

Lake Rotoiti Community Association

Annual General Meeting 3 January 2012, 10 a.m.

Karakia - given by Councillor Tai Eru

Apologies Received – Brentleigh Bond (Community Board Chair), Kevin Winters (Mayor), Glenys Searancke (Cr), Maggie Bentley (Cr), Karen Hunt(Cr), Lyall Thurston (Cr), Fred Whata, Newton family, Diane & Don Atkinson, Tipene Marr (Cr), Ian McLean, Jane Nees (Cr), Malcolm Whitaker (Cr)

Welcome – by the Chair – welcoming Todd McClay (MP), Mary & Jim Stanton, and Lindsay Brighthouse (Life Members), Bill Kingi (past committee member), Jean Paul Gaston (RDC), Neil Callaghan (Community Board), Dave Donaldson (Cr), Ian Noble (Cr), Geoff Rice, Tom Walters, Tai Eru (Cr).

Minutes of the 2011 AGM – Michael Gill has requested that the Minutes be amended to give the names of the committee elected *en bloc* during meeting:

Gerald Plested, Max Hughes, Nick Miller, Jim Stanton, Keith Smith,
Phill Thomass, Dave Wilson, Fraser Wilson,
Warren Webber (elected to committee during year).

Approval for amended Minutes, moved by Michael Gill, seconded by Bob Armstrong. Carried.

Matters Arising - No matters arising.

Chairperson's Report - Report read to meeting by the Chair, Hilary Prior. Approval moved by Hilary Prior and seconded by Bob Armstrong. A motion of thanks was proposed by Bob Armstrong and seconded by Hilma Gill.

Motion: This meeting expresses its very sincere appreciation for the way in which Hilary Prior and her team have spent so much voluntary time in representing the Association at the EBOP Resource Consent Hearings in relation to the Ohau Channel Weir and the Okere Gates.

Accepted with acclamation.

Financial Report – Gerald Plested read the financial report to the meeting. Many extra donations were received to assist with the legal costs associated with Resource Consent Hearings for the Okere Control Gates and Ohau Channel Weir. Two groups have been formed in respect of future monitoring of the operation of the control gates and Ohau Channel weir - Kaitiaki Group (iwi around lake and downstream), Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Liaison Group (local community organisations, RDC, Fish & Game etc). Gerald moved the accounts be accepted, seconded by Phill Thomass. Auditor Graham Prior has agreed to continue for at least another year. Gerald moved that Graham be appointed auditor for 2012 financial year. Seconded by Marcus Wilkins. Carried.

Election of Officers – Hilary stood down as Chair and Jim Stanton took over as temporary Chair. Jim called for nominations for Chair, and nominated Hilary Prior. Seconded by Nick Miller. Elected by acclamation.

Hilary resumed the Chair, and nominated Gerald Plested as Treasurer – seconded by Keith Smith. Meeting accepted.

The existing committee members Nick Miller, Jim Stanton, Keith Smith, Phill Thomass, Dave Wilson, Fraser Wilson, Warren Webber were prepared to accept re-election, and were nominated *en bloc* by Paul Prior, seconded by John Mace. Guy Nelson was proposed by Nick Miller, seconded by John Green. All were accepted.

Presentations

1 Warren Webber (LRCA Committee Member) – presentation on the current position of the Resource Consent Renewals for the Okere Gates and the Ohau Channel Weir. Full presentation to be made available on the Society website www.rotoiti.co.nz

Highlights of the presentation:

- Historical lake levels versus current flood levels and possible gate options.
- Current levels of Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti are much higher than usual at this time of year.
- The existing bottom sill at Okere Gates is approximately 1m lower than the original rock ledge before the gates were installed, so that removing the gates or having them permanently fully open are not sensible options.
- Progress of the Renewals process: Formal Consent Hearing was held 6 December 2010; the Hearing decision was appealed early 2011; mediation meetings with the Environment Court Commissioner took place August-September 2011; a late objection was made by third party November 2011; decision deferred until 27th January 2012. Operational Envelope discussion and compromises – low levels could be allowed to 279 mm from May to October but not drop as far as had been first proposed. Historical level management – uncontrolled, then after the gates were installed less extremes were experienced and the average water level was lower than previously so that there was less flooding.
- John Green said that EBOP have been very clear that the gates are not meant or operated for flood control down the river. Warren confirmed the gates were no longer required for flood control in the Lower Kaituna as stopbank infrastructure has improved. There is a question of whether they were originally also meant for controlling significant lakeside flooding.
- Ongoing issues: perceptions of lakeside flooding, loss of beaches, cultural and spiritual impacts. Kiatiaki or Liaison Groups can request changes every 5 years during the 35-year consent if the management regime is not satisfactory –however BOPRC can decide if this is valid or not.
- Mary Stanton said that the community is not united so there is no progress. Originally Mary's father was involved with lake level setting and there were no arguments.
- Tom Walters said that he is concerned predominantly for downstream, and supports level control where it is helpful. Intervention from small groups is not helpful and people should just get on with it.
- Issues of flooding – possibly memories have become blurred over time. The land is tilting down towards Hinehopu. Ohau Channel reflects levels in Lake Rotorua rather than Lake Rotoiti. Vegetation has filled much of the formerly flooded areas that were summer beaches; beaches are in a constant state of flux.

2 Jean Paul Gaston (RDC) – presentation on proposed changes to Rates. RDC has brought in a new rating proposal.

- Rating valuation process is required every 3 years – mass valuation not property-by-property. Valuers look at sales data – residential, commercial, vacant property sales to calculate capital value and land value. Around 30% of rates are allocated according to land value. Farming sector valuation has gone down 30-40% so rates must be shifted to other sectors. Urban and Southern/Mamaku residential land values have decreased around 10%. Lakes residential values have increased by up to 20%.
- John Green questioned whether farming values have gone down because there are few sales, as opposed to a drop in actual value.
- New valuation system will have impact from 1 July 2012.
- Phill Thomass asked how Maori leasehold land valuations are estimated. There are rating discounts for multiple-owned Maori land.
- Tom Walters said that 45% of gross income from Maori lands goes in rates, as properties are so highly valued and there are impediments on how they can be used.
- Geoff Rice said that due to Waitangi claims the local iwi may get land from DOC, MAF etc and so may raise rates received, but ETS may affect the valuation of land as well and that needs to be taken into consideration.
- Ian Noble, Councillor BOPRC, says that rate values are set a couple of years prior to when they are paid, and differentials and changing conditions need to be taken into consideration.

Due to changes in land values over the area RDC needs to consider how to change rate valuations between regions. Maybe change from land value allocation of general rate to capital value allocation of general rate. This would mean the change every three years would be less. Information about rating valuations can be put on the LRCA website, but there will also be a framework changes valuation impact tool on the RDC website. Submissions can be made to the next Long-Term Plan in April 2012.

John Scott asked what is the impact of targeted rates? The considered proposal will move both stormwater and roading targeted rates back into general rates.

Nick Miller asked about the petition three years ago to move from land value to capital value. Dave Donaldson replied that this time RDC have been a lot more inclusive with their discussions about rating to get community input.

Jim Stanton discussed the impact on rural residential versus urban residential and history. Only 5000-6000 of 27,000 ratepayers in RDC area are rural. Rural valuation is usually higher than urban so a differential is included. The historical differential of 51% has been eroded over time down to about 80%. Need to consider differences of services etc so that rates paid are fair for what we get.

John Green asked about the interest charged for sewerage installation schemes currently underway – GST, lump sum payment, and whether interest will be fixed or floating. When will lump sum payment amount be finalised? Will we get interest refunded if a lump sum payment is made? Interest will be reviewed each year. GST will be charged on the interest. There is currently only one opportunity to decide to pay in a lump sum rather than over 25 years, because of Government legislation. Interest paid on amounts already paid will not be refunded if the lump payment is made. The whole contract still has to be finalised before the final payment amount will be known and the community notified.

Thanks given to Jean-Paul.

3 Phill Thomass (LRCA Committee Member and Hinehopu resident) – presentation on the current position of the Proposed Rotoma Waste Water Treatment Plant. This is the last scheme to go in and has a few points of difference to previous schemes.

- Covers a larger area for a fairly small number of properties, from Curtis Road through to the end of Rotoma.
- It will get its own sewerage treatment scheme near Manawahe Road rather than being reticulated back to Rotorua.
- There is a much more complex funding model – from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for the Environment and different funding requirements. Tendered out as one scheme but has been divided into different processes – Rotoiti/Rotoma, reticulation/sewage, environmental/health impacts.
- Fairly small impacts (3-6%) on environmental quality projected in Rotoiti. The projected impact in Rotoma will remove 300% of nitrogen and 100+% of phosphorus. There is a higher risk at Rotoma than at Rotoiti, as the treatment plant will be only c.500m from lakeshore. Concern from community about this – RDC slow to respond to this.
- Requirement from MOH funding that system has to be up and running by mid-2012. RDC first applied for funding in 2006, scheduled scheme for around 2010-11 and have postponed starting. Resource Consent applied for and granted for the treatment plant. RDC did not have accurate information that was the same from one submission to the next. After some discussion, the risk of nutrients re-entering the lake was greatly reduced, and the Commissioners agreed to the consent as this would be better than with no intervention.
- There have been three appeals lodged since – Ngati Makino as the discharge would be mainly going into their catchment and RDC have not engaged with them. Lake Rotoma Residents Association appealed as they want a minimal discharge. Ngati Pikiao Environmental Society have appealed also. LRCA and Tamatea Street Ratepayers are registered as interested parties. Going to mediation at the end of January, but will run out of time due to funding issue – need to get funding deadline extended.
- Discrepancy in population figures between winter/summer. Load estimates therefore too low and treatment plant probably not big enough – discharge will then be required onto risk areas.
- The Rotoiti Action Plan does not have enough determination to get water quality high enough – need to keep Rotoma water as pristine as possible.
- The RDC estimate for cost per household at Rotoma is \$7000-8000. Cost for Rotoiti residents is \$18,000 per household, and will impact some of the poorest communities in the district. Also the average cost for prior schemes is about half that. RDC have said that cost will not be that high but have not come back with concrete revised figure. Need to continue pressuring RDC and get iwi involved to get an affordable funding model on the lines of the Rotoma costs. Also need to get the MOH funding deadline extended.

Todd McClay says that the Council needs to approach the MOH to extend funding but need to not let the extended deadline let scheme drag out. John Green suggested that the whole of the Rotorua area should help bear cost of the treatment station, as they did for the one in town. The Community Board have put that to RDC – Dave Donaldson says operational costs for local residents will be the same as for urban residents. The Mayor has written to MoH asking for deadline extension for subsidy. Some of the subsidy comes out of the EBOP rates, some from MfE. It is vital for eastern end of Rotoiti to be reticulated, due to subsidence.

Bob Armstrong congratulated Phill on the contents of the latest newsletters regarding this issue. Whereas English tabloids needed SEX on page3 to promote sales, these newsletters had good articles about the Eastern end of the lake on page3. He would like a motion from this meeting, representing all its members rather than only one individual:

Motion: This association expresses its deep concern with aspects of the East Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme including

1. The grossly excessive costs of the proposed scheme - \$18,000 per household compared to less than half of that for similar schemes in the Rotorua District Council area.
2. The apparent poor planning for the resource consent for the treatment plant at Manawahe Road, leading to unnecessary delays and the possible loss of Government subsidies.

Addendum: This Association further requests that ALL financial figures for this and similar ratepayer projects ALWAYS be quoted as GST inclusive.

Seconded by John LaTrobe. All in favour.

Michael McCarthy made a comment about the lack of information from RDC and others concerned. Hilary explained that she and the others have been to all the mediation meetings about the resource consent and the Society is trying to link to all available information on the website.

Hilary thanked Phill Thomass, Ian Noble, Jan Wilkins of the Care Group. Also stated that the LRCA will be making Mourea water supply a priority for 2012.

Phill encouraging people to use the website and also to contact the committee with any concerns.

General Business –

John Green asked Todd McClay whether we can use the Consent Process over the Okere Gates as an example for how to get rid of the RMA process. Cost of the process is a great blowout which then comes back to the ratepayer and has been very poorly managed.

Need a subsidy for refuse for green waste for Rotoiti. Councillor Karen Hunt a few years ago explained that we need to wait for the company who do green waste collection to extend into this area. There are two different companies for green waste and household rubbish who do not work together. Dave Donaldson said that RDC had planned a transfer station for Curtis Road but objections outnumbered support so they did not proceed. It is now up to the community to find a site but RDC will then build a transfer station. Community Board have made various submissions on waste but will take that into consideration for the next meetings.

John Latrobe congratulated RDC on their recycling centre in Rotorua.

Phill Thomas asked whether RDC can instigate kerbside recycling.

Geoff Rice said that on behalf of Tapueka no-one there wants to see the Okere Gates removed. Concerned about pollution – the water will have to go down the Kaituna one way or the other. Tapueka strategy group will be created in statute at the end of their Waitangi claim this year and will be working with the regional council and others on these issues.

Tom Walters said that the peoples of Kaituna where he is also support the Gates remaining. He would like to convene a meeting with Jean Paul Gaston, EBOP, RDC, Todd McClay, and the Federation of Maori Authorities to address rating issues.

Mary Stanton is concerned about the rise of security cameras in the community. Apologising to any people who may have been targeted by burglars. She sees the problem as being caused by drugs. Need more police resources – have asked for police support but have not necessarily received it. The culprits are minors and the school cannot help outside school boundaries.

Also the continuing issue of a water supply for Mourea. Bores are not cheap but people need clean water. Expensive for Maori land with multiple houses on.

Hilary thanked everybody for coming.

The meeting Closed at 12.45