

KUAOTUNU RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION INC.

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

HELD AT KUAOTUNU HALL

7 January, 2018

Meeting Opened: 3:10pm

Present: Committee Members Kathy Speirs, Kate Neilsen, Mel Asquith, Evans Young, Keith Goodall, Bill Muir, Gordon McRobbie, Dugald Hoyland, Chris Twemlow and Alastair Brickell along with approximately 65 members of the public as well as special guests Coromandel MP Scott Simpson, Heather Bruce TCDC Community Manager - Mercury Bay, MB Community Board Chairman Paul Kelly and TCDC Councillor Tony Fox

Apologies: Bruce Pilkington, Isabel Gilbert Palmer, Allan Tiplady, Murray McLean, Deli Connell

These apologies were accepted.

Moved: Gordon McRobbie **Seconded:** Chris Twemlow

1. Introduction

Gordon McRobbie welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked our special guests for their attendance and gave a brief introduction. Photographs of recent storm damage to SH25 west of the boatramp were circulated as well.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the 7 January, 2017 public meeting were read by Alastair.

These were accepted.

Moved: Ian MacDonald **Seconded:** Tony Vaughan

3. Correspondence

Inwards – Phone call to the Secretary from Brent Page regarding chairmanship of the January 2017 meeting, concerns about the KRRRA position on the proposed MB Medical Facility, and Matarangi Beach Paper report of public meeting.

Outwards – to Brent Page answering his queries.

Inwards – from Councillor Tony Fox to TCDC with copy to KRRRA on the public meeting mainly concerned about our stance on the proposed MB Medical Facility.

Outwards – to Rob Williams, TCDC CEO answering the points raised by Councillor Tony Fox.

Due to time constraints only the reply to Brent Page was read in full as it also covered some of the points raised by Cr. Fox and the other correspondence was summarised briefly.

Correspondence Accepted

4. Financial Report

Kathy Speirs gave the Treasurers Report, showing \$ 270.08 in the transaction account and \$ 2628.58 in the On Call account plus petty cash of \$11.70 giving a total of \$ 2910.36. This was a significant increase over last year's total of \$2432.58 but would have been even higher if the membership fee had not been lower this year.

Membership

Membership was at least double the previous year with 75 households equating to 130 individuals. It is intended that membership fees will be re-set at the AGM, probably going back to the previous \$10/person or \$20/ address. Kathy requested a show of hands on support for membership to be based on a per household or per person basis and the majority favoured a per person fee. A majority of people also favoured having a 5 year membership fee option.

Kathy noted that at the AGM only paid up members would be eligible to vote on any resolutions and Brent Page enquired if there would be a facility to join up on the day to which Kathy replies that there would.

Constitution Changes

IRD is requiring us to add clauses to our constitution at the AGM regarding personal benefit. This will be a good time to have a general review of this document and also discuss whether April was the best time to have our AGM as in some years the Easter holiday break was in March, not April.

Our current constitution says that changes to the constitution may only be made at an AGM or Special GM, and require majority approval of at least 65% of the financial membership. That means at least 49 households with our current membership level. Therefore we will be dependent upon proxy votes in order to get these changes through.

Copies of the proposed changes will be sent to all members in March for their review, along with proxy voting forms.

Website Development

1. KRRRA Website

The site <krra.org.nz> was developed to provide an alternative rather than KRRRA continuing to use the hall website. This has allowed us to conduct surveys, with the mining one being the first; send newsletters to the community, with the first going to 195 people and the latest to 270. It has also been very useful to receive community feedback on a number of issues.

2. Kuaotunu Hub Website

This is still very much a work in progress and it may be called "the Kuaotunu website" rather than "Kuaotunu Hub" as we have now been able to obtain the www.kuaotunu.nz domain. It will be useful to include such things as:

- community calendar
- directory of local businesses, artists, accommodation providers, etc.
- local group, club and facilities guides and contact details
- beach information; eg. tides, weather, dog restrictions
- newsletters

- local history and current issues
- local attractions

It is yet to be decided whether the KRRRA website will be part of the Kuaotunu website or stay as a separate site.

Report accepted. Moved: Kathy Speirs Seconded: Dugald Hoyland

5. Chairman's Summary

Gordon thanked council and community Board representatives for showing an interest in our specific concerns this year. He noted that KRRRA had had a productive year and gave a summary of issues we had addressed over the last year. These included:

- reopening of Bluff Road
- new bike rack at Luke's Kitchen
- new community notice board near the shop
- two navigation lights for boatramp access
- installation of 200m buoys on a trial basis
- erection of penguin crossing signs
- coin operated rubbish skip installed at the boatramp
- new website "kuaotunu.nz" well underway
- regular newsletters now being produced
- commitment from Domain Board to fund petanque court
- community survey on mining completed
- membership of KRRRA had grown from about 30 to nearly 80 households

Unresolved issues included motor caravan parking at the boatramp and we will be surveying the community on possible options. Thank you to those who had responded to our earlier surveys and newsletters.

6. Subcommittee and Local Group Reports

1. Boatramp Subcommittee

Bill Muir explained that the damage to the gabion baskets and road west of the boatramp had been serious during the recent storm and much of this could have been prevented if LTNZ had acted on our previous reports of damage. This was despite an onsite meeting having been held with LTNZ representatives and KRRRA committee members earlier in the year. The whole gabion basket supported retaining wall was beginning to sag as it was being undermined and now major repair work would be required. KRRRA would continue to press LTNZ to make the needed improvements wide enough to allow for the footpath to be extended. The newly installed western footpath had however also been badly damaged by the storm.

The three 200m marker buoys had been installed as a trial measure to the east of the boatramp. Their purpose was to provide a clear indication of the zone where swimmers might be present for those using boats or jet skis. However the recent storm had also dislodged some of them but they were designed to be easy to relocate.

The navigation lights on the Goodall's hill above the boatramp had been repaired and made brighter and was a big improvement.

Bill mentioned that the Black Jack boatramp needed maintenance work as it had been neglected by council for some time. It was the original and, for a long time, the only boatramp at Kuaotunu and was an important community asset which was still vital in some storm conditions for coastguard access.

Ian Preece enquired if the community would be involved in discussions about any change in the status to this facility to which the answer was affirmative.

2. Bluff Road Subcommittee

Alastair Brickell reviewed KRRRA's actions on this matter which had included extensive and ongoing lobbying of TCDC to try and get much of the blasted material left on the foreshore to be used either as retaining material for the road or for construction of a safety ledge rather than having council pay to have it carted to Matarangi and buried. Leaving the material on the foreshore might have allowed the road to have been moved slightly seaward away from the cliff face. This had been only partially successful but in any event the road was now open to cyclists and pedestrians which was a major step forward after years of no access at all. Indeed before KRRRA had been instigated its lobbying total closure of the road had probably been council's preferred option.

He was thanked for his actions over the years on this matter by Chris Twemlow and this was supported by those attending.

3. Reserves Subcommittee

Chris Twemlow mentioned that there had been some confusion in the Kuaotunu community about the purpose of the new 200m marker buoys and also about future plans for the old boatramp below Black Jack at the eastern end of the Kuaotunu beach.

He also asked Paul Kelly if the Community Board had received KRRRA's letter on the mining survey to which Paul replied that he had. There would be an opportunity for public input on reserve use around May this year and interested persons or groups should consider making submissions.

4. Website Subcommittee

Kathy Speirs noted that the "kuaotunu.nz" domain name was now owned by KRRRA and will be used for the proposed Kuaotunu Hub website.

Yoko Twemlow enquired if it would be a community website and, if so, would community groups be able to update or change their listing information to which the answer was, yes it would be a community website but exactly how and by whom content would be updated was yet to be determined.

Maxine McRobbie thanked Kathy for her ongoing efforts on this project and this was supported by those attending.

5. Proposed Mercury Bay Medical Facility and TCDC's Summer Magazine

Alastair Brickell explained that after a committee meeting had been held this year with TCDC representatives in attendance it had been decided that the best plan now for KRRRA on the Medical Facility issue was to maintain a watching brief. Council had been made well aware of our concerns regarding this facility, mainly relating to funding and location issues. It was now almost 18 months since the last public meeting had been held on this matter and there had not been a great deal of information provided since then.

Councillor Tony Fox commented that the business case being undertaken by the trustees was almost completed and he was confident that results would be positive. Funding for the facility was going to be arranged by the trust that had been established and he thought there would be further news in about two months.

KRRRA had also decided that a similar watching brief would be maintained on the expensive council funded Summer Magazine publication which we were also concerned about.

6. Water Quality Sampling

Gordon McRobbie gave a summary of the results of Regional Council's testing which had shown some e Coli contamination from various sources after storm sampling but no serious problem.

Ian Preece felt that KRRRA needed to pressure WRC for more regular testing and enquired if our streams were safe for swimming.

Paul Kelly noted that Auckland Council did daily waster testing, often using helicopters, and he felt that WRC should do more regular testing in our area. WRC was not keen to do spot checking and in the past he had found testing results had taken very long times and even up to a year to be made known to the MB Community Board or the public.

MP Scott Simpson commented that common sense was required by individuals to decide when it was unwise to be swimming in streams. KRRRA should perhaps involve our WRC councillor, Dal Minogue, to help pressure WRC for more regular testing.

Martin Smith stated that he thought that cheap testing kits were available and should be used but Gordon McRobbie commented that in his opinion, as a qualified water engineer, he did not have much confidence in these cheap test kits.

Chris Twemlow suggested that the committee should follow up on this matter.

7. Kuaotunu Library

Maxine McRobbie gave an outline of the history and progress on this issue and the formation of a library committee following on from the last KRRRA public meeting. A major event was the offer of support from TCDC for using the changing shed at the tennis courts for a library facility. Fundraising events had been held and in addition the Domain Board had agreed to fund upgrade and modifications up to \$30,000 for this building as this was on land managed by them. The Board had recently provided funding for the new BBQ sited adjacent to this building.

This building modification would give the library an 8.4 x 2.6m space and the idea had generated many favourable comments on KRRRA's website. Advantages included having an easily identifiable library building which had been a problem in the past...many did not know we actually had a local library. The area was centrally located with good parking space and modifications to the building could be made relatively quickly. Dugald Hoyland had prepared a plan and costings for the alterations and the next step was obtaining DOC approval.

Heather Bruce from TCDC noted that council was still in the process of gaining approval for the concept.

Maxine was thanked for her efforts and this supported by those attending.

8. Rings Beach Track

Ian MacDonald gave a summary of progress on the track over the last year. Highlights included the track being very busy with increased visitor numbers recorded by the automatic counter, kiwis being heard and signs of their presence on the ground noted, and the removal of many more unwanted pine trees. About \$15,000 had been spent on the pine felling and there was approval for a further \$ 30,000 to be allocated for this.

The reopening of Bluff Road was great news as it would make a useful round trip possible for walkers.

Steve Brown Douglas commented that DOC and the Coromandel Outdoor Language School should be commended for their work with ongoing maintenance and upgrading of the Waitaia Loop Track.

9. Hall Committee

Carrie Parker gave a summary of events over the last year which included the new floor, the improved wheelchair access ramp, and new plantings, largely thanks to Jo Mullins.

The old kauri floorboards and some joists were still in storage and were available for purchase. The new version of the website was working well.

Work in the planning stage included completion of the interior painting and a new window in the storage area. Moisture was an ongoing problem and the south exterior wall iron cladding is badly degraded and in need of replacement.

10. Bird Rescue

Klaudia McLeod reported that things had been very busy recently for her and Annameike Kregting with 24 birds currently being looked after. This was partly a result of the recent stormy weather. However, some birds were being brought in that should probably have been left where they were as their mothers may have been observing them. Sometimes well-meaning people could disrupt this natural process so birds should be observed on the ground before intervening. It was always best to give Bird Rescue a call first.

She also thanked KRRA for its help in getting the “penguin crossing” signs finally installed on the state highway.

11. Kiwi Aversion Training for Dogs

Klaudia advised that this was very effective but needed to be carried out regularly and only took a few minutes.

The next course would be held at Mark Simpson’s yards on Saturday, January 13.

12. Kauri 2000

Jill Kaeppli reported that over 1500 trees had been planted in the Kuaotunu area this year including about 800 on Myndermans Hill and 500 on Black Jack.

Viv McLean commented that kauri dieback was an ongoing serious concern with two major infestations on the Coromandel at Whangapoua and behind Whitianga. It was good to see the cleaning station at Matarangi on the Rings Beach Track being well used this summer. Walkers needed to make sure their footwear was cleaned and stay on tracks and off tree roots and also keep their dogs on a lead. Even if they had cleaned their boots after leaving a track it was important to reclean them on entry as others might be watching and it was important to remind them of the need to use the stations. Recent surveys of walkers nationwide indicated that about 1/3 of visitors had been in infected areas.

Alastair Brickell enquired about recent reports regarding “Trigene” being somewhat ineffective in dieback control. Viv replied that “Sterigene” was now the disinfectant used and it was true that perhaps one stage of the spores was less responsive to the chemicals but it was still the best protection we had. The most important protection was to ensure that all soil material was removed from footwear on entry and exit from tracks. Dilute bleach was effective but not ideal for use on footwear.

13. Kuaotunu Environment Group (KEA)

Chris Twemlow reported that vermin trapping in the Kuaotunu Valley was underway with the help of landowners and it was hoped to have additional DOC funding so this could be extended.

The food forest was being well supported with over 40 volunteers helping out in the last planting session.

14. KAMAG

Martin Smith stated that this had been established in the 1980s and had been successful with the recent survey indicating 94% opposed to mining at Kuaotunu. The government had also recently withdrawn from the objection process it had been involved in with TCDC.

7. General Business

1. Pine Tree Removal on Reserves

There was a comment from the floor that consultation on the removal had been inadequate.

Paul Kelly replied that council had acted on a 3-4 page petition from local residents and replanting was taking place. Work on the remaining macrocarpas would be limited to pruning of dangerous limbs.

Gordon McRobbie reminded the meeting that the KRRA committee had had only a day or so to consult on the removal of the trees in question.

Chris Twemlow noted that the community was welcome to help with the replanting work and TCDC would be providing some funding. Some exotics should probably be retained in areas such as the cemetery. Both he and Viv McLean agreed that community consultation should take place before more removal was done. Viv noted that some replanting had already taken place on the reserve.

Steve Brown Douglas reported that there had been some dangerous limbs falling from pine trees on the Waitaia Loop Track.

2. Footpaths

Viv Mclean enquired as the next stage of work on the footpaths. Paul Kelly stated that this was a joint TCDC/NZTA operation and was being worked on over a 5 year timescale. He was asked by Jannine Verner if an extension near Waitaia Road was planned but he reported that it was not planned at present. KRRA will follow this up with council and we had already asked them to keep us informed on works.

Gordon McRobbie noted that TCDC had been very helpful this year on a number of issues which KRRA committee had appreciated and we needed to continue working with them on these and other matters.

3. Kuaotunu Katchup

Jannine Verner reported that this was growing and now had about 620 members. Gordon McRobbie commented that there had been some misinformation being posted on Katchup recently which he was concerned about. He noted that it was actually KRRA that was the elected body representing Kuaotunu residents.

Meeting Closed: 5:00pm

Signed: Alastair Brickell, 27 January 2018