

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

Held on January 2nd, 2022, 10 am, at Pikiaro Rugby League Club, Mourea.

Present

Jim Stanton, Mary Stanton, Nick Miller, Elizabeth Miller, Phill Thomass (Life Members)
Steve Chadwick (Mayor of Rotorua)
Dave Donaldson, Reynold McPherson (RLC Councillors)
Doug Leeder (Chair, BOP Regional Council)
Fiona McTavish (CEO, BOP Regional Council)
Nick Chater (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 55 people in total were present at the meeting. The meeting was held outdoors due to concerns around COVID-19.

Welcome

Unfortunately, our Chairperson Reina Engelen was unable to attend due to health issues. Roy Duffy was elected by the committee to chair the meeting. He opened the meeting and welcomed all official visitors and others present

Apologies

Reina Engelen (Chair), Lyall Thurston, Kevin Winters, Derek Nolan, David Carson, Mark Beesley, David Lane, Sandra Goodwin.

Apologies proposed by Jim Stanton, seconded by Bob Armstrong.

Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

Motion: Annamarie Jensen proposed that the Minutes be accepted, seconded by Tom Macky. 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.
Many thanks to those who continue their memberships, and especially to those who make donations on top of their membership fees. This continues to provide the Association with a reserve in case we need to engage in legal proceedings.

The accounts have been reviewed by Graham Prior and the committee expressed their gratitude to him for doing so. A legal appraisal of our Constitution has indicated that the accounts can be reviewed rather than audited. Next year we may be looking to propose amendments to the Constitution to substantiate this.

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

Chair's Report

Roy Duffy gave a reflection on how the committee has experienced the year. The portfolio focus of the committee has simplified decision-making for us over the last couple of years, with areas of expertise. Reina has worked to enhance our relationship with the Iwi Community. The efforts of Tom Macky and Annamarie Jensen have really helped boost our communication to our members in getting information out. Sherilyn Coney has continued to produce a really good print newsletter. Jim Stanton has provided a lot of community knowledge and Treasurer skills as well.

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 Jim Stanton, 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:

The following committee members are re-standing: Mike Gowan, Tom Macky, Sherilyn Coney, 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.

General Business:

Invited speakers

Steve Chadwick:

- Thanks to the Councillors and Lakes Community Board members who attended today. The rubbish discharge charges at Okere Falls transfer station will be increased to cover the increased costs of managing the waste stream there. Also, consultation on an organic waste collection will be starting in April.
- Mowing started on reserves shortly before Christmas, and now there may be issues mowing patches due to trailers etc being parked there. If there are complaints about patches of long grass, please put them through to the Customer Call Centre and they will contact InfraCore to fix.
- The Open Spaces committee are looking at renewing the playground equipment at Haumingi at Gisborne Point, and the Lakes Community Board will cover some of the costs there.
- There will be an Open Day for the Sewerage Scheme on the 29th January, including a site visit.
- RLC has considered the Three Waters proposal. Since a working party will be set up on that, RLC has not developed a detailed position beyond reserved support, but are not in favour of the proposed governance model. They want assurance that assets will remain in public ownership and also that there will be community consultation. RLC want to work with hapū and community to develop a local plan to take back to the regional entity.
- Steve acknowledged the start of the LWQS and their many years of advocacy which have led to all the investment in the lakes. Need to look at the terms of reference of the lakes agreement and how it refers to water quality management.
- Steve acknowledged Reina and the committee for their engagement with RLC and commitment to working together to improve things for the community.

Doug Leeder:

- Congratulations to Reina and the committee for the quality of the newsletter and updates.
- Three years ago, discussion started on the lake structure consenting process – this has not proceeded with the speed we had hoped for, but it is a partnership between Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT), BOPRC and the community.
- There are no substantive updates on the proposed trial lowering of Lake Rotoiti water levels. Judging by the notes, the community has given LRCA the mandate to discuss this.
- Three Waters reform looks like it will go ahead. This time next year there may be a lot more substance about what that will look like. Governance will be the contentious issue.
- Plan Change 10 was signed off last year, affecting Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti. Overseer is the measurement model governing nitrogen coming into the lake. The governmental science review has decided that Overseer is not fit for regulatory purpose. Therefore, there is a need to develop something to resolve that. All regional councils have agreed that the use of Overseer as a farm management tool is still okay, even if it is not useful for regulatory purposes.

Don Atkinson:

- A brief LakesWater Quality Society update. Thanks to the Mayor for the comments earlier. The AGM this year was going to be held at the same time as their planned Symposium. However, the Symposium has now been postponed until they have more certainty about COVID-19 and potential lockdowns. The AGM will still be held on 3rd March, however. It will include an introduction to the new Toi huarewa – Waimāori Chair in Lake and Fresh Water Science, Deniz Özkundakci.
- LWQS are concerned that Okawa Bay has an algal bloom on at the moment – we don't understand why. It shows that there is still a need to resolve water quality issues. The rest of Lake Rotoiti was very close to also tipping over into a bloom. The Symposium will cover phosphorus and the results of that being released into the lake.
- Catfish continue to be a concern. Thanks for those who clean their boats before/after coming into the lake. Lake weed is also an ongoing concern. Restrictions around spraying in Okawa Bay and Te Weta Bay hinder control of weed in those bays. Changes to regulations to help with this are taking longer than hoped for.

John Treanor

- Update on Project Whakahaumanu. Continued work on the project is going on. They were acknowledged for their work on the project by a visit from Richie McCaw, representing Tourism NZ. Also received a Qualmark Award for their work during COVID-19. There is ongoing work keeping gorse and blackberry regrowth at bay. The project is halfway through at the moment – maybe 2-3 years until total completion, apart from ongoing maintenance and weed and pest control. The project is considering having a commercial venture set up on the land, with the restriction that the company would be responsible for the upkeep of the property. Thanks to BOPRC, RLC, DoC and the wider community for the support in funding and working on the project and all their best wishes.

Sarah Uhl

- The Okere Reserve Care Group has been set up to look after the reserve at 133-155 Okere Road. It developed from people not being happy with how the reserve was being looked after. Now the group is working with the councils to help maintain the reserve, starting work from next month. If anyone else wants information on how to set up such a care group, contact Sarah Uhl for information.

Other Business:**Lake structures update**

Roy Duffy: Updates have been emailed/handed out. There is a general feeling of frustration on how long this is taking. There are some concerns about what the costs of all this will be for applicants. Lake Rotoiti was the last lake to be actioned, with progress only starting a couple of months ago. We don't know what discussions the applicants (or LRCA on behalf) will be able to have with the process that TALT and BOPRC have going

on. LRCA have tried to discuss details with TALT but have been unable to get a meeting so far – will continue to seek this to get clarity on the process. LRCA has published on our website the latest information obtained from BOPRC in addition to their recently published update, regarding commencement of the notification determination work that is now underway for Rotoiti applications. We do not know how that is progressing.

Tim Manning: Of the lakes that have been completed, have most got consents approved?

Roy Duffy: Lake Tarawera has some instances with 'significant' cultural impact assessments, which Lake Rotoiti doesn't have. Those will go to the Environment Court. 'Less than minor' cases should follow Rotomā and other lakes. We are uncertain about 'minor/more than minor' structures and will be interested in how these are processed for Tarawera.

Kate Barry-Piceno: How much will BOPRC assist in facilitating some one-on-one consultation? TALT has been left to do the work with Ngāti Pikiao. Most impact assessments give a relationship to the closest marae or hapū, creating a more nuanced question for each consent. What steps will BOPRC take to get information out about what Ngāti Makino etc is doing in the process and where the consultation is going? There should be an ability for direct consultation, facilitated by BOPRC, rather than everything going through BOPRC.

Steve Chadwick: will raise with Tā Toby, who she has regular meetings with. TALT have just had elections which may account for the delay in response to queries.

Roy Duffy: Also, Ngāti Pikiao are in the process of setting up their own organisation, rather than going through TALT for lake management issues. Unfortunately, there is no-one here from either Ngāti Pikiao or TALT to talk to this today.

Nick Miller: If we are all told to pull out jetties/boatsheds as an eventual result of this process, the shoreline in places like Okawa Bay or Te Weta Bay will be littered with boats parked on the foreshore, which will create a lot of environmental and visual impact.

Lake levels topic

Jim Stanton: BOPRC's current Application to vary Operations has been progressing since July 2019. Suggestions from LRCA to amend the original proposal were included as part of the application which was first presented to the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Operational Liaison Group meeting in November 2019. Thanks to Kate for her work on developing one of the recent submissions which was offered as guidance for others. Many of the other submitters followed suit by acknowledging the intent of the proposed drawdown. We have supported the proposal in principle on the understanding that the conditions originally discussed are met. We are waiting to hear from BOPRC about the next step.

Tim Manning: re the consent to lower the lake level. LRCA has supported a submission to lower the lake level. I think that's wrong. There has never been a vote at an AGM or LRCA committee meeting to support this stance. BOPRC didn't send out their first notification to all the right people. Then sent out a corrected notification to all the affected people on the 15th November with 20 working days to respond – this response period has now closed. Firstly, the notification involved 'cultural mapping' which was never clearly explained. Also, there was no risk assessment report or health & safety report made on what lowering the lake would do to people in boats. There are a lot of under-water hazards and snags which would be exposed. Only one report was done by Opus. This report said that lowering the lake level would make 9 bays inoperable for boats. Last year there was a natural drought which brought the lake level within 10cm of the proposed level; this led to some boats having to be taken out of the water as jetties were unusable.

Tim proposed that the Association withdraw their supporting submission. Secunder: None.

Mary Stanton: Recommend that the Association think twice before making this submission change. Attended a TALT meeting recently, and there was a lot of discussion about the future of the lakes. Our whanau have spent a lot of time looking after the health of the lakes and our land. TALT own the bed of the lakes, and it is very frustrating to be told that they don't own the water of the lakes, while other people are free to take water for commercial purposes. TALT are electing new people onto the Trust Board. 7000 cubic yards of material was removed from the Ohau Channel in the 1970s. It took 10 years to get the legal property boundaries back. There was also a lot of environmental impact and loss from that drainage work. TALT are working to lower the lake levels so that they don't lose any more of their whenua around the lake.

Kate: Acknowledged what Mary and Tim said. Giving an overview perspective, this is a very common issue around New Zealand. We are a shared community around the lake – we have to acknowledge the iwi cultural ownership of the lake and their relationship with the lake. We need to develop a shared relationship of care of the lakes and working together to protect the environment. Suggest that BOPRC step up to get people to work together and stress our common interests and benefits, rather than emphasising the differences in position. Commend the committee for trying to work on this balancing act. Recommend that we work closely with TALT and Ngāti Pikiao on this trial, which is only for one week. For anything longer-term it will require another consenting process.

Tim Manning: This will not actually be for one week, because it is so difficult to achieve the target level given rainfall events. That is why they want a 4.5-year consent. Once you get the level down it takes a very long time to come up again. There are other ways to investigate what the lake would look like – drones, imaging, etc.

Roy Duffy: Stepping back from the meeting Chair role, I have a fear that if we make a dividing issue out of this consent it will muddy the water with TALT and local iwi when it comes to the other ongoing issue of lake structure consents. Following on from Tim's proposal, the committee would like to propose to the meeting that we liaise with BOPRC to discuss the benefit of hui at each marae so that there can be discussion on mitigating works for the consent, and get localised discussions going. As can be seen from this meeting discussion, there are a range of views and people are having trouble getting understanding given the communication and management coming out of BOPRC. What can we do to remedy that?

Fiona McTavish: I find that this is one of the most constructive AGMs I have ever attended. We are very happy to change how BOPRC have been working and adapt the process. BOPRC have been working solely with TALT on the process as it was the most cost-effective way to do things in bulk, rather than talking to each applicant individually, but are happy to adapt. BOPRC can also talk to the structure owners individually if requested. In other areas these issues are pushed by organisations like Fish & Game, but around the lakes there are very active community associations to promote their community and environment issues. Regarding lowering of the lake, it is intended to be purely a one-week trial to take place in the next 4.5 years. We are keen to minimise impact and see how we can do that.

As a separate issue, I talked to the Harbourmaster before the meeting, and am very happy to hear about how kind lake users are being. There are some concerns about the behaviour of jetskis, particularly in harbours, and we are keen to change behaviours there.

Doug Leeder: I understand the frustration that people have with some of the processes we are dealing with. Councils do have a regulatory framework that they have to work within. We have a statutory Treaty obligation to deal with Post-Settlement Entities. TALT is the local one. BOPRC have funded TALT to try and set up a local Taiao Hub to deal with environmental issues, as has been done successfully in other regions, such as with Ngai Tahu in the South Island, and Tainui in the Waikato. The problem is with internal politics of iwi and hapū regarding who is entitled to make decisions or negotiate, which makes any progress very slow.

Roy Duffy: We have a suggestion from Kate to initiate dialogue with iwi. In the first instance perhaps we should meet with the BOPRC people in charge of consenting.

Don Atkinson: We see LRCA having to straddle two groups here in the community. In this situation it is fair to say that the Association acknowledges the position we are in, and takes a neutral position rather than advocating for one or the other side.

Jim Stanton: A lot of this has been discussed in previous meetings. The lake level can change very quickly with sudden rain events, as has been shown with the Ohau Channel flush which has been done every year since 2012, and then the level can be brought back up fairly quickly afterwards. It can be harder to get rid of a lot of water through the gates after a heavy rainfall, due to the large catchment area. Also sometimes there can be progress made in pre-hearing meetings, we shouldn't give up on those altogether. Over 50 of the 90+ submissions supported the Application in part, provided the issues of timing and recovery rate in particular were revised.

Tim Manning: Thanks to Jim for the explanation. This is an issue that does attract a lot of feeling and I do feel that the issue should have been put to the vote here at some point so that we have a mandate from the membership. Do feel that the Association needs to be neutral rather than picking one side.

Nick Miller: One of the things that is apparent lately – with more control of lake levels the beaches have been getting narrower. You need changes in water level to build a beach. The other thing is that weather events can be extreme here leading to large water level fluctuations even in a 'controlled' system.

Roy Duffy moved that: The new committee will work with Kate on how to frame our expectations with BOPRC and once we have an understanding we can then start engaging with iwi.
Seconded by Sherilyn Coney. All in favour.

Andrea Macfarlane: I sit on a maritime safe boating forum. Following up from the question raised at last years' AGM, and interested in the Harbourmaster and his safe boating comment. Typically, jetskis are very transportable and can go to a lot of different lakes very easily. Different lakes have different rules, which the jetskiers don't know. Could there be more information at launching areas about what is permitted or recommended, or should more information be sent out to ratepayers?

Mike Gowan: We had a meeting with the Harbourmaster the other week. They do their best, but have three vessels that have to cover all the lakes, so can't be everywhere at once. We raised issues such as jetskis and abuse of low-speed zones. It is a good point to have better signage and we will raise that with the Harbourmaster.

Phill Thomass: If you see people misbehaving on the lake, ring the 0800 number and let BOPRC know. They will start patrolling the trouble area more.

Fiona McTavish: Excellent suggestions regarding the signage. Also, we currently have ambassadors out – more for biosecurity, but they can also cover lake safety.

Jock Schoeller: There is so much signage at boat ramps that it is overwhelming and no-one will read it all. The central message about 5 knots or ski lanes needs to be separate and emphasised.

Fiona McTavish: BOPRC are working on getting jetski users licensed, as the users can be very young and not used to driving or operating high-powered vessels.

Hamish Brown: I have been coming to Otaramarae for a long time, and notice that the community are getting older. How can we get an AED over there, as it is a long way from the nearest one or other emergency services?

Phill Thomass: The Lakes Community Board has been working on getting AEDs placed around the lakes and will see if they can fund getting one in Otaramarae.

Nick Chater: there is one at the Okere Fire Station, and also several of the rafting companies have them.

Phill Thomass: At the other end of the lake, there is one at the Rugby Club, and one at Rotoiti School. Their locations are also listed inside the back cover of the LRCA newsletter.

East Rotoiti Sewerage scheme

Roy Duffy: Five Biolytix units have now been installed by Fulton Hogan. Properties with the highest water tables and poor performance will be the priority for installation. Great to see progress going on now, and encourage those who haven't already made a site visit to the treatment plant to take advantage of the Open Day at Auckland Anniversary weekend, and to learn about the Installation programme.

Jim Stanton: Thanks to Steve Chadwick for all your work for Rotorua community and especially for Lake Rotoiti community work over the years as MP for Rotorua and then as Mayor. Congratulations also for your new investiture as a Companion of the QSO. You have done a lot of work for the people of Rotorua over the years and have always been happy to talk to people. Best wishes for the future.

Marcus Wilkins: The meeting last year gave unanimous support to seek an underpass at Okere Falls. NZTA talk about consultation with the community, but that is not what he has experienced. Has carried this question to the top of NZTA and to the Minister in charge, but has not received a response. Received 600 signatures to the submission he created. Have received no support from BOPRC or RLC so no success following on the effort. He can do no more.

Caroline Stewart: Thanks to Phill for the new children's playground. However, it is only built for 5-year-olds and is useless to any older children. Hope any new playground is built with more consideration for older children. Also, there should be consideration for rates for people where their property is unusable due to wetland encroachment and being turned into a swamp through bad drainage. A third point: the pipe at Hinehopu is broken and dangerous, even though it was replaced recently.

Phill Thomass: The pipe will be repaired once RLC staff are back at work after the holidays. There was not much LCB budget given for the playground and they are very expensive to build. Unfortunately, that meant that they could only afford to put in a slide. There is a rates review coming up this year and consultation will be coming out March/April. With regard to the wetlands behind Tamatea Street, the swamp is on Māori land so we need to work with the local Trust for any remediation.

Scott Kusabs: There are new rules around wetlands now so people need a consent to do any draining. BOPRC do have an environmental programme with the Trust at Hinehopu and are doing weed control and tree removal on the land there.

Nick Miller: The lakebed is tilting slowly and the eastern end of Rotoiti is subsiding and there is not much we can do about it. Issues will continue over time.

Caroline Stewart: The speed people drive down Tamatea Street is too fast. The judder bars there are not any use, and there is a lot of motorbike use there which needs to be stopped. We need better judder bars. Also, RLC has promised to plant replacement trees in the area there in the past but have never done so. Can they please plant native trees when they cut out willows? Kahikatea love the wetlands and pohutukawa could be considered. We need some No Camping signs in the area as well – the signage there is small and easy to miss. Currently there are six campervans parked down there.

Mary Stanton: Thanks to Claire for her hard work with the minutes every year.

Roy Duffy: We did invite the membership to submit questions before the AGM and got nothing. Please in the future contact the committee if you have any questions so that we can avoid having the meeting dragging on too long. As a final note, please get your adult children or relatives to also become LRCA members, or to become involved in supporting the community. We are keen to get younger members with expertise in areas that we don't already have.

Elizabeth Miller: Thanks to Roy Duffy for chairing the meeting so successfully at such short notice.

John Treanor: Closed the meeting with a karakia.

Meeting closed 12.05 pm.