

## THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL HELD ON THE 31 MAY 2010, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 A.M.

#### PRESENT:

R. Scarlett (Chairman), B. Chinn, T. Archer, A. Robb, A. Birchfield, D. Davidson

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

C. Ingle (Chief Executive Officer), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager),  
T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk).

#### 1. APOLOGIES:

P. Ewen.

#### 2. ANNUAL PLAN SUBMISSIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chairman explained that this meeting was to hear submissions on the Council's Draft Annual Plan 2010/11 after which, at the conclusion of today's meeting a workshop will be held to discuss submissions.

##### **Submissions on the Draft Annual Plan**

Only one submitter appeared to present their submission.

##### **Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Richard Reynolds).**

Richard Reynolds presented this submission to the Council, on behalf of Federated Farmers of New Zealand. He stated that Anna McKenzie wrote the submission but was unable to attend today's hearing. R. Reynolds advised that he is the Dairy Section Chair for the West Coast province for Federated Farmers. R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers welcomes the modest increase in rates proposed by Council. R. Richards stated that Federated Farmers notes Council's ongoing commitment to Tb pest management which is welcomed by Federated Farmers as the West Coast has one of the highest levels of Tb infections in New Zealand. R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers seeks transparency in all council annual plans to enable ratepayers to have a clear understanding of how much money is being generated and spent by their councils. R. Reynolds stated that one of Federated Farmers concerns with the Annual Plan is the dairy effluent monitoring charge which is made in accordance with Rule 13 of the Regional Plan to discharge to land for dairy effluent. R. Reynolds stated that the proposed increase in dairy effluent monitoring charges is inconsistent with Rule 13, he quoted rule 13 (g) to the meeting which states that for the year 2000 /01 the fee shall not exceed \$50.00 and any future fee increase shall not exceed the rate of the Consumer Price Index. R. Reynolds stated that the proposed increase to \$150.00 means there will be an increase of 50% from last year's figures while the Consumer Price Index has a rate of only 2% for the current year. R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers seeks consistency between the Regional Plan and the Draft Annual Plan and would like the cost of the inspection be partly funded by the community in recognition of the environmental benefits farming makes to the entire community.

R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers wished to thank Council for their involvement in supporting the eradication of Tb.

Cr Archer asked R. Reynolds for further clarification as to who is he aiming his comment at regarding farmers feeling that they are not receiving adequate rewards for their efforts. R. Reynolds stated that this comment is aimed at the wider world and councils for the input that farmers are putting into rates and the return that they are getting from rates. Cr Archer drew attention to the substantial subsidy from the general ratepayer towards Tb management. Cr Archer spoke of the current level of resistance to 1080 from the southern region of the farming sector. Cr Archer asked R. Reynolds how widespread is the anti 1080 feeling within this part of

the farming sector. R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers are still pro possum control and Tb vector control and at the moment 1080 is the best tool for the type of country that they are dealing with. R. Reynolds stated that Federated Farmers are exceedingly aware of the negative publicity that 1080 is generating towards farming and those supporting possum control. R. Reynolds stated that the information flow is not 100% accurate from some of these lobby groups and feels that Federated Farmers have let themselves down on the marketing around possum control. R. Reynolds stated that cyanide seems to be acceptable by these organisations yet 1080 is not. Cr Archer stated that regarding dairy inspection charges, Council needs to be able to move towards a full cost recovery service, and he wonders whether Federated Farmers feel that full cost recovery should be used for dairy visits, same as activities such as mining visits. R. Reynolds feels that at the moment council could be getting better value from its interaction with farmers and stated that there would be support from Federated Farmers and the Dairy Company with this matter. R. Reynolds feels that at the moment farmers are not getting a lot of education from the dairy inspections as it is a pass-fail test. He feels as a council we are doing a lot better than other councils. Cr Archer asked R. Reynolds if there were a higher level of education would farmers be happy to pay more. R. Reynolds would like to see a more non-binding advice service to farmers with support and advice in view of the level of service provided by farmers to the community. Cr Scarlett stated that mining could use the same arguments that R. Reynolds is using with regard to economic benefits as mining pays a lot more than farming for their environmental inspection costs. R. Reynolds stated that he feels farming inspections are a lot simpler than mining inspections and most farmers don't need the inspections as most farmers have good effluent systems in place. Cr Scarlett asked R. Reynolds if he felt that farmers were more worried about effluent problems than miners. R. Reynolds stated that miners are aware of their risks but the effects that farmers have are less if fully compliant and often an inspection is not required. Cr Robb asked R. Reynolds if he is aware that the consented farmers are subsidising the non-consented farmers and this is a way of bringing into line these non-consented activities. R. Reynolds responded that he is aware of this. R. Reynolds stated that \$150 is not a huge fee but the rate of increase is of concern.

Cr Scarlett thanked R. Reynolds for his submission.

C. Ingle stated that the rest of the submissions are all straightforward and noted that there are no further submitters wishing to speak to Council.

The Chairman indicated that the submissions would be considered at a workshop following this special meeting and the recommendations presented at the next Council meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2010.

The meeting closed at 10.52 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date