

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of The Lake Rotoiti Community Association

Held on January 2nd 2019, 10 am, at Pikiaro Rugby League Club, Mourea.

Present

Jim Stanton, Mary Stanton, Nick Miller, Elizabeth Miller, Phill Thomass, Ian McLean (Life Members)
Steve Chadwick (Mayor of Rotorua)
Dave Donaldson (RDC Councillor)
Doug Leeder (Chair, BOP Regional Council)
Nick Chater, Jim Stanton, Phill Thomass (Rotorua Lakes Community Board)
Hilary Prior (Chair), John Bowen, Sherilyn Coney, Jim Stanton, David Wilson, Fraser Wilson, Claire Miller (LRCA Committee).

Approximately 70 people in total were present at the meeting.

Apologies

Todd McClay, Kevin Winters, Lyall Thurston, Andy Bruere, Helen Creagh, Peter and Leslie Stevenson, Faye Stamp, Jeff Turner, Bill Hunter, Lisa Wallace, Bruce Aitcheson, Dave Mansell, Heather & Sax Crawford.

Welcome

Ngaro Morehu provided a karakia for the meeting.
Hilary Prior opened the meeting and welcomed all official visitors and others present. Hilary apologised that the incorrect date and time of the AGM were given in the newsletter.

Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting

Motion: Nick Chater proposed that the Minutes be accepted, seconded by Bob Armstrong. Accepted by the meeting.

Matters arising

Nil.

Chair's Report

The Chair's report is comprised in the last Newsletter issue. The catfish issue is now becoming a huge problem in the Rotorua lakes. There is a proposed review of the rates being looked at by RLC and we are hopeful that this will go ahead. A public meeting updating on the Eastern Rotoiti and Rotoma Sewerage Scheme will be held Saturday 19th Jan 10am at the Rotoiti Sports Club. The work on the plant construction is ongoing and almost complete for some parts. Details on reticulation and STEP systems are given. 130 Rotoma residents have agreed to have STEP tanks and of these, 61 are already installed. RLC is now designing and costing the reticulation system for residents between Manawahe Rd and Curtis Rd. A decision will be made on which processing system is to be used after tenders have been received and costings looked at, in consultation with residents and iwi. The reticulation system will be going in at the end of 2019. There has been a lot of work and development for the Safer Roads programme around Okere and Mourea, and a lot of consultation with the local communities.

Financial Report

Don Stotter presented the accounts of the association. Membership and subscription numbers are down this year, and expenses for the website are changing as the association is moving to a new website host. There was approximately \$300 excess income over expenditure.

Graham Prior, honorary auditor, was thanked for his services.

Motion: It was moved by Don Stotter that the financial report be accepted, seconded by Roy Duffy. Accepted by the meeting.

Hilary thanked Don for his work for the association over the years, and noted that he is stepping down as Treasurer. If anyone is willing to take up this position, please contact the committee.

Election of Officers

Hilary has noted that she would prefer to stand down as President as this will be her 11th year and she has given a lot of time to this association.

Chair: Jim Stanton took the chair for election of chairperson. He thanked Hilary for her contribution to the Association, and noted that she has done remarkable work for us, in addition to giving her time to a lot of other organisations. We do need to think very seriously about succession. Jim asked for nominations from the floor.

Hilary Prior was nominated as Chair by Jim Stanton, seconded by Sherilyn Coney. There were no other nominations. Hilary Prior was nominated to acclamation.

Committee:

All committee members are re-standing: John Bowen, Sherilyn Coney, Claire Miller, Jim Stanton, Don Stotter, Helen Wallace, David Wilson, Fraser Wilson. Their re-election was taken as moved.

General Business

Lucas McDonald (BOPRC) and William Anaru (Te Arawa Lakes Trust) - report on catfish

Catfish were initially found in March 2016 in Te Weta Bay, Lake Rotoiti, and have been increasing since then. Adult fish have now been discovered in Lake Rotorua on 18th Dec 2018. There is surveillance at Lakes Okareka and Tarawera. Trapping will intensify now that urban iwi are affected and involved in discussions. BOPRC and Te Arawa Lakes Trust are working together on this issue. There are 30 acoustic buoys in Lake Rotoiti to track microchipped fish. Jeff Hewett is the contractor, setting and retrieving 40 nets per day in Lake Rotoiti. There is also now volunteer net setting.

Blair Richardson: Why aren't BOPRC trapping all year round?

Lucas McDonald: Volunteers might be trapping all year round if they wish, but otherwise catfish can go into hibernation over winter, and so trapping is less effective in this time.

Brian Stamp: Is there any relationship in the downgrading of trout fishing in Lake Taupo with the catfish incursion there?

Lucas McDonald: Yes. He has spoken with the DoC officer there and they were concerned. The trout fishery has survived but not necessarily as good as it was.

Graham Prior: What is the end-game of the netting programme - is Lake Rotoiti a write-off now? Are we just using it now for a source of research for other locations?

Lucas McDonald: No, there are 3 branches of the programme now. Operations are trying to disrupt the fish population.

Graham Christie: What is actually involved in operations? Why only one contractor – is it dependent on volunteers?

Lucas McDonald: One contractor is involved. The main limitation is money.

Graham Christie: Why? If this is a real problem, then why can't we spend more money on it? Rates are going up not down. Is this issue getting its fair share of the budget?

Graham Prior: You can make recommendations and reports back to the council, that the community is concerned about this. Do you think this is an issue that needs more money?

Nick Chater: There have been studies worldwide and eradication efforts haven't been successful anywhere, with all the technology currently available.

Graham Prior: So Lake Rotoiti is a write-off. How is the research applied?

Graham Christie: How does the research provide a solution? Once you know where the fish go, do you depend on the volunteers to catch them, or will there be more input from BOPRC? Does the info get fed into the worldwide research?

Lucas McDonald: The research is going into a Master's degree study, may possibly get published in a science journal.

Don Atkinson: The eDNA work will give a good look at what is happening in the other lakes. One of the major pushes is to get a predator apart from rainbow trout to predate the catfish.

Blair Richardson: That is stupid, like putting carp into the Waikato. Introducing yet another pest into the lakes.
Don Atkinson: Both brown trout and long-finned eel are in the lakes but not in sufficient numbers. The science is not yet proven on these things.

Mary Stanton: 25 years ago the local iwi were aware of catfish farming in Kaitaia, and were concerned that the catfish might contaminate the lakes locally. They were told that this was not to be worried about.

William Anaru: Just replying to the question of whether it is a waste of time. Te Arawa Lakes Trust believe that they might be able to recover the mana of these lakes from the catfish and other problems, and have to keep trying.

Graham Prior: More should be done with the research than just a Master's thesis – it should be putting out information into the global awareness.

Lucas McDonald: BOPRC doesn't do the research itself, it's done by Waikato University in conjunction with BOPRC and Te Arawa Lakes Trust.

Steve Chadwick: These questions reflect what was heard at the Te Arawa Lakes Trust and Rotorua Community Board meeting. BOPRC and TALT and RLC all need to work together on this. We are also acknowledging that LWQS keep looking at incursions and pests and keeps on at the council to keep on top of them. The hope was that we can contain them. Science will keep up and eventually we will be able to contain them, like wallabies. We do have funding in place, but just have to hope that there will be a solution found in the future.

Graham Prior: What is the consequence of this incursion?

Lucas McDonald: Catfish are known to create poorer water quality – they eat anything, stir up the sediment, predate native fauna and trout.

Samuel Martin: Can money from our rates go towards catfish nets? Supply ratepayers with nets?

William Anaru: We have got 40 that we are giving out to people and teaching how to use them - so if anyone wants one talk to William.

Nick Miller: Theoretically it should be possible to eradicate catfish from Lake Rotoiti. We would have to pour a lot of resources into it, and the residents and locals would have to put up with a lot of inconvenience in the meantime. We just need the resolve.

Steve Chadwick – is one fulltime person enough to work on this problem?

Lucas McDonald: I am running the biosecurity operations side, William is the community liaison, and others in the team are also working on this. Under the new pest management plan BOPRC will move catfish from an eradication pest to a progressive containment pest.

Unidentified enquirer: How spread are they throughout Lake Rotoiti?

Lucas McDonald: They have been caught mainly at the western end, but decrease as they go east. Not sure how far east they go Not many trout have been caught in the nets.

Samuel Martin: Is there a website that shows the data or sends it through to anyone?

Lucas McDonald: The volunteers have access to an app where they can add data of their catch.

Unidentified enquirer: Do the nets have to be on the bottom? Perhaps put a bounty on the catfish.

Don Atkinson: We have no ability to nuke them, like the calicivirus for rabbits.

Lucas McDonald: Unfortunately, there are no solutions like that. Unintended effects for things like rotenone, so we can't use that.

Nick Miller: Lake Rotoiti is the national stronghold of the nationally threatened dabchick population. Dabchick have been caught and killed in the catfish nets. What is the situation around this?

Lucas McDonald: Yes, there have been dabchicks caught, in the low 20s. We have now changed the nets configuration so we can release any dabchicks caught.

Mary Stanton: There are not enough people working on the problem. There is only one boat working from Okawa Bay – 2 people & 1 dog. Compared to the number of other boats on the lake, this problem deserves better than one boat, and more help required.

Hilary thanked both Lucas and William for giving up their time today to come and inform us.

Other questions

- Peter Browning: Down at Hinehopu end, we sometimes have small leeches (2-4mm), coming from the lakeweed. Does anyone know what is going on?

Hilary Prior: We have a boatshed in Te Weta Bay, and every time we have gone in to access the boat we get leeches there.

- Cynthia Armstrong: Asking RLC to clear the path between Gisborne Point and Emery's Store before the Christmas holidays. She has to take her secateurs to cut the blackberry back off the path. Also people cut a willow tree down and the debris obscures the path and the tree is also regenerating. There is a big sign

saying to 'beware of trucks' (working on the sewerage scheme) blocking the path. No trucks have been working since Christmas. It would be good if people didn't have to go on the road to get past these blockages.

- Graham Prior: Question regarding resource consents for lake structures. If anyone has got their pack then they'll be aware that lake retaining walls were excluded from the resource consent. The solution is that if you want your wall included in the consent, then there is a process, which will delay the total process and cost money for an engineer's report. Those walls should have been included in the original consent. Was told by Sheryn Owen of BOPRC that they were aware of the problem at the start but it was a little difficult to include so they left it out. Now it has become the ratepayers' problem, and getting an engineer's report is not part of the solution.

Steve Chadwick: Possibly you were not around when we looked at lake structures and had a good meeting on it last year. The meeting included several organisations in discussion, and we made good progress. We didn't even know at the time we looked at fixtures how many jetties there were. Now we know. RLC doesn't consent fixtures. That's TALT's responsibility.

Please attend the meeting on the sewerage on the 19th. There were no elected representatives at the last meeting and a lot of distress. Not a minor issue but a major issue. Will mention Cynthia's issue at the first meeting back.

- Roy Duffy: An update on the research he did last year on jetty renewals. Who in the audience has received jetty renewal pack? About half of the meeting have. In the last time talking to her, Sheryn had admitted the process is going very slowly and it hasn't progressed very far since last year. Not sure how that will be resolved. Following on from Graham Prior's comments on the original resource consenting and walls, councils had decided to implement a consenting process on these without consulting owners. It is not now the owner's fault that the walls weren't included in the original process. It is important to make sure that these are not treated as new structures. We should take up Steve's offer to re-engage with council – however it is more a BOPRC issue than RLC. Apparently, anyone who puts a structure on their land - if they have riparian rights - if they are not on water's edge or in the lake then that doesn't require a resource consent. If later erosion means that the wall ends up in the water, then that should not count as a lake structure.

Hilary Prior: Has spoken to two retired builders who did a lot of work building erosion protection walls in the 1950s and '60s with understanding from RLC that it was being done to help protect properties rather than being a structure like a jetty which was purely recreational. This needs to be remembered and taken account of.

- Mary Browning: I have received resource pack, filled it in and paid fee. It was receipted and acknowledged on 3rd May 2018. How long do we wait until we get the consent coming through?

Doug Leeder: These questions were asked last year. Short answer – I don't know. My understanding is that these were going to be done in bulk. There is a lot of correspondence coming through to with people's displeasure with this process. This delay is not an adequate timeframe and I apologise. I will give an answer providing information to all those who have lodged an application, and to LRCA, by the end of January 2019.

Nick Miller: We have heard various names floated around today with regard to this issue. The lady mentioned gave a lot of extremely misleading information in a previous part of this process, which I went to considerable trouble to correct. Hopefully this time around we will get some people who know what they're doing, rather than people at the last set of hearings who were not familiar with the issue.

- Grant Wallace: Could some please update us on when Endothall will be able to be used on our lake to kill lakeweed?

Don Atkinson: I'm not too sure. There is a draft consent in process.

Lucas McDonald: The public hearing was in late Nov/early Dec 2018. The decision on that will be granted in mid-January. BOPRC will be deciding on how to use Endothall after that, in consultation with NIWA. Probably a small-scale trial will be undertaken first to see how effective it is.

- Sam Martin: Last year the Navy conducted a survey on Lake Rotorua, updating the charts. Could we get the survey done for Lake Rotoiti as well? It would be free from the Government if we put in an application. Also, perhaps a minimum requirement of a Day Skipper's license to drive on the lakes, in hopes to get improved water safety on the lakes.

- Phill Thomass: A reminder to everyone that it is Local Government elections this year. Those who have holiday homes here are also entitled to vote in this area – there are contact details etc at the back of the hall.

At last election only 20 out-of-area households voted. There are local community boards to support ratepayers. There is one vote per household.

- Ivan Thomson: Can we please have an update on the rating review, and have we now lost all of our rural differential?

Jim Stanton: In the newsletter is an update on where we are at with regards to the review. We have lost the last bit of the rating differential. Every year the rural and lakes communities have asked the council to do a review to determine whether the rating system is fair and equitable. RLC via last year's Long Term Plan

undertook to do a rating review, and started that 3 months ago, through community focus groups which RLC put together. The results have gone back to RLC for assessment. A meeting will be held within RLC in February and a decision will be made at that time whether to actually undertake a review and what matters will be considered at that point.

Steve Chadwick: Four areas emerged from the focus groups – a trend that the Universal Annual General Charge should be reduced and more targeted rates introduced, that Maori freehold land should be looked at, enforcement of short-term accommodation rules, and more education around how rates are used.

- Marcus Wilkins: Wish to raise two topics:

1. Let RLC know that in the Okere area, residents all pay rates for our properties and the RLC services we use. The motor camp has at least 20 people who are permanent residents. They do not pay any rates and make heavy use of the rubbish transfer station and other RLC services.
2. Have been trying to get through to the Minister of Transport and his deputy about the Safe Roads programme, with regards to the Okere Falls area. At Okere Falls, Safe Roads are putting in a median strip for a pedestrian refuge, for the large numbers of residents and rafters/kayakers crossing the State Highway there. Marcus says that there should be an underpass there – engineers he has consulted say it might be expensive to install but possible. Each death on the road is costed at \$4 million. What is the feeling of the meeting whether Marcus should keep trying to get through to the Ministry?

A show of hands showed that the entire meeting concurred with Marcus.

Brian Stamp: The meeting should pass a motion backing up Marcus.

Steve Chadwick: Phill Thomass got RLC and Stavros Michael out to look at the road at Okere. The lake level in April 2018 rose catastrophically due to a heavy rain event. The NZTA engineers say that it is hydrological folly to do an underpass on a lake edge while dealing with climate change.

Blair Richardson: Put in a submersible pump and a float valve to pump out the underpass if necessary. A pump would only cost around \$1000.

Steve Chadwick: NZTA will start doing barrier work after all the safety work is done on the road. If we start pushing back on this issue, then there will be a delay on the barrier work. Te Ngae Rd is the main roading priority in the area, and is already underfunded.

Sherilyn Coney: Marcus should start a petition to get a lot of community names on it for backing, rather than just fighting it singly.

Marcus Wilkins: There is no need to worry about the water down there. Engineers say it can be channelled away from the underpass.

Motion of the meeting: The Community Association supports the establishment of an underpass or alternative solution that totally isolates pedestrian traffic from road traffic at Okere Falls. Put forward by Brian Stamp, seconded by Roy Duffy. All in favour.

- Lindsay Browns: What about a speed camera as you come down the hill that issues tickets and the money stays within the community? There is a lot of speeding traffic in that area.

Hilary Prior: I'm not sure that that solution is legally possible.

Jock Scholler: He was part of the early group behind the start of the sewerage scheme at Okawa Bay. One of the big issues that came up in the presentation at that time was that the engineers said it was too expensive to install sewerage and that we should forget it. One learning from that is that engineers say good one-liners but that these should be investigated rather than just trusting them, especially when people's lives are at stake. We are asking Steve to stick up for her community on this issue.

Steve Chadwick: I have been around for a while. I don't mince around and we don't rely on one engineer.

Have put this issue through the Community Board, and didn't get a one-liner back, but they have gone away and brought good answers back. This is a public safety issue and what Safer Roads are all about.

- Jan Wilkins: For 4-5 years I headed up the Okere road clean-up volunteer group. She has spoken to members of the Community Board about the foliage which was originally planted to beautify the area. It is now well past that point and needs to be cut back as it is a disruptive and a distraction to pedestrians and traffic. Get some young rafters to cut it back.

Doug Leeder, Chair, BOP Regional Council

It is good to come to this meeting and hear challenging questions that make you think about how things are working. People are struggling with delays and having issues with processes. For a couple of years BOPRC have been dealing with issues at the Kaituna Gorge. Have been trying to facilitate a discussion between kayakers and local community, but no-one wants to come to the table. There are also problems working with the Rotoiti Rotoma Sewerage Scheme, and Plan Change 10. Under Plan Change 10 the water quality in Rotoiti will not see an improvement until 2030, and it won't start being implemented until 2020. The process to date has cost more than \$M200, and may yet result in going back to solutions that were ruled out in 2003 for being too expensive at that point. TALT want to be an active participant in managing activities on the lakes. Need Ministry for the Environment to grant funding to assist with this. The most difficult one is biosecurity – it

is the biggest issue that we face as a region and a country. Eradication is very difficult to achieve – we have to go for containment while we are hoping to find something else. BOPRC at governance level are deciding that catfish and wallabies are prime targets and have increased the budget by \$1.5million dollars. Against the recommendations of staff BOPRC Council are now looking at implementing a bounty system for wallabies. Also, the increasing prevalence of Canadian geese – have warned TALT that this is an issue.

Steve Chadwick, Mayor, Rotorua Lakes Council

Steve thanked Hilary for all her work as Chair. This is a very strong community association and has got a lot of results in the past. Steve would hope that someone will stand up to work with Hilary in the future.

Hilary Prior gave thanks to Jan and Kaye for their work putting together food for the meeting attendees to enjoy today.

The meeting closed at 11.55 am.