

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COAL CREEK RATING DISTRICT HELD AT THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICES ON 8 OCTOBER 2012, COMMENCING AT 7.07 PM.

PRESENT

B. Jones, F & M. Riordan, O. Norton, S & M. McGeady, W. Brennan, A. Inman

IN ATTENDANCE

West Coast Regional Council

I. Cummings (Councillor), A. Birchfield, A. Robb (arrived 7.20 pm) (Councillors).

M. Meehan, W. Moen, P. Birchfield, T. Jellyman (Staff)

APOLOGIES

A. Beck, C. Williams.

B. Jones / S. McGeady – Carried

BUSINESS

Cr Birchfield opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

He introduced himself and the Council staff.

Moved: *“That the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting held on 11 October 2011, be adopted as a true and correct record of that meeting.”*

B. Jones / S. McGeady - Carried

MATTERS ARISING

M. Meehan advised that he wrote to DoC to see if they would spray the willows in Coal Creek. M. Meehan advised that DoC's response was that they have no funding for this work.

FINANCIAL REPORT

M. Meehan presented the financial statements for the financial period ending 30 June 2012. M. Meehan advised that a progress payment of \$64,340.82 was made for the works that have now been completed. He reported that the opening balance as at 1 July 2010 was \$134,209.02 and the closing balance was \$82,818.49.

Moved: *“That the financial report for the 2011 / 2012 year be adopted”.*

B. Jones / S. McGeady - Carried

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

WORKS REPORT

W. Moen presented the detailed works report, which covered the 12-month period. He advised that the figures were based on raising the stopbank by 1.5 metres of the existing structure with compacted gravel. W. Moen advised that the decision was made with the rating district committee to raise the stopbank and strengthen the bank and this cost more than was originally planned for. Cr Birchfield advised the meeting that there was a directive from council regarding the raising of the stopbank, as council was concerned about safety of residents in the event of a flood. S. McGeady asked why the gap in the stopbank on his property was not filled in at the time of the stopbank upgrade. W. Moen stated that he is not sure why this was not done. B. Jones advised that he topped up this area during a recent flood.

W. Moen reported that \$64,340.82 worth of works were carried out during the reporting period. W. Moen advised that the first progress payment of \$59,000 was made in June 2012 and the second progress payment of \$76,084.00 was made in July 2012. W. Moen advised that the total contract came to \$135,284.60.

W. Moen reported that he carried out an inspection in July 2012 and no maintenance works were identified but he advised that \$10,000 be allowed for unforeseen maintenance. He stated he is not expecting the \$10,000 to be spent but it would be prudent to allow for this. F. Riordan asked how \$9,000 came from Grey District Council when the rating district has asked them for funding in the past. W. Moen responded that \$9,000 was received from Grey District Council last year as well. W. Moen advised that Grey District Council has infrastructure in this area and that is why they paid some money towards the works required. O. Norton stated it is good to see that Grey District Council contributed as they obviously feel they should contribute and this is a good start. F. Riordan asked if the \$9,000 is on top of the rate strike. W. Moen confirmed this is correct. O. Norton suggested that a letter of thanks be sent to Grey District Council and that they are invited to the next annual meeting. W. Moen stated that Fulton Hogan gave the gravel for the stopbank upgrade to the rating district for next to nothing. He expressed his thanks to Fulton Hogan.

It was noted that no allowance has been made for any potential upstream protection works on S. McGeady's frontage. W. Moen explained the function of the new works to the meeting. W. Moen advised that the work done was done because this was the most vulnerable area. W. Moen advised the Graeme Smart's report recommended that this area be upgraded.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Works Report covering the 2011 / 2012 financial year be adopted.*
- 2. That the 2012/ 2013 works proposals be approved.*

B. Jones / W. Brennan – Carried

RATES 2013/ 2014

W. Moen advised that with the proposed works and the rate of \$75,000 previously struck for the 2012 / 2013 year the balance in the rating district account at the beginning of the 2013 / 2014 year is likely to be approximately \$25,000. W. Moen recommends a rate strike of \$15,000 as he stated there is not a lot of money in the kitty. W. Moen drew attention to the two \$9,000 contributions from Grey District Council for the 2011 / 2012 year and the 2012 / 2013 financial years, he stated that in view of these contributions this is still not a lot of money. W. Moen stated that the rating district will be faced with further works long term and a rate strike of \$7,500 is insufficient. M. Riordan stated that the rating district is too small to be able to afford a bigger rate strike. Cr Birchfield asked W. Moen what would the chances be of Transit NZ contributing. W. Moen stated that he was unsure about this. M. Meehan advised that if major works were required then the rating district would have to raise a loan to cover the costs of major capital works. W. Moen advised that one of the recommendations in the Graeme Smart report is that a civil defence warning system is put in place in the event of an emergency situation and evacuation is required. He stated that if money is not built up to carry out works then evacuation is the worst case scenario. Discussion ensued. M. Riordan stated that he is happy to take the risk of losing his house. O. Norton stated that the problem is there are a lot of small holdings in the rating district and they cannot afford it. M. Meehan advised that if the rating district were looking at doing work upstream then they would need to consider taking out a loan as \$15,000 will not cover the costs. M. Meehan advised the meeting to strike a rate of \$15,000. Cr Birchfield stated that his impression is that the rating district has not been rating high enough and has not been paying enough rates and that is why they are in this position now. Cr Birchfield stated that the rating district should have been rating \$10,000 or \$15,000 previously instead of \$7,500 and this is why the kitty has got low. He stated that now is the time to do some catch up. Cr Birchfield advised the meeting to set a rate of at least \$15,000. F. Riordan stated that they are not going to strike a rate of \$15,000. Cr Birchfield advised that this figure is a recommendation to council and if council is concerned that the rate strike is not high enough then council can set the rate themselves. M. Meehan advised that council generally goes with what is recommended but under the Rating Act they can set the rate. Cr Birchfield stated that

the stopbank has not been maintained enough over the years because the rating district will not set a high enough rate and if the bank goes then lives are at risk and it is important that the bank is maintained. S. McGeady stated that he feels the stopbank did not need to be lifted as high as it was. He stated that it was \$7,000 just for the gravel on the top and this is the same as what the annual rates are. W. Moen stated it is important that stopbanks are future proofed. Cr Birchfield stated that W. Moen is the engineer and his recommendation should be taken. B. Jones stated that the rate strike has not been keeping pace with inflation. B. Jones moved that the rate strike is \$15,000. W. Brennan stated that he is prepared to second the motion, as he knows how valuable the wall is. Only two people were in favour of the \$15,000 recommendation. The motion was lost. Cr Robb stated that the rate strike needs to be a realistic figure so the funds can be built up over the years and money is there when its needed. Cr Robb stated that there are 22 rating districts in the region and that staff have plenty of experience when it comes to the administration of these rating districts. Cr Robb spoke of his own experience in the Taramakau rating district and how quickly rivers can change. F. Riordan feels that Coal Creek is a unique rating district and there are small households who cannot afford an increase in their rates. Cr Robb stated that there are quite a few other rating districts in a very similar situation to this. It was noted there are at least eight other rating districts similar to this one.

Cr Robb advised that the rate needs to be at a realistic level that can both maintain and sustain the stopbank otherwise properties will be at risk and owners may need to walk away from them.

F. Riordan stated that she does not consider that she lives near a river as she feels her property is a long way from the river. M. Riordan stated that they cannot even see the river and they are insured. W. Moen advised that they live on a flood plan and they are taking a risk. Extensive discussion ensued on future works and rate strikes and loans. M. Meehan advised that he would be happy to go back to Grey District Council and Transit NZ to see if they are prepared to contribute further financially if that is the wish of the rating district. Cr Robb advised that it is the people that live in the rating districts that have to pay for them and it is the responsibility of Councillors to make sure that the assets in the ratings districts are maintained. A. Inman stated that he is a small landholder and he feels that the rate strike should be increased. He moved an amendment to the motion that the rate strike is \$12,000. The amended motion was lost.

Moved: *"That the rate strike for the 2013 / 2014 financial Year is \$10,000 (GST Excl)."*

B. Jones / W. Brennan – Carried

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

T. Jellyman read out the names of the current committee and the current Spokesperson. Cr Birchfield asked if anyone wants to come off the committee or go on to the committee.

Moved: *"That the present committee carry on for a fifth term, namely:*

O. Norton

F. Riordan

A. Beck

B. Jones

be the committee for the 2012 / 2013 financial year."

F. Riordan / B. Jones - Carried

Moved: *"That S. McGeady be elected as the spokesperson for the 2012 / 2013 financial year."*

B. Jones / W. Brennan - Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

Graeme Smart Report

M. Meehan spoke to this report advising that this report sums up historic information and provides options on what remedial measures could be taken. The report also outlines in section g, what

would happen if nothing were done as the river thalweg will eventually change location and reduce the threat of erosion to the stopbank. Mr Smart states that the question is how long this would take and what could happen in the interim. He advises that the erosion should be closely monitored, especially when there are floods. Mr Smart says that the erosion will be episodic and a decision to place protection rock may need to be taken if the erosion approaches unprotected parts of the stopbank. He states that the consequences of failure of the stopbank should be considered and if there is potential for loss of life from a failure of the Coal Creek stopbank then a flood warning system should be implemented and evacuation procedures should be put in place. M. Meehan advised that measures d, e and f would increase the security of the stopbank without major expense. M. Meehan advised the meeting to explore the options outlined in the report and to start to do some planning and investigations. O. Norton stated that Mr Smart gives no indications of costs. O. Norton stated what is this going to cost. M. Meehan stated that Mr Smart was not paid to do the in depth cost analysis as the rating district need to decide what they want to do. M. Meehan explained to O. Norton that options a, b and c is expensive and they will require loan and that this report contains options for the rating district to consider not costings. M. Meehan stated that the do nothing approach comes with consequences and potentially lives could be put in danger. W. Moen stated that council might decide to act on this report, as they will see the potential for loss of life. O. Norton stated that if the rating district can't agree on whether or not to do works then council decide to do the work. M. Meehan advised that if the council proposes works and the rating district don't want them do then council could go ahead with the works. O. Norton if that is the case then they should put a caveat on the properties. M. Meehan advised that it would be unlikely that this would happen but if council felt it was a matter of protecting assets and safety then the works would be done. Cr Robb advised that caveats would not be put in place and that if a loan was required then this would be arranged by council and it would come out of the rating district account and ratepayers would get two accounts one for the loan and one for their usual rates.

A. Inman asked about the action point from last year's meeting regarding the spraying of willows in Coal Creek. M. Meehan advised that he wrote to DoC back in January and he has heard nothing further from them. He met with DoC three weeks ago to see if there is some funding for this type of work. M. Meehan advised that DoC is doing some spraying on Cobden Island as part of the restoration for Grey District Council and he is hopeful that they will also do some work for Coal Creek.

A. Inman asked M. Meehan what is the system for floodwarning. M. Meehan advised that council has a flood warning system for each river they monitor for flood warning purposes and as part of this system each river has a certain person that is contacted once the river reaches a certain level. M. Meehan advised that Alan Wilson at Grey District Council provides civil defence contacts at a local level. When the Grey River reaches five metres the flood committee is formed and this is when Mr Wilson starts ringing around to get the warning system happening. M. Meehan advised that WCRC has an Infoline and people can call this line during a flood event and the Council website has up to date river level information on the website. M. Meehan advised A. Inman to contact Mr Wilson at Grey District Council for additional information.

Action Points:

- M. Meehan asked the meeting to confirm the actions that they wish to see happen.
- O. Norton suggested that a letter of thanks be sent to Grey District Council and that they are invited to the next annual meeting.
- W. Moen to send a thank you letter to Fulton Hogan for gravel.
- Council to monitor erosion upstream of the stopbank.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.