

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE MOTUORA RESTORATION SOCIETY
held at Old Library, Silverdale
on Tuesday 25th May 2021**

Roger Harker chaired the meeting as John Stewart was unable to attend in person.

Present: Roger Harker, Nattu Nataraj, John Stewart, Kevin Hawkins, Kay Milton, Liz Norquay, Karin Gouldstone, Eva Fernandez, Ray Lowe, Helen Lindsay, Nick Harker, Tim Harker, Vonny Sprey, Karyn and Tony Hoksbergen, and Jill Potter.

All those attending in person and by Zoom were welcomed to the meeting and business got underway at 7.35pm. Special welcome to Kat Lane, Area Manager with the Department of Conservation. Particular thanks to Kay Milton for managing the Zoom meeting arrangements.

Apologies: Marlene Buckton, Richard Griffiths, Rob Chappell, Bruce Ross, James Russell and Wendy John.

Minutes: Roger read a summary of last year's minutes.

The minutes of the 14th July 2020 AGM confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

Kevin Hawkins/Nattu Nataraj: Carried

The Treasurer's Report

Nattu Nataraj summarised his report which was available to view on the Motuora Restoration Society website and in hard copy at the meeting.

Income received comprising of donations and grants totalling \$21,360.00 plus Membership subscriptions, marginally less than last year, of \$1,869.57.

Total expenses were in line with the previous year. Main costs were weed control of \$22,790.00, Transport & Freight \$7,669.58, Insurance \$2,640.89. Several assets were written off during the year giving an expense amount of \$7,641.00. The net deficit at year was \$25,458.09. With reserves of over \$99k in the bank giving two to three years of operation.

The Society's finances are on a strong footing for the next couple of years.

Treasurers Report approved.

Liz Norquay/Ray Lowe: Carried

Chairperson's Annual Report

John Stewart could not attend in person and his report was read by Kevin Hawkins. It was also available to view on the Motuora Restoration Society Website.

- Once again, the year was disrupted by the impacts of Covid-19. The Island was closed for an extended period which delayed progress on installation of decking and solar power at the cabins. Then contractor Ian Higgins was unfortunately unable to resume this task but we were able to employ Craig Garrett to take it on. Craig completed the deck, adding a 'boot box' and weatherproof compartment for the solar power controller and batteries and roofed over the deck to provide a dry entrance area. Craig will return soon for some additional building work around the cabins and a new camp kitchen on the potting shed deck. Kevin Hawkins was able to complete the installation of the solar powered lights and USB chargers in the cabins and in the potting shed.
- A hot, dry period of weather put enormous stress on our resident kiwi population. Island Ranger Vonny Sprey put substantial effort in to provide food and water and this is sure to have saved the lives of some kiwi. Some birds were taken off the Island and released into protected sites in Northland.

- I'm pleased to report a year in which our main contacts with the Department staff remained unchanged. Kat Lane is now 'permanent' in the role of Area Manager and Vonny Sprey remains our Island Ranger. Vonny is still on a contract which sees her on the Island from December to April, then one week in four until the end of August. We then employ her as a contract weedier from September to November. Of course, we would prefer that the ranger be present all year and without MRS needing to fund the weeding contract and we continue to make our case to the Department for this outcome.
- Biosecurity is paramount and a presence on the island to cover times when Vonny is off is now managed by DOC. This means volunteers undergo training and familiarisation and work under DOC protocols for health and safety and infrastructure.
- we now have a ride-on mower, an LUV (light utility vehicle) and the blue tractor has been given a maintenance overhaul. Our thanks to the Department who funded all these changes.
- In another infrastructure change we have donated to DOC those parts of the Island's solar power system which still belonged to the Society. DOC will continue to maintain the system.

Weed control

Vonny and Helen Lindsay continue to plan and execute our weed monitoring and control with help from contractor Richard Sharp and his colleagues for rope access to the cliffs. Over the past year Vonny has managed to revisit most of the designated weeding surveillance areas and her report indicates that our efforts to eradicate or control some weeds have not been as successful as we would like. Of course, we are aware that new weeds will always arrive and that some have very long-lived seed banks. It is also the case that regular slips around the cliffs open up fresh soil which is quickly invaded by new weed plants which then provide new seed sources. Weeding is a major part of our annual expenditure and it is now appropriate to have a review of our strategy.

Seabird monitoring

Our thanks are due to the volunteers who undertake the seabird monitoring each year.

Our little penguins had another reasonable breeding season. Eight nests produced 12 chicks and there were three second clutches with another five chicks.

Dotterels had a disappointing season with only one or two chicks from quite a few nesting attempts. This was despite lots of effort to protect the nests from high tides, marauding black-backed gulls and pukeko, and disturbance from visitors.

Only four or five gannets attended the colony site this season and only one pair laid an egg. The egg hatched and the chick grew to near full size. Unfortunately, for reasons unknown, it died a few weeks from fledging.

Four fluttering shearwater pairs used the nest boxes and produced a chick each which fledged.

No sightings of diving petrels were identified this year and it was felt the clay soil at the original release site was too hard for them to dig their burrows. With that in mind we have moved the sound system to a new location high on the cliff top just north of Still Bay where the soil is light and friable.

The Pycroft's petrels had another great year. Thirty-six individuals were identified at the colony and 15 eggs were produced from 15 or possibly 16 pairs. All the eggs hatched and the chicks fledged.

Lizards

Thirty-one shore skinks were caught during a monitoring programme in 2021, most of which are thought to be Island-born (16 adults, 7 gravid females, 7 sub-adults and 1 neonate). This number exceeds the 24 individuals released in 2011 and confirms the important milestone that the population is at Translocation Stage 3 – 'population growth as indicated by the capture of more animals than were originally released'. The shore skinks continue to exist alongside copper and moko skinks.

Raukawa geckos were present in reasonable numbers at the release site, and an individual was detected at Macrocarpa Bay indicating that they are dispersing. Pacific geckos are showing promising signs of establishment including multiple adults, island-born juveniles and sub-adults, and individuals were found north of the release site

Other notable activities during the year included:

- three newsletters were published and other news distributed by e-mail
- our health and safety plans and programme were updated and we have had another incident-free year
- we have suffered on-going issues with our website and membership database which have only been intermittently available. Work continues to resolve the problems
- two of our three sound attraction systems required major upgrades including two new amplifiers and two new loudspeakers
- visits were made to identify potential sites for planting out kakabeak. Six sites were identified and, after consideration to avoid disturbing archaeological sites, three were agreed to be useable
- we have been successful in an application to the Chisholm Whitney Charitable Trust who will provide funding for our boat transport costs for the coming year.

Supporters and Donors

Simon Chamberlin; Foundation North; Auckland Council

We thank Kawau Cruises for subsidised cost of water taxis and for their reliable and helpful service to and from the Island.

Conclusion

Thanks are due to your committee, to the staff at DOC, to our funders, contractors, members and volunteers. Our members and volunteers get their reward when they visit and enjoy the Island and can take pleasure from what has been accomplished.

Chairpersons Report for 20/21 was approved

Karin Gouldstone/Helen Lindsay: Carried

Election of Officers and Committee Members:

The following were proposed, seconded and elected unopposed for the coming year:

Chairperson – John Stewart

Treasurer – Nattu Nataraj

Secretary – Liz Norquay

Committee: Colin Cordes, Helen Lindsay, Roger Harker, Kevin Hawkins and Eva Fernandez.

Kay Milton/Nick Harker: Carried

Subscriptions for the 2019/2020 Year: Roger Harker spoke in favour of retaining a reasonably low subscription and it was proposed that these remain at \$25 for adults, families and groups, and \$5 for students.

Eva Fernandez/Raye Lowe: Carried

General Business

Kat Lane wished to have it recorded the Departments thanks for the great work underway and for the support given to Vonny.

Closure

There being no items of general business the formal part of the meeting closed at 8:25pm.