

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PUNAKAIKI RATING DISTRICT HELD AT THE KEATING RESIDENCE ON 19 MAY 2016, COMMENCING AT 7.03 PM.

PRESENT

M & F. Keating, C. Findlay, A. Gardiner, M, P & J. Costello, G & D. Freeman, G & A. Chapman, J. Johannsen, T. Pugno, L & I. Ryder, M & T. Wilkins, G & A. Beynon, J. Ashby, L & T. Sims

IN ATTENDANCE

West Coast Regional Council
T. Archer (Councillor), N. Clementson (Councillor)
M. Meehan, P. Birchfield, J. Ellis, T Jellyman (Staff)
Buller District Council
Mayor Howard, P. Rutherford (Councillor)

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

BUSINESS

T. Archer opened the meeting and welcomed those present to the meeting. He introduced himself and the Council staff.

Business of the meeting – Proposed Works and Estimated Costs

T. Archer outlined the timeframe for the project. He stated that survey forms need to be returned to Council by 25 May. A decision on whether to proceed with the works will be made at the Council meeting on 7 June. If approval is given then work will commence the week of 8 – 11 June.

M. Meehan addressed the meeting and advised that the at last year's annual rating district meeting discussion took place on the potential northern extension to the seawall. He stated that since this meeting there has been significant erosion to the northern end. M. Meehan stated that earlier this year work started on what could be done to protect this area from further erosion. Survey work was done and investigation work took place with OCEL Consultants engaged to design an extension. M. Meehan stated that rock can be sourced from Kiwi Quarry and a nearby source closer to Punakaiki. He stated that he is hopeful that costs will be reduced significantly by using this closer source of rock. M. Meehan advised that an independent rating expert (Mr John Philpott) has been engaged to work out the apportionment of costs for the work. Mr Philpott looked at the benefactors from the work and indirect benefit to other properties and the background of the rating district. M. Meehan advised that Mr Philpott has come up with new classifications, A through to E to replace the current A to C classifications with a huge weighting placed on the campground who is paying the most for the proposed extension. Modifications have been made to the classifications on properties behind the current seawall.

M. Meehan advised that previously the rating district paid off a loan and a maintenance rate on the original seawall and this is being proposed again for the extension. M. Meehan advised that estimated costs are \$550,000 but it is hoped this figure will be reduced significantly by using the closer rock source. M. Meehan advised the rate take would need to be \$135,000 per year. Currently the rating district is paying \$95,000 a year and includes just under \$70,000 to pay off

the loan and another \$65,000 which would be a maintenance rate which would cover the new extension and the current seawall. M. Meehan advised that an interest rate of 4% has been secured on a \$550,000 loan for the next five years with the term being ten years.

M. Meehan stated that a lot of research has been done on the options, with the option presented to tonight's meeting considered to be the best option to actually protect the northern end and to protect properties in this area. M. Meehan advised that the proposed apportionments that Mr Philpott has come up with are a draft and he is expecting submissions on this. Submissions received will be forwarded on to Mr Philpott as he is an independent expert. M. Meehan advised that the same process was used for the Hokitika seawall with regard to the apportionments and submission process. M. Meehan advised that depending on the amount of submissions and feedback received, a decision from Council may be made at the Council meeting on 7 June.

P. Birchfield addressed the meeting and advised that a desk top survey has been done by Coll's using OCEL's alignment and the design from the original wall. She advised that the costs are at the high end but by using gravel from Eight Mile this will save on costs as only cartage has to be paid.

Extensive discussion took place on who benefits from having a seawall in place and who should pay for this. Various speakers stated that they feel the rating district needs to be extended to "share the load" on the current rating base. A. Chapman asked why wasn't the seawall extended right from the start. A speaker responded that the original price was around \$680,000 and it was felt at the time, that this was too expensive.

Discussion on funding took place. Mayor Howard stated it would be good to get some government funding but this will take time and the longer it takes the bigger the problem and the bigger the bill. He stated that public consultation could take 3 – 4 months. Mayor Howard stated that BDC has a vested interest in the camping ground as they get rent and rates from it. He stated that the camping ground is a great asset for the whole community. Mayor Howard stated that BDC is prepared to put some of this money in to help the project and they are very keen for the project to happen. Mayor Howard stated that Punakaiki is a New Zealand icon and brings a lot of people to the West Coast. He advised that he cannot comment on how much BDC will contribute as this needs to be discussed by Council. Cr Rutherford stated that under the current business model the leasee would not be able to afford the \$45,000 per year. A. Beynon stated that it is important that the seawall is maintained to protect the camping ground otherwise once the Great Walk is finished there will be nowhere for tourists to stay. A speaker suggested increasing the fees at the camping ground.

Cr Archer asked the meeting for feedback on the proposal that has been put to the meeting. Extensive discussion took place including ideas around the possibility of extending the ratable area. L. Sims stated that she is concerned about bringing the Fox River area into the rating district as if erosion problems arise in this area then Punakaiki ratepayers might be expected to contribute to this. Cr Archer encouraged the meeting to put an effort into their submissions as council is very keen to hear what people have to say on this. M. Meehan advised that the costs presented are the worst case scenario but Council is optimistic that they will be able to reduce the costs significantly. He stated that by working with BDC, getting some assistance from central government and widening the rating district money could be saved. M. Meehan stated that there is some urgency due to the erosion to the north end of the area. M. Meehan advised that based on the feedback from this meeting, it is realistic to now have to liaise with the consultants so that options can be re-jigged and to enable further discussion to take place. M. Meehan stated that submissions need to be in by the 25th of May. He stated that in 2 – 3 weeks' time a further meeting can be held and a better idea on costs and access to rock will be to hand. He stated that final costs would not be known until the job goes out to tender. M. Meehan advised that a decision on funding from central government would be months away but would be a nice bonus to have. A. Chapman asked if WCRC would be making a contribution to the proposed works. M. Meehan explained that rating districts are a user pays system and WCRC has around 26 rating districts around the region. Mayor Howard advised that WCRC acts as a coordinator for rating districts but has no responsibility to put anything in place at their

cost. Mayor Howard stated that WCRC role is to act in the best interests of the community and to facilitate the construction of protection works for rating districts. Cr Archer agreed with this. Various speakers felt that BDC should contribute more money to the proposed works as owners of the camping ground. Cr Archer advised that WCRC cannot impose this requirement on BDC as it is up to BDC to decide on the amount they contribute. S. Ryder stated that years ago the rating district was told that if they don't go ahead with the seawall, then houses would be lost. He stated that over the years the 26 ratepayers have paid over \$1.2M into the seawall. S. Ryder stated that time has come to do the northern extension and this is going to be too hard financially for such a small rating district. S. Ryder stated that the rating district needs help to fund the extension as everyone wants to keep Punakaiki. S. Ryder stated the works may need to wait until further funding becomes available.

M. Meehan explained the survey form to the meeting. He advised the meeting to consider whether or not they want the extension to proceed, in principle, and then look at who pays for it. Cr Archer encouraged the meeting to send their submissions to WCRC, he urged people to write all of their concerns on the submission form. Cr Clementson stated that Council needs to be able to make an informed decision and it is very important that people make a submission. Mayor Howard stated that if people want BDC to do something then they need to add this to their submission. It was agreed that all submissions would be sent to WCRC and the information would then be shared with BDC. M. Meehan advised that submissions close on 25 May and a report will then go to WCRC's June council meeting. He stated that his report will include the concerns raised at this meeting. F. Keating stated that it is important that people put their concerns regarding the rating classifications on their submission forms. M. Meehan advised that the submissions will go to Mr Philpott and he will reconsider the matter. M. Meehan confirmed that Mr Philpott has visited Punakaiki. A speaker asked if Development West Coast (DWC) has been approached. Mayor Howard stated that it is worthwhile have a discussion with DWC. He stated that support is required to lobby various organisations. It was noted that DWC have not been involved with the current issues that Franz Josef is facing or the Hokitika and Greymouth seawalls.

Cr Archer called for final questions. A speaker asked how long construction is likely to take. P. Birchfield advised that she expects construction to take around about a month.

Cr Archer thanked the meeting for their attendance. He thanked M & F. Keating for providing the venue.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.