



Otorohanga Community Board

# MINUTES

5 March 2018

**OTOROHANGA COMMUNITY BOARD**

5 March 2018

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of the Otorohanga Community Board held in the Council Chambers, Maniapoto St, Otorohanga on 5 March commencing at 4.01pm.

**MINUTES**

Minutes are unconfirmed and subject to amendment at the next meeting of the Board.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

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## **PRESENT**

Mr P Mc Connell (Chair), Mrs K Christison, Mrs E Cowan, Mr A Buckman, Mr N Gadd (attended at 4.05pm)

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Messrs DC Clibbery (Chief Executive), RH Brady (Engineering Manager), MA Lewis (Community Facilities Officer) and CA Tutty (Governance Supervisor).

The Chair declared the meeting open and welcomed those present.

## **APOLOGIES**

**Resolved** that the apologies received from Mr P Coventry and Mr N Gadd (for lateness) be sustained.

### **Mrs Cowan/Mr Buckman**

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

### **Steamfest 2017**

Mr Allan Barclay attended the meeting and presented a letter on behalf of his wife and himself. He said they take exception to the way Council's Chief Executive reported in the Waitomo News, the \$50,000 blowout in relation to the 2017 Otorohanga Steamfest. Mr and Mrs Barclay considered that a person employed by the Otorohanga District Council with Chief Executive responsibilities should portray accurate knowledge before making such statements. He then outlined the following facts:

- 1) 3 weeks prior to the event he and his wife were approached by Mr Peglar and Mr Dowd and asked to run the street section of entertainment. This they agreed to and carried out at a no cost basis to the community and Steamfest event.
- 2) The only cost to the event for this area of responsibility was that of arranging an adequate sound system and a sound technician for the 2 days. A quoted invoice statement was raised, submitted and approved by signature by Mr Dowd before they got started.
- 3) Mr and Mrs Barclay arranged free accommodation at their bnb for out of town security personnel and entertainers and free meals, organised programs for the event on a voluntary no cost basis for the full 2 days.
- 4) The submitted and approved invoice was the only cost incurred for their section of the event.

The Chair thanked Mr Barclay for his presentation and advised that the Steamfest was Council driven not by the Otorohanga Community Board.

Mr Barry Marx a lead organiser for Steamfest 2017 and chairperson for the Steamfest 2019 Committee addressed the matter of the Steamfest and the Chief Executive's interview published in the Waitomo News last Thursday. Mr Marx reported that he represented himself, his wife and many of the Steamfest 2017 volunteers and wished to address the negative impression given to the public by the front page news item "\$57,000 Budget Blowout".

Mr Marx reported that they are being blamed by implication for a financial stuff up that is essentially an employment issue within the Otorohanga District Council. He said all this is especially damning for him as he was one of only 3 organisers for the initial weeks.

Mr Marx said that he had witnessed the Council's Chief Executive and Mayor heap praise on Mr Peglar and Mr Dowd at number of public meetings, they are now experiencing a big dump blame shifting.

Mr Marx advised that from day one he could see that Steamfest had the potential to become one of the biggest annual events in Otorohanga, far exceeding the now defunct County Fair, it can become a national event. He said by July 2017 not long after Steamfest was first mooted, it was obvious to him that the \$15,000 which had been allocated to run Steamfest, was totally inadequate. Mr Marx reported that an urgent "off premises" meeting was held with the Mayor to express his concern that the organisation was being run in a laissez-faire manner. The Mayor assured him that he would meet with the CE and his concerns would be addressed.

Mr Marx continued to say that the Otorohanga District Council is a massive multi mullion dollar organisation with a District Accountant and support staff however, after 7 months this is the best reconciliation of Steamfest expenses that can be provided, two inaccurate spreadsheet pages, and to this day he is still fielding complaints from unpaid creditors not listed.

In closing Mr Marx said he would address the personal implications for himself and his wife. In continually referring to "the organisers" "as being the cause of the expenses blowout", so as the highest profile volunteer the spotlight is especially on him.

The Chair said that the Board accepts Mr Marx's letter and that this would be forwarded through the correct channels with the result being communicated to them.

### **Poppy Places Trust Remembrance Project**

Mr Trevor Skilton on behalf of the Project Kiwiana Team presented to the Board his involvement to facilitate the Poppy Places Project in Otorohanga.

Mr Skilton reported that the Poppy Places Trust has been established to develop, promote and oversee a nationwide project that commemorates and recognises the participation of New Zealand in military conflicts and operational service overseas, as part of our national history and heritage. He said the aim will be accomplished by identifying and denoting streets and other appropriate places that commemorate such history, including posting individual sites information on the Poppy Places website. For Otorohanga, Gradara Avenue, Sangro Crescent, Wall Memorial Park and the Wall Memorial Pool are at least, appropriate places.

Mr Skilton advised that total estimated cost for this work (6 signs) is in the order of \$800-\$1,000 of which approximately \$650 should be eligible for NZTA cost sharing.

Mr Skilton concluded in seeking Council's and the Board's commitment and approval for the project.

The Chair thanked Mr Skilton for his presentation.

## **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Resolved**

That the rates/rental relief for the Otorohanga Motor Camp be considered in General Business which may require a resolution.

### **Chair/Mrs Cowan**

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 8 February 2017**

Mr Gadd reported that he has not as yet been able to go through the transcript of the meeting to enable him to bring forward any alterations or corrections.

Mrs Christison referred to page 2 the paragraph reading “the Chief Executive said that it was not, the sale was agreed before the potential of water supply was considered....the water was later identified as an asset that the Otorohanga Community Board did not want to lose with the sale of the property”. The Chief Executive replied that the sale of this property was a decision made by the previous Board.

Mr Christison then referred to page 4 the first paragraph under her name and said that this matter was reported by Mrs Cowan not herself.

Mrs Cowan referred to page 3 the statement by Ms Ambury that Ms Smith had said that on the Kiwi House website it says Camp Kiwi is permanently closed which Ms Smith believed could be the confusion amongst regular campers. Mrs Cowan advised that no campsite website was permanently closed.

### **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Otorohanga Community Board held on 8 February 2018, as amended, be approved as a true and correct record of that meeting.

### **Mrs Christison/Mrs Cowan**

## **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Mr Gadd expressed a declaration of interest in any matters to be discussed regarding the Otorohanga Motor Camp.

## **MATTERS REFERRED**

The Chair referred to the item listed under the Board to revisit the investigation of the physical development of a water storage lake at Council’s Te Raumauku Road property. He asked members whether they had any comments to make.

The Chair expressed the opinion that the Board should look at exploring the physical development of a water storage lake as a future resource. He expressed concern that should someone else get involved in this issue then the Board may lose control of it. The Chief Executive replied that “yes” they would expect some rights. Concern was also expressed as to the availability of extra water when required. The Chair said it is necessary for the Board to establish what the proposal may cost and that a further stage of investigation would likely cost around \$50,000.

The Chief Executive undertook to give members a copy of the consultant’s report and confirmed that a sum of \$100,000 has been included in the budget estimates, 3 years out.

Mr Gadd queried what would the value of a water reservoir be. The Chief Executive replied that it might provide a significant royalty type income. Mr Gadd expressed the opinion that the Board should be investigating the proposal further as such a reservoir would not fill up overnight.

In reply to Mr Buckman the Chief Executive reported that the natural flow of the stream appears to be 10-15 litres per second however during the winter period the flow can be much higher. He said Council could take water from the stream during the winter period. The Chief Executive reported that Council is still waiting for the new titles to be issued.

It was agreed that this item be deleted from matters referred.

## **RENTAL/RATES RELIEF CONSIDERATION – OTORHANGA MOTOR CAMP**

The Chair reported that he had spoken to Mrs Cowan regarding the Kiwi House website and that the manager of the Kiwi House Jo Russell will be having a meeting with current leasee Tash Smith. He said Ms Smith is moving on and working through the process of the financial venture she took on. The Chair expressed the opinion that any rates or rental relief should not be granted as there could be many other businesses coming forward with a similar request.

### **Resolved**

That the application from Ms T Smith of the Otorohanga Motor Camp for a rental/rates holiday be declined.

### **Chair/Mrs Cowan**

The Chief Executive stated that he believed that Mr Buckman and Mrs Cowan had conflicts of interest in respect of this matter.

Mrs Cowan said that the request from Ms Smith has nothing to do with the Kiwi House, she has come to the Board to request a rental/rates relief. Mrs Cowan agreed with the Chairs comments that should any relief be granted then everyone would request one. Mrs Cowan requested a copy of the lease agreement with Ms Smith and a copy of the Certificate of Registration.

The Chief Executive replied that the Otorohanga Kiwi House has expressed interest in the land and therefore it does represent a conflict.

## **GENERAL**

### **Otorohanga Village Green**

Mrs Christison asked whether the Board could give consideration to the installation of a drinking water fountain at the Village Green. It was agreed that this matter be placed on the matters referred.

Mrs Christison queried whether the Board should be proactive and send a letter to the camping grounds asking if they would be prepared to pay for a metered water supply tap within their grounds. The Chair expressed the opinion that motorhome owners do not pay any rates as they live in their motorhomes therefore the NZ Motorhome Association should be making some contribution for the cost of services.

Mr Gadd said there is a charge made for dump sites utilised by motorhomes and therefore water should not be free. He said that NZ Motorhome Association is a big organisation with good lawyers and have been known to hold Councils to task.

Mrs Cowan expressed the opinion that the Board's ratepayers should not be subsidising water use for motorhomes owners.

The Chief Executive said that he believed that a water tap, metered, was to be erected on the Motorhome Association's site in Otorohanga.

The Engineering Manager undertook to check on the installation of a water tap at their site.

### **Kiwiana Walkway**

Mrs Christison queried whether the Kiwiana Walkway is still being cleaned regularly. The Community Facilities Officer replied that this should be carried out each Monday.

### **Otorohanga Pool Complex**

Mrs Christion raised the matter of the driveway into the Otorohanga Pool complex. The Chief Executive replied that the existing driveway is not safe and therefore it is desirable to have another entranceway installed.

### **Metered Water Consumption**

The Chief Executive informed members that the matter of a free water meter allowance has not been resolved and suggested that a further workshop be held on this issue. Mr Gadd agreed it would be desirable to have another workshop with more reliable information available.

### **Te Raumauku Subdivision**

Mr Buckman received the Chief Executive's advice that the payment for the sale of the large area of the Te Raumauku subdivision will be settled next month.

The Chief Executive reported that Mr Tom Smit (owner of the property for the extension of the Westridge subdivision) has said he will be submitting a Resource Consent in the near future. He said Mr Smit is keen for work to commence from May this year. The Chief Executive confirmed that any funds from the subdivisions will sit in an interest bearing account.

### **Proposed Walk/Cycle Way**

Members were informed that Council's Roading Manager Martin Gould, has submitted an application to NZTA for funding for this project expressing safety for kids as a major factor. The Engineering Manager advised confirmation is hoped to be received from NZTA around August/September this year.

With regard to planting being undertaken adjacent to the stop banks the Chief Executive reported that he has sent a letter to the Waipa River Catchment Committee informing them that Council does not support the proposal for a ten metre wide Riparian strip through Otorohanga.

The Chair queried whether there is a view that this strip should be what the Regional Council is recommending. The Chief Executive replied that the normal strip is 5 metres therefore a ten meter strip should not be required just because it is Council land.

Mrs Cowan suggested that the strip be planted out with native trees.

### **Gradara Avenue – Lower Road**

Mr Buckman queried when work will commence on the tidying up of the retaining wall adjacent to the lower portion of Gradara Avenue.

The Community Facilities Officer replied that this work commenced last week.

### **Native Fish**

Mrs Cowan circulated to members information obtained highlighting the fact that native fish are being "annihilated" by Council run pumps. The Chair suggested that Council encourage the Regional Council to consider the information. The Engineering Manager reported Council's water take pumps have screens around the intake pipe and in respect to stormwater pumps eels usually travel through these.

Mrs Cowan requested an updated list of Council's lease agreements within the Community.

### **2017 Steamfest**

Mrs Cowan requested that all financial records relating to Steamfest 2017 be referred to Council's Audit and Risk Committee. She said as a ratepayer she is very concerned with the outcome of this event and the process that was undertaken.

The Chief Executive replied that he has prepared a fifteen page report for consideration by Council. He said this will then be referred to the Audit and Risk Committee.

In reply to Mrs Cowan the Chief Executive advised that the report will not be made public as it contains personnel matters.

### **Water Account**

In reply to the Chair the Chief Executive confirmed that the deficit in the water treatment account will increase due to the UAC not being increased. The Chair expressed the opinion that the Board should not be carrying any debt and such debt incurs interest which will have to be paid eventually.

### **Footpath/KC Merrins Avenue**

The Chair suggested that consideration be given in the estimates for footpath/kerb and channel works to be undertaken in Merrins Avenue. The Chief Executive replied that this will require Council approval as the work will be funded out of the District Roading Account. The Chair expressed the opinion that this proposal needs to be indicated. The Chief Executive advised that there is \$20,000 per year for sundry improvements 3 years of which might be brought forward and spent over a 1 year period.

It was agreed that the Chair informally raise this matter at the next meeting of Council.

The Engineering Manager referred to Merrins Avenue and reported that he has investigated the current stormwater system there which is not causing any problems for the properties.

### **Kiwi House Parking**

The Chair reported on discussions with the manager of the Otorohanga Kiwi House Jo Russell and advised that the Otorohanga Netball courts can be utilised for parking by Kiwi House users. Mrs Cowan suggested that discussion on this should also be held with the Otorohanga Netball Club.

### **Proposed Drinking Fountain**

The Community Facilities Officer queried whether the Board wishes to give consideration to the installation of a drinking water fountain on the Village Green. Mrs Cowan said that she is concerned at the possibility of this being vandalised.

It was agreed that it needs to be ascertained whether there is a need for a water fountain, that the tap be vandal proof, and the question of costs be considered.

The Chair undertook to have discussion with the manager of the Isite regarding this suggestion.

### **MEETING CLOSURE**

The meeting concluded at 5.43pm

**CHAIRMAN:**

**DATE:**

## LATE ITEM – RENTAL/RATES RELIEF CONSIDERATION – OTORHANGA MOTOR CAMP

– REF PAGE 4

Tasha Smith  
49 Te Kanawa Street  
Otorohanga  
Operating as Otorohanga Motor Camp

8 February 2018

Otorohanga Community Board  
C/- Otorohanga District Council  
PO Box 11  
Otorohanga

To the Chair and members of the Otorohanga Community Board

I would like to thank you all for granting me permission to be the new camp ground operator. I feel very privileged to be looking after this wonderful little site for Otorohanga Community and their visitors.

Since taking over the camp ground on Domain Drive on 22 December 2017 I've been working hard to get everything up and running to make the most of the summer camping season. I've had a few campers through but I have been struggling to get good numbers due to a multiple of reasons such as;

- The Kiwi House have posted on their website that the Camp Kiwi Holiday Park is now permanently closed. Although I understand that I'm operating under the new name of Otorohanga Motor Camp and that the trading name of Camp Kiwi is no longer in use, I think referring to it as permanently closed could be misleading previous customers who see it and think the camp ground is closed.
- It has taken time due to the timing with the Christmas break just as I took over to get my website organised, but this is now up and running.
- I have also struggled to get the camp ground onto any popular booking websites as the Kiwi House haven't closed their accounts for bookings when they were the operators. An example of this is the site Book Me, when I contacted them they said they couldn't have two accounts running for the same campsite and that the Kiwi House would need to close their account first.
- I am not getting campers coming through from the Kiwi House and yet when I worked at the Kiwi House we were always referring customers through to the camp ground, they were our main source of customers. I am finding this very strange and wonder if the Kiwi House are no longer giving referrals?

Another matter that I have been made aware of is that the Kiwi House have stopped giving campers the 10% discounted entry to the Kiwi House if they camped there – and yet they still make this discount offer to some other services such as the taxi service and Waitomo Hotel.

I have also given up my part time job at the Kiwi House because it felt difficult to work there knowing they weren't happy with me operating the camp ground because they'd wanted it for something else.

It has been difficult to get enough campers through to just cover my running costs and I still haven't received my first water, power, lines charge, rates and rent invoices yet. I'm still not paying myself any money yet as I'm putting everything back into the camp ground at the moment. I am not even paying to have the lawns mown even though it takes me 3.5 hours to mow them!

I have made some progress by securing a permanent camp host to assist with security and greeting customers and in return I've offered him a discounted rate to stay there. I have also had no incidents what so ever with any security issues, even before my camp host arrived.

Due to all of the factors above and as we're nearing the end of the summer camping season, I am writing to ask the Board if you would please consider granting me a rates and rental relief period to buy me some time to build the business up before the next season starts in September. I would really appreciate you supporting me by granting me a relief from these main costs until 1 September 2018 if possible?

I am happy to come speak to the Board if you would like me to or answer any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely

Tasha Smith

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tasha Smith', with a small horizontal line extending to the right.

