

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 MARCH 2011 AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

C. Ingle (Chief Executive Officer), M. Meehan (Planning & Environmental Manager), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

Cr Chinn advised that at 12.51 p.m. the meeting would be joining the rest of New Zealand in standing in silence for two minutes as a mark of respect for those who lost their lives in the Christchurch earthquake on the 22nd of February.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum.

3. MINUTES

Moved (Archer / Robb) *that the minutes of the previous Resource Management Committee meeting dated 8th February 2011, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters Arising

Cr Cummings stated that Largarosiphon is also now in Lake Mapourika as well as Lake Paringa. C. Ingle advised that there are a couple of weeds that look very similar to Largarosiphon and one of them is called Elodea. M. Meehan confirmed that the other weed is easily confused with Largarosiphon but he will check with DoC staff to see when they were last at Lake Mapourika. C. Ingle confirmed that this other weed is less invasive and would not take over the whole lake but experts do check the lakes to ensure that Largarosiphon is not in any lakes in this region.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cr Chinn reported that he, Cr Robb and Cr Scarlett attended a workshop in Westport on the 22nd of February called "*The RMA – How it really works*". Cr Chinn stated that he found this course very interesting but felt that the RMA can still be read two or three different ways. Cr Chinn stated that judges in the Environment Court could have a premeditated view on how the RMA is going to work, which can give mixed results. Cr Chinn stated that Council Planners also have certain ideas on how the RMA works and it is very important as a council, what is put in our Plans as this dictates which way the RMA is read. Cr Chinn stated that there are gray areas in the RMA especially around recording areas of National Significance.

Cr Chinn reported that he visited ratepayers in the Franz Josef area regarding the Lower Waiho rating district, he will discuss this matter later in today's meeting. Cr Chinn stated that he has received phone calls regarding the lack of rock in the Camelback Quarry at Kowhitirangi which he wishes to discuss further later in the meeting.

Moved (Chinn / Robb) *that the Council receive this report.*

Carried

5. REPORTS

5.1 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

5.1.1 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report advising that Planners from our Council, Forest and Bird, DoC and Solid Energy have met to consider the Judges interim decision on the Wetlands Appeal. He reported that the first meeting was held on the 14th of February with a second session held on the 22nd of February, the second session was interrupted by the Christchurch earthquake therefore the Planning evidence which is scheduled to be heard in the Environment Court on the week of the 4th of April is now on hold as they were unable to complete the 22nd of February session.

M. Meehan reported that Council staff has successfully applied to the Biodiversity Fund for \$60,000 to do fencing and planting work at Lake Poerua. Further funding applications for the Lake Brunner catchment are underway.

M. Meehan reported that work has begun on the 10 year review of the Coastal Plan with pre-consultation work within the Consents and Compliance groups of Council being worked through to ascertain what parts of the Plan can remain the same and what parts may need to be changed. M. Meehan advised that an "Issues and Options" report would be prepared and presented to Council explaining the recommended changes. M. Meehan stated that the pre-consultation work might take several months to get through.

M. Meehan reported that the Ministry for the Environment has released a decision document on "Building Competitive Cities" which has been looking at a reform into urban and infrastructure planning systems. M. Meehan reported that Council lodged a brief submission supporting spatial planning being kept to a voluntary option.

M. Meehan reported that Dr Nick Smith, Environment Minister, announced changes would be made to the RMA Regulations 2004 relating to National Air Quality Standards on the 29th of January 2011. M. Meehan reported that there are a number of airsheds around the country covering approximately 40% of the population that were unlikely to comply with the original 2013 deadline under the previous standard. Under the new standard the requirement for the Reefton Airshed is that by 1 September 2016, three exceedences are allowed a year and then one exceedence per year after 1 September 2020. M. Meehan advised that the Ministry for the Environment is developing a national compliance strategy to monitor progress, and to follow up on non-compliance, this will also involve education and best practice guidelines.

M. Meehan reported that the Waiho River has remained in alarm mode since the 6th of February. He stated that staff are monitoring this river very closely and working with Westland District Council and other agencies to keep them informed of the river heights during heavy rainfall events. He stated that there is a large amount of gravel build up in this river. Cr Scarlett asked if over time would the Waiho River flush itself out. M. Meehan responded that gravel is continuing to build up especially around the bridge. Cr Chinn stated that when he visited Franz Josef on the weekend, locals who have lived in the area all their lives said that they have never seen so much gravel where the Callery River meets the Waiho River. Cr Chinn stated that local helicopter pilots have noted slippage in the Callery gorge. C. Ingle stated that there is more gravel being flushed in and over time this gravel may make its way down to the main road bridge and to the township. Cr Archer asked for an overview on what spatial planning means for planning staff. M. Meehan responded that District Councils have two spatial plans developed for Moana and Franz Josef as these are the only two areas on the West Coast that are growing and developing. C. Ingle added that spatial planning is about planning for infrastructure and for infrastructure demand in response to urban growth. It involves ensuring that transport requirements, power supplies and water are provided for in a sensible way. C. Ingle advised that Auckland has been required to have a spatial plan in place in a very short time as there has been a lot of growth and planning has not been "joined up" in the past. Cr Archer stated that this should be one of the basic fundamentals of all planning and is curious as to why there is now legislation around this matter.

Cr Archer asked if changes to air quality standards are likely to impact on Reefton as he notes that it is unlikely, within the foreseeable future, that there will be any significant industrial discharges of PM¹⁰. Cr Archer stated albeit that there is a limit of exceedences he is not sure of what the statutory requirements are or what the impact would be should there be an exceedence. M. Meehan advised that from September 2012 unless compliance is achieved in Reefton then there will be a ban on new domestic open fires. Log burners would still be allowed. New industrial discharges will be required to have an offset somewhere. M. Meehan advised that a new national compliance strategy is to be developed to monitor progress and follow up on non-compliances with best practice guidelines and education being provided. M. Meehan confirmed that existing open fires would not need to be removed. C. Ingle advised that the Air Plan will be reviewed next year and council will address the issues in Reefton during this process. Cr Archer stated that currently within

the proposal there is no identified enforcement action for non-compliance. C. Ingle confirmed that this is his understanding as well.

Moved (Scarlett / Birchfield) *that this report be received*

Carried

5.1.2 CIVIL DEFENCE & REGIONAL TRANSPORT REPORT

C. Ingle spoke to this report and took it as read but advised that this report was written prior to the earthquake. He advised that the West Coast Coordinating Executive Group for Civil Defence had to postpone its meeting that was scheduled for the 24th of February as all available civil defence personnel were responding to the Christchurch earthquake. C. Ingle reported that the Christchurch event has taken up a lot of time with M. Meehan coordinating the West Coast response. He advised that eight staff from the four West Coast councils are in Christchurch at the moment with a further request for assistance expected. C. Ingle advised that Cr Archer has been requested to assist in his capacity as a Building Inspector. C. Ingle advised that he has been phoning into Group Controller teleconferences each day and stated that the assistance coming into Christchurch is quite phenomenal and this council is playing its part in the emergency response. He stated that four staff members from this council are currently in Christchurch and another replacement team may need to be sent over on the weekend.

Cr Birchfield commented that the Mingha Bluffs area of road between Arthurs Pass and Klondyke Corner is one of the worst pieces of road in the South Island.

Moved (Scarlett / Cummings)

1. *That the Council receives this report.*
2. *That the Council accepts the nominations to the NZ Transport Agency representative, and alternate, on the West Coast Regional Transport Committee.*

Carried

5.2 CONSENTS AND COMPLIANCE GROUP

5.2.1 CONSENTS MONTHLY REPORT

C. Ingle spoke to this report in C. Dall's absence. He took the report as read. He advised that Colin Dall along with three other staff had been called over to Christchurch on Sunday to assist with the civil defence response to the Christchurch earthquake.

Moved (Scarlett / Archer) *that the March 2011 report of the Consents Group be received.*

Carried

5.2.2 COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

C. Ingle spoke to this report. He advised that Organs Island on the Buller River is now closed again for gravel extraction as it has exhausted its supply and is now awaiting replenishment.

Moved (Archer / Scarlett)

1. *That the March 2011 report of the Compliance Group be received.*
2. *That Council release the bond held for Resource Consents RC04161, RC07054, RC08138.*
3. *That Council notify Crown Minerals that the bond held for Mining Licence ML321374 can be released.*

Carried

Cr Davidson advised that he attended the recent Land and Water Forum. He stated that 90% of this will be regional council responsibility and Cr Davidson feels that this will place quite a financial burden on regional councils. Cr Davidson stated that councils may be audited by other councils and he finds this concerning.

C. Ingle stated that he was unable to attend this forum but noted that the Environment Minister, Dr Nick Smith, initiated the Land and Water Forum. C. Ingle stated that regional councils were not included in the initial planning of this forum. C. Ingle advised that the government has not taken up any of the

recommendations of the forum yet but the main focus is on water allocation and water quality. C. Ingle stated that he does not think that the West Coast is a major focus and that they are looking at Waikato, Canterbury, and Hawkes Bay for water allocation and Canterbury, Waikato and Manawatu for water quality. C. Ingle stated his main concern is what the Minister is going to do with the National Policy Statement on Freshwater; he feels this is a risk area for the West Coast as well as other regions. C. Ingle stated that regional councils are the leading agencies with water management and if the water quality in rivers is good then regional councils are doing a good job. Cr Davidson agreed with Cr Scarlett's statement that a one size fits all policy would not work for the West Coast. C. Ingle stated that Regional Council Chief Executives and Council Chairs are taking water issues very seriously; water is the number one issue on the table at the Chief Executives Environmental Forum and the Regional Affairs Committee meetings. He advised that what Government is doing about this needs to be influenced by regional councils to show them the sensible way through that does not unduly impact on potential economic growth in the country.

6.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

The meeting closed at 11.02 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date