quigg joined the hearing on Zoom and said she was available for questions. Cr Thompson asked about the cultural importance of Puketapu to Runanga and whether they should contribute to the reforestation of the reserve. Further discussion took place with Ms Quigg.

*The Mayor apologised and left the hearing at 12.31pm to attend a Community Board meeting.*

Michael Thorsen joined the meeting by Zoom. He said he had not been able to find a restoration plan and there was not enough information available to the public to make an informed decision. He supported using the land for recreation of the public, which was the reason why it was gazetted. He did not support a staged approach.

Cr Hopkins asked about the existence of a restoration plan. Mr Hyde said this was a biodiversity plan that went to the Community Board last year. Mr Hyde offered to circulate this plan to the submitters and make it available on the website.

The chair asked to have this plan available before deliberations started at 4pm tomorrow.

Submitter Jamie Hickling had a speaking slot but was not in attendance.

#### Attachments

- 1 20250512 Attachment to Minutes Hearings Committee Nicky Oliver
- 2 20250512 Attachment to Minutes Hearings Committee Hamish McFarlane
- 3 20250512 Attachment to Minutes Hearings Committee Malcolm Mackay
- 4 20250512 Attachment to Minutes Hearings Committee Maria Barta
- 5 20250512 Attachment to Minutes Hearings Committee Taranaki Smith

## 4 MEETING ADJOURNED

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and declared the meeting adjourned at 12.46pm. Deliberations will take place on Tuesday, May 13, at 4pm. He said that although the committee would make recommendations, the decision would ultimately sit with full council.

## 5 MEETING RECONVENED

The meeting reconvened at 4pm on Tuesday, May 13, in the council chamber.

Those present were: Cr Hopkins (Chair), Cr Thomson, Cr McCone, Cr Linwood, Roger Cook, Lindsay Hyde, Arlene Goss.

#### APOLOGY

Moved: Member Jim Hopkins  
Seconded: Member Jim Thomson

That the apology received from Mayor Gary Kircher be accepted.

**CARRIED**

#### RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jim Thomson  
Seconded: Cr Jim Hopkins

That the meeting of the Hearings Committee moves into public excluded for deliberations to take place.

The general subject matter of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48 for the passing of this resolution
<b>Reserves Act Hearing – Waihemo Recreation Reserve Application for Grazing Licence</b>	s7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons	s48(1)(a)(i) - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins  
Seconded: Cr Jim Thomson

That the meeting of the Hearings Committee moves back into public session and the recommendations to Council be made part of the public record.

**CARRIED**

**RESOLVED HC 2025/002**

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins  
Seconded: Cr Courtney Linwood

That the Hearings Committee recommends to Council:

1. That the progressive rehabilitation of the Puketapu/Waihemo Recreation Reserve, as proposed by the Waihemo Community Board, proceeds.
2. That the current grazing licence to occupy be reduced by approximately 20 hectares as agreed with the licensee to assist with the progressive rehabilitation of the reserve.
3. That Council delegates to the Chief Executive the authority to negotiate and undertake necessary actions for the renegotiation of the licence to occupy.

**CARRIED**

**Attachments**

- 1 20250512 Hearings Committee Attachment to Minutes - Questions from Peter Lobb

**6 MEETING CLOSED**

The meeting closed at 4.49pm.