



The Northern Action Group Incorporated

“Taking the Fight Forward”

We had our AGM last Monday 20th July and our thanks to all those members and supporters who came to the meeting. Draft Minutes (thank you Mona!) are attached.

Chairman Bill Townson noted that this was the 10th AGM and NAG has now been active for 11 years – no-one foresaw at the outset that it would need to exist for so long or that getting a fair deal for the ratepayers and residents of North Rodney would take so long – or become a never-ending story!

Bill has decided to step aside after 11 years, and shared a few memories of the early days of NAG. While NAG was ultimately unsuccessful in its application to the LGC to get out of the not-so-super city, the organization has acquitted itself extremely well and earned respect and credibility for its efforts to improve the governance of our area.

Democracy with independence and autonomous governance for North Rodney is still an objective for NAG, but we also have to push for improvements within the current system – that is sadly letting down our strong rural community in particular.

Mona Townson also stood down as Secretary and we were all pleased to record great appreciation for her tireless work for NAG. Bill remains on the Committee and I am carrying on the challenge as the new Chairman. We have a new Treasurer (Maurice Purdy) and Secretary (Hugh Briggs). Lance Taylor stays on the Committee.

For the open part of the meeting we heard from our tireless Councilor Greg Sayers, who constantly goes to battle for Rodney and ratepayers in general. Sadly, the AC emergency budget means much needed road sealing and infrastructure development in Rodney (from toilets to a sports center) is being put on hold to allow AC to continue to fund its central city “iconic” projects and corporate hierarchy.

Local Board member Colin Smith also talked about his “Fit for Purpose” road maintenance programme developed with AT, which should make a major contribution to improving the quality of Rodney’s rural roads and allow sealing at much lower costs.



The Northern Action Group Incorporated

There was general disappointment that political parties and candidates for the local (Kaipara ki Mahurangi) electorate do not seem keen to support either a binding referendum for Rodney (to restore what was taken from us in 2009), or to enact much needed changes to the Local Government Act, but that is something we clearly have to work on.

If NAG can arrange a meeting with the local party candidates and list hopefuls to hear them say what they will do for us before the election, we will do that.

The mood of the meeting was good, with agreement and support for NAG continuing with its three-pronged approach to better governance and administration of North Rodney:

- Fairer representation (not subject to the tyranny of the Auckland city majority);
- Independent and locally-based governance and administration (to eliminate wasteful spending of our rates on things NR people don't want); and
- Legislation changes to support and ensure that.

The feeling was that if NAG can work with and find common ground with the many other community groups in our area, that will increase our chances of improving our situation.

The Electoral Act talks about people having fair and effective representation, but none of us feel we are getting that in North Rodney. We hope the LGNZ initiative on Localism (which NAG made a strong submission on) will provide an initiative for some improvements, and we have to keep campaigning for changes to the legislation to fix Auckland's dysfunctional (for us) governance structure.

All of this is not without some costs (supporters of our cause enabled us to conduct the LGC application and appeal) so if you are unhappy with AC's rates increases, increased spending on city projects, more debt (breaching its covenants), cancelling our road sealing programme, lack of infrastructure spending here, and proposals to dump their rubbish here, please donate to help us.

Donations to NAGs Bank Account ASB WW **12 3095 0233547 00**

Ideas to northernactiongroup@gmail.com

Yours sincerely

Bill Foster
Chairman
Northern Action Group Inc.