

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE NORTHERN ACTION GROUP JUNE 2024

Held at Totara Park Hall, 5 Melwood Drive, Warkworth on Monday 24th June 2023 commencing at 7.04 p.m.

1. WELCOME

Attendance:

Committee – Bill Foster (Chair), Hugh Briggs (Sec), Maurice Purdy (Treasurer), Lance Taylor, Peter Buckton, Peter Sinton, Malcolm Black

Attendees: Members, supporters and speakers: Chris Penk (MP Kaipara ki Mahurangi), Greg Sayers (Auckland Councillor), Sue Crockett, Stephen Law, Tim Holgate (RLB), Michelle Carmichael (RLB), Elizabeth Foster, Caroline Barrett, Angela Buckton, Sue Crockett, Bill Townson, Mona Townson.

The Chair, Bill Foster, welcomed all attendees (19 including the Committee and guest speakers) to the AGM. It was an excellent turnout, given the poor weather. Bill identified the key speakers: Greg Sayers (Auckland Councillor for Rodney) and Chris Penk (Local MP) and welcomed them to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

The Secretary (Hugh Briggs) read out the apologies from Colin Smith (RLB), Deanne Yardley, Glen Ashton and Brian Mason. The apologies were moved and accepted.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous AGM meeting on the 20 July 2023 were taken as read. Copies were available at the meeting but no questions were raised.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising and Bill Foster indicated that most of the matters in the minutes would be covered in his Chair's report later on and in subsequent discussion. The minutes of that meeting were then accepted as being a true and accurate record of that meeting. Moved Bill Foster, seconded by Hugh Briggs. Approved.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair, Bill Foster, then presented his report using Powerpoint slides. This report can be viewed by way of a link on the website and in the next Newsletter. He started with a review of the 6R's from last year, which are again highlighted again in 2024. His message was that it had been a successful year for NAG (and Rodney) with several "wins".

Our key issues were:

1. The disconnect between planning and implementation
2. Maintenance shortfall
3. Unfair transport priorities
4. Need for fairer local board representation
5. Wayby Valley landfill

6. Storm damage repairs
7. A broken Council
8. Three (or Five) Waters

Action this year:

Bill then identified the successes of this year:

1. Three waters cancellation
2. Contained rates rises
3. URIP funding of \$125m (push for frontloading)
4. Improved liaison with RLB and community groups (eg WALG)
5. Representation review for fairer balance between urban and rural
6. An adjustment (small) to Local Board discretionary funding formula which helps Rodney

He showed the proposed new boundary changes, which gave a fairer presence for rural areas and identified the changes in the maintenance programme. He indicated why NAG had to continue to question the structure of Auckland Council, which he hoped the RLB and Council members would outline. He ended his presentation with thanks to the Committee, and all the supporters with their generous donations, without which NAG could not continue its fight on behalf of the Rodney communities.

Moved that the report be accepted – proposed Bill Foster; seconded Hugh Briggs (Sec): Carried.

Hugh Briggs (Sec) and many others thanked Bill for his tremendous work on behalf of NAG and the Rodney Community. There was loud applause for this.

6. TREASURERS' REPORT

Maurice Purdy presented the brief financial statement (copies were made available and was also shown on the Chair's presentation). The financial statement is attached to the minutes. The Society was kept financial by generous donations from supporters, given that the Society had not sought grants or funding from any appropriate agencies. The main expenditure was on materials and limited advertising. A discussion followed about getting a better (Thrifty) account with ASB, rather than the business account NAG has.

It was then moved that the accounts be accepted as a true and accurate record, as attached and signed off by the Chairperson. Moved by Bill Foster and seconded by Peter Buckton. Carried.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Bill then moved that the nominations as shown on the Chair's slides for the officer and Committee positions could be accepted, unless there were more coming from the floor. None were offered. As the Chair was the only nomination, Bill stood down whilst the Secretary, Hugh, acted as Chair to undertake the voting for the Chair position. Hugh proposed that Bill be nominated as there were no others, seconded by Peter Buckton. Bill was unanimously voted as Chair.

Bill resumed in his role as Chair to complete the election process. The nominations for Secretary (Hugh Briggs) and Treasurer (Maurice Purdy) were moved and accepted, as there were no others presented. Peter Sinton, Malcolm Black, Lance Taylor and Peter Buckton were re-elected onto the Committee.

8. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Bill advised the meeting that there was no annual subscription provided for. Any person that made a donation was considered to be a financial member as per the Constitution. Members just had to fill in the membership form and indicate their donation. It was resolved to maintain this process. Moved by Bill and seconded by Hugh.

9. DISCUSSION

Bill opened up the discussion session by reiterating the main points of his report. His main question to the meeting was to ask how could we unify the Rodney community to get better governance and more equitable funding. NAG wanted positive ideas and possible solutions to achieve this. He then invited the guest speakers to comment on these issues and on the theme chosen: A Better Rodney.

10. GUEST SPEAKERS

Chris Penk: Kaipara ki Mahurangi MP

He acknowledged NAG's work for the Rodney community, Greg and FTT for their work too.

He discussed issues:

Regional Fuel Tax coming off as it was too general going mainly to CBD projects which were too expensive.

Three Waters needed to be changed. Major infrastructure issues with Watercare needed funding solutions. It was not a perfect solution - need to get more local projects.

Supercity: the 2026 election may create new boundaries to reflect population growth. NAG wants open consultation process with any boundary changes to wards. Need accountability for Councils to ratepayers for expenditures, as there are limited powers for LB's. There is no enforcement process, nor transparency of decision making and financial accountability. Need fairness of allocations across all LB's.

FTB: Michelle wanted proper sustainable development and all expressed concern about Fast Track Bill. Need for real (integrated) planning.

He was thanked for his attendance and thoughts, and his hard work for the Rodney communities.

Greg Sayers: Ward Councillor

He acknowledged NAG's fight had not always been fully successful but it had repositioned itself to get appropriate changes to representation, better integrated planning and better maintenance expenditure. He congratulated NAG on its hard work for the Rodney communities.

His main points were:

Watercare pipeline: he emphasized that Council and the public could not alter Watercare's operational powers, as these were set by the Auckland City Act. The only way that NAG and other groups could get any possible change would be to provide full details of other options costed out and submit these to RLB and Greg to put to the Mayor. There was no guarantee that it would be successful. There is very strong opposition to the Queen Street route and WALG is putting an alternative option to the Council to be submitted to Watercare. It is amazing that there is no full cost-benefit analysis required as with RMA applications/Plan changes – there should be an analysis of the costs to the community against the implementation cost.

Sealing Programme: Whilst the funds have been allocated there is no programme set yet. The LB can choose the type of seal with targeted rate funding but not with AT funded projects. Still issue of getting funds from a bigger budget or a targeted rate.

Water Tables: Drainage is not up to standards and yet there is no proper quality control. No Clerk of Works as in old times, which Greg is pushing for. Many examples of poor workmanship and failures.

WINS in Rodney: RLB greater increase in RLTB programme, but timing is under AT control, so need to push for "front loading" with greater funds over next 3 years. Greater funding has been provided to RLB for community facilities and services. Hill Street has \$19.7 m allocated but no timing yet sorted. It is the highest roading project on the list. NAG has pushed for Local Government Body review re (a) representation and (b) subdivision boundaries. This will be out for consultation 8 July – 8 August. Need for all to submit.

Rodney is being given priority.

Greg's thoughts were very well received and his hard work for the Rodney communities was gratefully acknowledged.

There was a vote of thanks to both Chris Penk and Greg Sayers for all their great work on behalf of the Rodney communities. A strong round of applause. There was also a vote of thanks to Bill Foster from many people, with a rousing reception.

Michelle Carmichael (RLB) and Tim Holgate (RLB)

She focused on the need for the greater transparency in RLB, and for a more socially conscious group and not party politics. It has changed from the previous Board (Rodney First no longer has dominant influence), with a change in direction. Open workshops have been happening for a while, continuing after the end of the trial. Recording of business meetings is currently being trialled for 6 months to enable access to RLB discussion and

decisions at a time convenient to public, as we understand it is difficult to get to meetings during the day when it suits council staff to attend. They have also set up informal Warkworth Community Group meetings every 2 months (first one was successful). She indicated that being an RLB member was a full time job and should be recognised as such. She was also thanked for her great work for the community and with her involvement with Fight the Tip. **Tim** echoed these points indicating that the RLB is much more of a positive entity now, able to achieve projects of meaning.

Peter Sinton (WALG/NAG)

Peter is a NAG Committee member, joining as he wanted to get involved in producing a better planned Rodney. He became the Chair of WALG (the combined Business and Professional group set up to share information and coordinate activity for a better Warkworth area). He wants to expand its role to provide a platform for all aspects of the community to be able to take formal action on behalf of ratepayers to support a better planned District area (Warkworth town and rural areas served by it). He set out the framework of a new entity (name yet to be determined) designed to include all groups – residents associations, professionals, businesses, farmers, landowners, and environmental groups. A steering group of professionals (planner, engineers, environmentalists, businesses) will be set up to set out the direction the Society should go. It will be necessary to create an Incorporated Society (for protection and power to go the Environment Court if necessary). The goal is to manage change in the Rodney District, coming from the community, letting Council know what the community wants. Warkworth has character and identity of its own and not just a commuter suburb of Auckland.

It will take a few months to get the organization underway but it will be necessary to develop an integrated planning strategy before the review of the Auckland Unitary Plan is advertised in 2025. NAG is fully supportive of it, with some of its professional members being drivers of this new direction.

Sue Crockett (Fight the Tip)

Sue's opening was "it is not over yet"! There are appeals to the High Court coming up in July from Ngati Whatua to get the same manawhenua status instead of Ngati Manuhuri. This is supported by FTT as an interested party, enabling it to put up lawyers and expert witnesses if needed. There is no final decision yet, as the High Court could override the Environment Court's interim decision. The Waste Management Plan has no legal status but should be taken into account (more) in any final decision, particularly as it states that the city does not need any new landfill!!!

Sue (and Michelle) were thanked for their magnificent work in this fight – with very strong applause.

11. GENERAL DISCUSSION

There was no other discussion, as it had been a very full and comprehensive debated session.
On that note, **Bill** declared the meeting closed at 9.13pm with an invitation to share tea/coffee and finger food. Social further discussions took place until after 9.40pm.

Hugh Briggs
Secretary

Signed by:
Chairman Bill Foster..... Date
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Financial Report for the year ended 31st March 2023

(Add to these minutes)