

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

Held on January 2nd, 2023, 10 am, at Pikiaro Rugby League Club, Mourea.

Present

Jim Stanton, Mary Stanton, Nick Miller, Elizabeth Miller (Life Members)
Gregg Brown, Conan O'Brien (Rotorua Lakes Council Councillors)
Doug Leeder (Chair, Bay of Plenty Regional Council)
Greg Corbett, Rosemary Cross, Roly Bagshaw, Ella Tennent (BOP Regional Council Staff)
Nick Chater, Peter McMillan (Rotorua Lakes Community Board)
Don Atkinson (LakesWater Quality Society)
Roy Duffy (Deputy Chair), Sherilyn Coney, Mike Gowan, Tom Macky, Annamarie Jensen, Claire Miller (LRCA Committee).

Approximately 60 people in total were present at the meeting.

Welcome

Roy Duffy, Deputy Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all official visitors and others present.

Nick Jensen gave the opening karakia.

Apologies

Phill Thomass, Pamela Pederson, Arapeta Tahana, John and Sue LaRoche, Tania Tapsell (Mayor), David Lane, Robyn Duffy, Jenny Robertson, Sarah Uhl.

Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting

Motion: Nigel Donne proposed that the Minutes be accepted, seconded by Kate Barry-Piceno. Accepted by the meeting.

Matters arising from the previous minutes

None.

Treasurer's Report

Jim Stanton presented the accounts of the association and explained the details.

The accounts have been reviewed by Graham Prior and the committee expressed their gratitude to him for doing so.

Jim noted that Don Stotter, the previous Treasurer for the LRCA, passed away some months ago and felt that this needed to be mentioned to the meeting as he was a friend to many here and he will be missed.

Motion: It was moved by Jim Stanton that the financial report be accepted, seconded by Bob Armstrong. Accepted by the meeting.

Roy Duffy: The committee has discussed whether or not the current membership fee should be raised from its current level but has decided to keep it at \$15 as we do not want to create any barriers to membership, but in turn we are very grateful that this membership fee is supplemented by so many people being generous with donations, which enable us to be in a more secure position.

Chair's Report

Roy noted that most of the substance of the Chairperson's report can be found in the print newsletter which shows our activity throughout the year. We have had a really strong year in the Communications department – Sherilyn and Annamarie and Tom have done a lot of work in these areas to get information out to our members in different media. We are hoping to get some new blood in the committee in these areas, to prevent burn-out in the committee.

Election of Officers

Chair: Reina Engelen was nominated as Chair by Jim Stanton, seconded by Claire Miller. There were no other nominations. Reina was elected with acclamation.

Deputy Chair: Roy Duffy was nominated as Deputy Chairperson by Claire Miller, seconded by Annamarie Jensen. There were no other nominations. Roy was elected.

Treasurer: Jim Stanton was nominated as Treasurer by Mike Gowan, seconded by Claire Miller. There were no other nominations. Jim was elected as Treasurer.

Secretary: Claire Miller was nominated as secretary by Jim Stanton, seconded by Mike Gowan. There were no other nominations. Claire was elected as Secretary.

Committee:

Sherilyn Coney is retiring after many years of work for the committee.

The following committee members are re-standing: Mike Gowan, Tom Macky, Sarah Uhl, Annamarie Jensen. They were nominated by Jim Stanton and seconded by Claire Miller.

No other nominations received. All were accepted by the meeting.

Nominations were closed. All re-standing committee members were approved by the meeting.

Roy asked for volunteers from areas around the lake which are not currently covered, and also for someone who is able to produce the print newsletter for the future, as Sherilyn is stepping down from this. People can either volunteer now or if they are interested later then they can approach the committee as we have the ability to co-opt people onto the committee later in the year. Roy also said that if current members can encourage their family to join that would be great - the association needs the newer generations to be more interested in joining, to continue the association into the future.

Roy nominated Sherilyn for Life Membership of the LRCA in recognition of all her hard work for the LRCA and the community over the years. This was seconded by Bob Armstrong and applauded by the meeting.

General Business:

Lake Structures

Roy Duffy gave a brief update on the lake structures consent process. A lot of work has been done by Roy and other representatives from different areas of the lake. Roy also acknowledged the managers and consenting staff at BOPRC who have been very good to deal with during this long process. LRCA's sub-committee group has worked through a lot of submissions and conditions with BOPRC and TALT and has reached a point where the group propose that they are willing to recommend to structure owners to approve the current conditions of the consent if TALT are willing to agree to a 30-year consent term rather than a 10-year term, due to the amount of work involved in the consenting process. Roy recommended to structure owners that if this process does go to a Commissioner hearing that all owners notify that they wish to be heard at the hearing and make personal statements on the value to them of their lake structures and the impact of the process and the need for a 30-year term. We are now at the point at of the process which needs a strong body of support from the individual owners as well as the association.

Roy invited Ella Tennent of BOPRC to talk to the meeting on the topic.

Ella thanked Roy for the opportunity to speak to the meeting. BOPRC have continued to process non-notified consents, and are hoping to avoid going to a hearing if possible. This would give more certainty and the opportunity to address everyone's concerns. If it does go to a hearing, then applicants should have an

organised statement around issues – this would be better than each individual having different concerns to raise.

Mike Gowan: Could you clarify for the meeting the proportion of 30-year consents that have already been granted for the jetties? Ella: I don't have a number available, sorry. All the non-notified consents are coming out with a 30-year consent. Roy: The BOPRC report that came out from Sherryn Owen recently says 7.7% of consents around Lake Rotoiti have been issued to date – these are the non-notified consents. Approximately 10% of Lake Rotoiti structures are non-notified. Consequently the high number (close to 90%) of 'limited notified' consents have not yet been granted, and it is these LRCA is working with BOPRC to attempt to resolve with TALT.

Peter Browning: He has been talking to another resident who indicated that the information that is held about people's properties may be incorrect, which is the reason that they have been evaluated as 'minor' rather than 'less than minor'. Is there a way for people to check their information? Ella: Yes, email BOPRC and we can check it for you.

Kate Barry-Piceno: with the non-notified consents, why has the BOPRC only allowed for 30-year consents rather than the maximum allowed 35-years under the Act? Why has BOPRC done this? Ella: BOPRC are trying to coordinate the consent terms with the 10-year terms of the LINZ leases for water and air strata, and the RLC 'right to occupy' licences for those structures on esplanade reserves. They would need to be renewed twice for consents with 30 year terms. Resource consents are now coming out with the lease included as well – BOPRC are coordinating this.

Andrea Macfarlane: Will the 30-year consent be backdated 5 years or will they be from when they are actually signed off? Ella: We have been signing off a lot at the same time – they are mostly from December this year, and they will not be backdated.

Nick Miller: I remember a hearing on lake structures maybe 30 years ago, when I asked the Council planners present then how many owned boats – none had that history. This is not a great information base for the planners to be working from. Ella: Planners do have to make decisions on things they are not involved in – they rely on expert advice from others. BOPRC work closely with LRCA on what their observations are.

Mary Stanton: 77 years ago remembers only 7 boats on Lake Rotoiti. Why don't people sort this issue out? It is taking too long, and our environment suffers in the meantime. There has never been so much algal bloom in the lake as today. There are no specific warning signs where people are swimming.

Tim Manning: How many other lakes have had the process concluded and how many 30-year consents have been granted? Why are TALT asking for the 10-year term? Ella: None of the processes for the other lakes are concluded yet – Lake Tarawera is close but not yet finished. All the non-notified consents have been done for the lakes. Can't speak to TALT's reasoning but indications are that they wish to reduce the number of structures over time. Roy: The way that TALT express their desire is to have intergenerational involvement in decision-making and that a 30-year term would mean it would be another 30 years before iwi can have input into the lake decisions again. Their policy document He Mahere Taiao o ngā Wai o Te Arawa on their website is clear that TALT want to reduce the number of structures on the lake and that they want to have more shared structures. If members do have a shared structure, they need to emphasise that to the Commissioners in the case of a hearing.

Elizabeth Miller: On behalf of the meeting, thanks to Roy and the rest of the subcommittee for all the time that they have put into this issue that is significant for us all.

Lake Levels

Jim Stanton: He gave a Powerpoint presentation on the Lake Rotoiti water levels over the year. The first half of the year was fairly dry and the lake levels were usually at or around the minimum desired operating level. At the end of May we had heavy rain and since then there has been consistently wet conditions, meaning that the lake has been operating at the top end of the desired level. The Okere control gates have been persistently fairly wide open to alleviate or prevent flooding at the eastern end of the lake. LRCA keeps an eye on the operating of the gates and has a good relationship with the BOPRC operating staff, who do their best to balance the needs of the river rafting community and the lakeside community.

With regard to the new operating consent, following submissions there is now an allowance that BOPRC can do a one-time drawdown at any time of the year during the period of the consent, rather than being restricted to LRCA's recommended late autumn-winter period. Once they decide to go ahead with the drawdown, they must widely notify the community a week beforehand. LRCA negotiated conditions with BOPRC before the hearing regarding observations that should be made during the drawdown which were largely ignored by the Commissioners, but there is a provision for some observation during the period. Thanks to Kate Barry-Piceno and other residents of Okere Road who gave a lot of expert advice during this process.

East Rotoma and Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme

Good progress is being made on installations of the new systems. Fulton Hogan are doing good work but owners need to make appointments for site visits if not yet arranged, and to ensure reinstatement is done to their satisfaction.

Sue Taylor: Who do we ask about the terrible smell at the pumping station outside the Taheke Motor Camp at this time of the year? Every year it is appalling. Jim: Rotorua Lakes Council are responsible for this at the pumping station there – contact Stavros Michael, the infrastructure manager. Ella: People can also call the BOPRC Pollution Hotline to make a complaint. Mary: We get a smell at Okawa Bay as well at certain times of the year. We get a lot of lakeweed removed and when it rots there is a terrible smell. Hopefully there will be a solution soon.

S.H. 30 Speed Review

Tom Macky: For some time we have been concerned about the speed of the traffic going along the eastern shores of Lake Rotoiti. In the 19 months since the Waka Kotahi speed review began, there have been a disproportionate number of serious incidents along those 11 km between Moose Lodge and Hongi's Track – 2 fatalities, 4 people seriously injured, and a truck and trailer rolling. Waka Kotahi appear to agree with our recommendations for lower speed, but we have not yet had results published. They advised in April that the conclusion was due to come out a few weeks from then, but in December they advised that it was hoped it would come out before Christmas. The reasons for delay are a new Government requirement on how to create speed limits, and the time that it takes to create and install new road signage. LRCA are pushing Waka Kotahi for progress as hard as we can.

Lakeweed/Algal Blooms

Roy Duffy: LRCA set up a sub-committee with representatives from different areas of the lake to provide feedback to TALT, RLC and LINZ about our observations of lakeweed. We requested they feed these into their evaluation on which areas of the lake should be sprayed with diquat twice a year. If members are concerned about proliferation of weed or if your area of the lake is not being covered, please let us know. We have succeeded in getting a lot more area sprayed this year than in some previous years.

Don Atkinson: The consent conditions on Okawa Bay have been relaxed – originally it and Te Weta Bay were considered closed bays and only 5% of the bay could be sprayed at any one time, but this restriction has now been reviewed and lifted. Over the last 3 years the November spray seems to coincide with an algal bloom afterwards. We have requested to have a meeting with LINZ and RLC early in the new year to get a better understanding of what we are trying to achieve and get a programme together going forward. We have established a target for Lake Rotoiti of restoration of native weeds and eradication of the invaders – after 4 years we should be starting to get progress on this. However, this year's algal bloom is the worst we have ever seen in Okawa Bay.

Blair Kirk (Okawa Bay): I have heard that there is a harvester over in Lake Rotoma – is there any opportunity for people to get harvesting services over here as a solution rather than spraying? Greg Corbett (Biosecurity Manager, BOPRC): BOPRC own the harvester. They have been working closely with TALT and LINZ on the spraying programme. Looking at the potential of using a harvester to reduce the weed biomass before spraying. Investigating how much of an opportunity it offers – using the harvester only is not a long-term solution as it only reduces the lakeweed for a couple of weeks, like a lawn-mower. Roy Duffy: I have a question relating to the resource consent matter: TALT are opposed to private boat ramps being consented. LRCA have said that BOPRC need to work more closely with people on inspection of boats on private ramps. We have been asking BOPRC to work on a self-certifying app for people to confirm that they check their trailers before launching/retrieving and make sure they are clean. Greg: The app is still in development but they are hoping to have a version available early in 2023. There is also the issue that there is not universal cellphone coverage across the lake.

Richard Amery: A lot of people would like to have an explanation why the weed harvester isn't moved into areas where the weed is growing around jetties as an emergency measure – what do people need to do?

Greg: It will only give short-term benefits, and also the current harvester is a big machine – it is not easy to manoeuvre it close to jetties. Also there is a question of who pays for operating it. The machine was originally purchased to remove nutrients from Lake Rotoehu but has been used for some other issues since then.

Richard: We know it has been used in the past – why not now? Greg: It comes down to the cost of doing it. In the past it has been used to reduce some wind-driven weed, especially at the Lake Rotorua lakefront.

Blair Kirk: If everyone in Okawa Bay agrees to pay for it, how do we actually get the harvester in? How do we get a price quote? Greg: We can discuss this with Don later in the year. Blair Kirk: This need is not a surprise – it's happened for many years. We don't need more meetings. Greg: We are working with LINZ and TALT to get a better solution for Okawa Bay.

Andrea Macfarlane: Is it true that the November spraying caused the bloom, and why can't the spraying take place earlier in the year, rather than when it is warm? Greg: Spraying in the November period has taken place for many years and a bloom afterwards is a rarity. High water temperatures this year may be a factor in creating the bloom. Andrea: Is it possible to update health communications weekly to let people know how the water quality is tracking? People don't know whether it is safe or not to swim at any time. Greg: Health warnings come from Toi Te Ora Public Health so we will talk to them about their processes.

Bob Smith: About the bloom on the rest of the lake, some research indicates that the excessive rain during the year washes more nutrients into the lake. Does BOPRC have a view of this? Greg: I can't speak to the science, but yes, the extra runoff is being looked at.

Mary Stanton: In the past the Newton family asked the harvester to do something about the weed problem, because the weed was hampering catching koura. After harvesting though, the weed started growing higher, and they needed trucks to take away the weed and it stacked up on the marina site, and that meant that there wasn't space for the marina to launch boats. However, if the harvester comes back now we can find Maori-owned available land to store the weed on. Greg: TALT now manage the weed programme on behalf of LINZ and take a stronger view of protecting cultural views.

Nick Miller: Re the earlier discussion on water clarity: At the moment in Te Weta Bay the visibility depth is 1 foot (30 cm) – this is the worst he has ever seen. Re lake structures: Should we have floating lake structures which are not anchored in the lakebed which is owned by TALT? They work in other areas such as Westhaven Marina.

Roy: The takeaway that we need to consider is that someone should have the cost analysis prepared before the planned next meeting with BOPRC, LINZ and LRCA. Greg agreed that he will get this sorted.

Invited speakers

Roly Bagshaw, BOPRC Harbourmaster:

Harbourmaster tasks include buoy maintenance around the lakes area and across the BOPRC region. Over the summer season they have patrol teams from Labour Weekend through to Queens' Birthday Weekend. Things that they keep an eye on include jetski behaviour, 5-knot speed limits near the shoreline. Available at the meeting is "Boating in the Bay", a publication outlining Navigational Safety Bylaws and what people can do on the water. Keen to get across a number of safety measures to the community. There has been a lot of pressure put on the lakes in the last couple of years – numbers of users continues to increase since COVID. Patrols keep seeing a lot of noncompliance with lifejacket wearing – now trying to enforce zero tolerance on this, especially given the fatalities on the lakes this year. If people see bad behaviour on the lakes, please call the Harbourmaster – 0800 55 66 87 or harbourmaster@boprc.govt.nz. One of the targets for communication and education are AirBnBs where there are a lot of new visitors who might not know what to do.

Andrea Macfarlane: Do you do any patrols at dusk, on the lack of boat navigation lights? There have been some very near misses. Roly: Yes, we need to do something better with this – have received advice that we also need to be less predictable in timing of patrols. Need to be out there more at dark and are hoping to improve.

Doug Leeder, BOPRC Chair:

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to attend these meetings – it is very impressive to see the BOPRC staff and also the community attendance on a public holiday. Firstly, it is worthwhile to note the passing of Tā Toby Curtis. He was a great resource, very passionate about the lakes and will be sadly missed. Arapeta Tahana the head of the new Pikiāo Kotahitanga organisation is also a very effective person and one that LRCA should make the effort to work with. One of the highest priorities, especially at the moment, is developing relationships not just at a high level with TALT but also with the hapu that we deal with around the lakes. It is very difficult for BOPRC to do this with the resourcing levels available, but I encourage the communities to also do very hard work to build relationships with the individual hapu.

Re the East Rotoma and Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme – this has had a cost overrun of about \$15m. The Minister for the Environment has just agreed that BOPRC can take \$10m from the Lake Incentives Scheme and put that into completing the sewerage scheme, as long as RLC consults on having a specific targeted rate to replace the funds into the Lakes Incentives Scheme. The Minister does expect that the Lake Tarawera Scheme will be delivered on time and on budget. This may be a considerable problem for Lake Tarawera down the line.

Roy thanked everyone for their contribution and for paying attention. We look forward to your support for the future. Roy acknowledged that the wonderful group of ladies who have previously supplied the meeting lunch have retired and are much appreciated for their efforts for us in the past. Their role has been taken over this year by the Okere Falls Store – thanks to the staff there for their contribution.

Nick Jensen closed the meeting with a karakia.

Meeting closed 11.55 am.

DRAFT