

Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting
of the
New Zealand Limnological Society Inc.
(Trading as New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society)
Held at Silverstream, Lower Hutt
Thursday 26 November 2015

These minutes were approved and confirmed as a true record at the 2016 AGM held in Invercargill on 6 December 2016 (Motion: Gerry Closs; seconded: Natasha Petrove)

The Annual General Meeting commenced at 12:37 pm and was chaired by Marc Schallenberg, President.

Present: Marc Schallenberg, President; Phil Jellyman, acting Secretary-Treasurer, and 57 members.

- 1. Apologies** – Vivienne Cassie-Cooper, Jane Kitson, Janine Wech
- 2. Minutes of the 47th AGM circulated**

Matters arising from minutes: Dealt with under general business.

Motion: That the minutes be accepted as a true and correct record of the 47th AGM (*Avalon Edwards / Greg Burrell – carried*)

- 3. President's report** [Marc Schallenberg]

Since taking over the presidency of the NZFSS from David Hamilton in January, my first 8 months of engagement in the role have consisted of “learning the ropes” of how our Society functions, with the assistance of many skilled and helpful colleagues. I'd like to thank the members of our Executive Committee, and especially our Secretary/Treasurer Janine Wech, who have so ably helped guide Society (and its new President) through a busy year.

Over the past year, the NZFSS has been asked to input its expertise into a wide array of environmental debates and policy developments and this is where the majority of our work has been directed this year. This is very positive, because each request for our feedback is a chance for the Society to share its expertise and to be a serious player in these debates and policies. This heightens our profile, sharpens scientific debate among our members and contributes the best available scientific information to public debates and policy decisions. Thank you to all of our members who've taken the time this year to provide feedback for our Society's submissions. Your efforts and generosity are very much appreciated.

Activities:

Along with the usual administrative tasks that the Exec performs, the Exec has been involved with a number of issues year, including:

- Providing a letter of support (via the International Society of Limnology (SIL)) regarding environmental impact studies to do with a proposal to construct a canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans via Lake Nicaragua
- Providing a letter of support for our Australian colleagues to host the 2019 American Society of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO) conference in Brisbane
- Preparing submissions for the Ministry for the Environment on the Draft Implementation Guide to National Policy Statement – Freshwater Management (NPS-FM), on their proposed guidelines on Freshwater Accounting in the NPS-FM, and for the Ministry of Primary Industries on their draft National Environmental Standards for Production Forestry (NES-PF)
- Participating in a Science-to-Policy workshop of the Land and Water Forum
- Providing input to the 2015 conference organising committee.

The NES-PF caught the attention of many of our members and I feel that we made a very valuable contribution to the policy debate around guidelines to protect freshwaters affected by production forestry. Our submissions to the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Primary Industries are available on the NZFSS website:

(<http://freshwater.science.org.nz/index.php/bulletin-board/#submissions>)

Opportunities for the Society to submit on government policy will continue in 2016 and you will continue to receive emails when the opportunities for submission arise. Please feel free to send us your thoughts and comments.

Special kudos and opportunities to join the Exec

In recent years, the activities of the NZFSS have been including more community engagement and more advocacy for science/evidence based policy development. To facilitate this, we established new co-opted positions on the Exec to help us carry out these roles. Kate McArthur and Ngaire Phillips have been spearheading our advocacy role this year and I'd particularly like to thank Kate and Ngaire not only for organising, but also for often contributing substantially, to our submissions to Government Ministries. Unfortunately for us, Ngaire has had to step down from her role as submissions co-ordinator. Luckily Kate has indicated that she can still contribute and Richard Allibone has also offered to help with submissions. However, we would like to co-opt another member to help spread the work load in our important and growing activities in freshwater advocacy and policy engagement.

I'd also like to thank Jay Piggot for his excellent work in designing and maintaining the NZFSS website and running the NZFSS email bulletin. Unfortunately for us, Jay has indicated that he'd like to pull back somewhat from these activities, but he is happy to help train up a new webmaster.

So the Exec is looking for some new talent. More on this later in the AGM.

Looking forward - Cash reserves and what to do with them

The society has recently accumulated substantial cash reserves and this needs to be addressed. These reserves give us opportunities to do new things that are aligned with our objectives and mission. To help develop and focus the opportunities, the Exec would like to set up a formal planning process for the NZFSS, involving an Annual Plan and a 5-Year Plan. More on this later in the AGM.

Summary

In summary, it's been a busy and fruitful year for the NZFSS. We are definitely in good "health" whether measured by the Society's activities and engagement, financial position or memberships. I've really enjoyed working in my capacity as President with many of you, both inside and outside the Exec. All of the Exec team are keen to discuss ideas and concerns with any of the members to help the Society fulfil its goals in the best possible ways. Feel free to get in touch with any of us and to take any opportunities to provide feedback to us. We look forward to serving the society again in 2016.

I move from the Chair that this report be accepted. (*David Hamilton – carried*)

4. Secretary-Treasurer's report [Phil Jellyman on behalf of Janine Wech]

Membership

Total membership as at November 2015 was 479, compared with 465 in 2014. Membership figures for the last five years are shown in Tables 1 and 2. The number of members in arrears by 2 years is creeping up again (Table 1). This reflects members who we have lost contact with, or who may have moved away from freshwater science and have not resigned from the Society. Membership by member type (Table 2) shows the breakdown of membership regardless of financial status, and shows that waged and student member numbers are relatively stable.

Table 1: Financial status of membership

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Members – Current:					
Paid	236	224	248	221	268
Unpaid	122	132	97	120	140
Members - in arrears:					
1 year	55	58	45	103	-
2 year	39	23	83	-	-
Other:					
Honorary	9	9	10	10	11
Life	4	4	4	4	4
Legal*	1	1	1	1	1
Societies	5	5	5	5	5
Libraries	9	9	9	9	9
TOTAL	479	465	502	473	438

(* Not a member; a legal requirement)

Table 2: Type of membership

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Ordinary	337	326	345	329	304
Unwaged/Student	113	108	13	13	15
Honorary	9	9	10	10	11
Life	4	4	4	4	4
Other (Societies)	5	5	125	112	99
Corporate (Libraries)	11	9	5	5	5
TOTAL	479	464	502	473	438

Finances:

Crowe Horwath now audits the accounts (having taken over Angela Wood accountancy practice). They have made one change in accounting policy. The Subscription Income policy has changed to now ensure that unpaid subscription revenue is now recorded as accounts receivable so that income is recorded in the correct period. This has resulted in an increase in income (\$5,910) for the financial year ending 30 June 2015.

Total assets as at 30 June 2015 was \$118,189, and includes our current account, our Jolly term deposit, as well as unsold stock of "The Guide to the Freshwater Crustacea of New Zealand". As this book is now considered 'slow-moving inventory', the remaining stock has been written off under accounting conventions (allowing it to be correctly recorded at Net Realisable Value). The book can still be sold by the Society, with the selling price recognised as profit – it just means that there is no carrying value in the Society's books.

Income earned for the 2015 financial year came from conference profit, subscriptions, and interest earned from our bank account and term deposit.

Expenditure items for the 2015 financial year included audit fees, RSNZ membership fees, hardcopy newsletter and postage, bank charges and donations to the SIL Trust.

A net surplus of \$23,055 was made for the Society for the year ended 30 June 2014. This compares with a net surplus of \$11,254 for the 2014 financial year.

I request that the Secretary-Treasurer's report be accepted

Motion: That the Society accounts for 2014-2015 be accepted (*Phil Jellyman / Jeremy Piggot – carried*)

I move that the auditor appointed to conduct the Society audit for the 2015 financial year be Crowe Horwath NZ Ltd.

Motion: That the Auditor for the next financial year be Crowe Horwath NZ Ltd., Blenheim. (*Phil Jellyman / Sjaan Bowie – carried*)

5. SIL 1987 Trust Fund report [Marc Schallenberg for Kit Rutherford]

Note: No SIL members were in attendance this year. SIL Treasurer Kit Rutherford provided a treasurer's report in the form of a spreadsheet, which Marc Schallenberg presented.

Total assets as at September 2015 were \$66,644, a net increase of \$1,188 since September 2014. Two awards were made in 2015: N Bodie and J Piggot.

Motion: That the SIL 1987 Trust Fund report for 2014-2015 be accepted (*Marc Schallenberg / Amber Sinton – carried*)

6. General Business

Webmaster role (currently Jeremy Piggot): NZFSS looking for a replacement, ideally someone with web/IT management experience. Marc explained the role. Lisa Carlin (UoO) was present at the AGM and expressed interest in taking up this role.

Advocacy and submissions role: Kate McArthur outlined upcoming work in 2016 for this role and suggested a small committee of people was needed to cope with this large amount of work. (Tanya Blakely let AS know that she was a possibility but will need to consult with her employer first).

- Dean Olsen: Is NZFSS advocacy currently too partial?
- Marc S: We endeavour to provide evidence-based information and the best science for policy.
- Kate McArthur: We take submissions for members, collate these, and provide this information to the government. We thoroughly read policy line-by-line, comment on this and make recommendations. Members are encouraged to respond to emails that are sent out to all of NZFSS regarding their views on policies.
- Marc S: We need editors to make sure what we put forward to the government is well-written. Is everyone happy with this process?
- Kate M: (clarifies the process)

NZFSS medal: This year Colin Townsend was presented his medal at his plenary speech on Thursday 26 November (9:45 am). Clive Howard-Williams will be awarded his medal at the 2016 conference (hopefully).

Future planning for the society (i.e., NZFSS cash balance):

- Marc S: We need to think of some ideas to solve this. (Shows the constitution to illustrate areas we can spend money). We need a planning process which can involve member input, e.g., via an online forum. These plans would be ratified at AGMs.
- Scott Larned: Does that mean the current year's surplus will not be spent for another year?
- Marc S: E.g., for this year... (cut short).
- Angus McIntosh: We have much more money than SIL, which exists to run investments, which is the core aim of the society – we should give more society money to SIL, this should be a main aim for the society.
- Marc S: Yes we can add this to the list and give more money to SIL but there are other good options too.
- Bryce Johnson: We should spend money to get kids into freshwater science.
- David Hamilton: We need to move to update IT more quickly, plus sort out advocacy.
- Kate M: In terms of honorarium?
- David H: No
- Jeremy Piggot: Society is slowly catching up with IT but needs to move membership subs to a more proactive role for members to cut down on work for IT/secretary. This needs to be integrated into the current website. Plus the jobs board needs to be automated. Currently all of this is done manually – i.e., on paper. There will need to be investment into an external IT company to do this.
- Marc S: This is an inevitable move, I propose this is added to the annual plan (motion moved). Seconded by Russell Death (all in favour).

- Scott L: I have concerns about the website – with these new services needed there will need to be professional work on an ongoing basis, rather than just volunteers.
- Jeremy P: A payment system (credit card processing) requires professional management. Additional funds will be required on an ongoing basis. Avenues for revenue will also be created though – book sales, charging for job ads.
- David H: Members of the exec or other delegates sometimes need to attend important forums to represent the society. There should be a small budget made for this – currently representatives have to find their own funds.
- Marc S: It would be good to not have to lean on Wellington people all the time too, also we can then send the most suitable people. Motion moved by David Hamilton to add this to the annual plan. Seconded by Gerry Closs (all in favour).
- Marc S: There is discontent with the NOF – a discussion document to support NOF development.
- Russell D: NOF – compare this to Australian scientists, who appear to be doing a very good job. NOF has political inputs that have an influence on the science – the society should make stronger submissions to support the science and not be swayed by politics.
- Bryce J: NOF – The society should make an independent and focused effort to promote the science over all else.
- Dean O: Advocacy – remember that not everyone in the society have time for this plus some work for the MfE – there are conflicts of interest. We need to discuss how to go about this and present a single society view, avoid being a political pawn, and maintain integrity. There needs to be a clear process.
- Keith Hamil: There needs to be a good peer review process – I have concerns over the narrative of some previous submissions.
- Marc S: We need to pursue this further, probably using online methods – forums, Facebook, email – as we are out of time now.

The meeting closed at 1:25 pm.