

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL HELD ON THE 31 MAY 2011, 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, I. Cummings

IN ATTENDANCE:

C. Ingle (Chief Executive Officer), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk), The Media.

1. APOLOGIES:

There were no apologies.

2. ANNUAL PLAN SUBMISSIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that this meeting is a hearing to listen to submitters. Council takes note of what submitters have to say and may also ask questions of clarification. The Chairman explained that this meeting was to hear submissions on the Council's Draft Annual Plan 2011/12 after which, at the conclusion of today's meeting a workshop will be held to discuss submissions. Decisions will be made at the next Council meeting on 14 June.

Submissions on the Draft Annual Plan

Four submitters appeared to present their submissions.

Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Anna McKenzie).

Anna Mackenzie and Katie Milne presented this submission to the Council, on behalf of Federated Farmers of New Zealand. A. Mackenzie congratulated Council on the joint IT Strategy with the three other local councils. She stated that this is a positive move and a great opportunity to reduce costs. A. Mackenzie stated the cost of dairy shed inspections is continuing to increase and Federated Farmers would like to see yearly inspections reduced to two yearly inspections for all compliant farms who have had three consecutive clear inspections. A. Mackenzie suggested that this could be achieved by the Council and the dairy company working together on this matter. A. Mackenzie stated that Federated Farmers continue to be involved in plans and policies with Council and feels that they have a very good working relationship.

A. Mackenzie offered to answer any questions from councillors. Cr Archer asked A. Mackenzie if she felt that farmers had been given plenty of notice regarding costs of dairy shed inspections rising. A. Mackenzie responded that there had been sufficient notice. Cr Robb suggested that self documentation could be supported by the dairy company and this could be helpful. Cr Cummings stated that miner's activities are inspected twice per annum and miners are required to provide work programmes to council. A. Mackenzie stated that dairy shed inspections and effluent matters are a permitted activity and mining is a resource consent matter.

Cr Scarlett thanked Federated Farmers for their submission.

Tb Free West Coast Committee

K. Milne spoke to this submission. She thanked Council for its continued support towards the eradication of bovine tuberculosis and to the national Tb control programme. She stated that one third of New Zealand's cases of bovine Tb are on the West Coast. There are currently 31 infected herds on the West Coast but this has been as low as 23 herds, this April. K. Milne stated that the programme remains well on target but she would be delighted to see a further decrease in Tb on the West Coast.

K. Milne offered to answer questions. Cr Archer stated that funding is provided by both the targeted rate and the general ratepayer. He asked K. Milne what benefit does the general ratepayer get from this. K. Milne responded that the farming sector contributes more than \$700M a year to the region's economy and it is vital to the vitality of the coast. There are also benefits to biodiversity. If the number of Tb infected herds can be kept very low then the West Coast becomes an attractive area to farm. Cr Archer stated that Federated Farmers have remained virtually silent with regard to the anti 1080 faction. K. Milne responded that both organisations are supportive of the Tb Free programme but it is hard to be pro 1080 in this environment. K. Milne stated that in the past there have been threats made to herds and properties of those who have publicly supported the use of 1080.

Animal Health Board (Matthew Hall)

Matthew Hall presented this submission to the Council, on behalf of the Animal Health Board. He thanked Council for its continued financial support of the Animal Health Board's Tb Free programme. M. Hall advised that Tasman District Council is unable to fully fund their programme and therefore some of funding could become available to the West Coast but this could not be confirmed until later in June. M. Hall advised that the Revised Pest Management Strategy order in council has now been passed by Parliament. Cr Archer asked M. Hall if there has been any progress in finding a suitable substitute toxin to 1080. M. Hall responded that at this stage progress has stalled with some of the research funding coming to an end. Discussion took place on other poison options. M. Hall advised that deer repellent is used in some areas but this needs further research. He stated that RS5 bait has been found to have less impact on Kea. M. Hall stated that the Animal Health Board believes that currently 1080 is still the best tool for the eradication of bovine Tb in back country possum populations and that if 1080 weren't used then there would be more cases of Tb. He stated that over the last five years there has been a steady decrease in bovine Tb on the West Coast. M. Hall answered various questions from councillors on funding options and the effectiveness of 1080. Cr Scarlett stated that in the past there has been tension between the Department of Conservation and hunters regarding the use of deer repellent in 1080 because deer repellent is not always allowed to be used on Department of Conservation land. M. Hall stated that he is aware of this and stated that it is the intention of the Animal Health Board to continue to work hard to eradicate Tb. Cr Scarlett thanked M. Hall for his submission.

Proposed New Lower Waiho Rating District

Liz Ewins presented this submission. She spoke on behalf of fellow submitters J. Vychodil & A. Bangan, James R. Campbell and one other who wishes to remain anonymous. L. Ewins stated that she and her fellow submitters do not benefit from flood protection from the Milton and Others stopbank but they do benefit from the rubbish bank stopbank and they are happy to pay for this. L. Ewins stated that most ratepayers in the Lower Waiho rating district will get a reduction in their rates whilst she and the submitters she is representing will be paying substantially more. L. Ewins stated that the Milton and Others stopbank has been wiped out by floods three times in the past. She stated that this stopbank is a long way downstream from the properties the submitters are representing. L. Ewins is concerned that the owners of small properties will be unable to afford to pay for protection and should there be a major flood event these property owners would be unable to afford to pay for repair works. L. Ewins stated that now that Transit NZ has taken over the maintenance of the stopbanks in the Canavans Knob area this has made it easier for council to reclassify the Lower Waiho Rating District. L. Ewins spoke of the report by Bob Reid that recommends changes to the current Lower Waiho Rating district. L. Ewins feels that Mr Reid should be asked to make further investigations on behalf of the property owners she is representing to ascertain why they should pay for a stopbank that they do not get protection from. L. Ewins stated that Mr Reid's report is not comprehensive enough and does not fully address all of her concerns. Cr Chinn asked L. Ewins if she felt that a differential classification for residential parts of the rating district could be more accommodating. He explained how various differential classifications could work. Cr Scarlett advised that it would be very difficult to instigate a differential rate in this area due to the nature of the Waiho River and the fact that protection works benefit the whole area as a community. Cr Archer stated that L. Ewins submission is a very comprehensive submission and he noted that her main point is that the Milton and Others stopbank is quite a distance from the properties that she is representing. Cr Scarlett thanked L. Ewins for her submission.

C. Ingle 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 14th of June 2011, where decisions would be made.

The meeting closed at 11.20 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date