

**Minutes of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Mahurangi East Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc. held 10.30 am Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at Scott House**

**Present:**

Chairman: Mark Croft  
Treasurer: Susan Jelicich  
Secretary: Heather Mackay

**In Attendance:**

40 residents, ratepayers and MERRA committee members

MP for Rodney: Mark Mitchell

Local Board member: Beth Houlbrooke

Chairman Mark Croft welcomed all to the meeting and requested further apologies

**Apologies:**

Joy Paxton	George Ireland	Colin Harvey
Linda & Fraser MacFarlane	Greg & Geraldine Kasper	Roger & Mara Harvey
Malcolm & Penny Scott	Rob & Wendy Munro	Jim & Sue Cleland
Ken & Fiona Knight	Glenn & Katherine Larsen	Dennis Willers
Chris & Helen Russell	Suzette Eastmond	Toby Whyte
John & Linda Trainor	Simon & Clarissa Gould-Thorpe	Lindsay Crocker

**The Chair introduced Rodney Minister of Parliament Mark Mitchell to the meeting and invited him to speak.** He congratulated MERRA on attaining 50 years and invited feedback that he could take to Wellington. His position is an opposition MP with Justice and Defence portfolios. He has recently assumed responsibility for the Pike River Mine Recovery from Chris Finlayson who is retiring. He talked politics briefly about the re-entry into the drift of the mine planned for the coming week saying that National in opposition had always been advised that entry to both the mine and the drift was too dangerous. There are instruments in the drift which may help to determine the cause of the explosion in the mine. Current advice is that the re-entry can be done safely into the drift (1.2km) and this is being supported by National. MP Mitchell talked about Defence and Orion plane replacement with P8 Poseidon that will become available 2022/3. Hercules replacement is necessary but such decisions are being delayed by the current Government. The opposition has a strong stance on public safety with Justice and are pushing to ensure there is no dilution of bail laws and sentences imposed which changes responsibility from the Justice system to the community. There was a question from the floor about security agencies being able to read signals of terrorist attacks in a timely manner.

Hill Street – NZTA and Auckland Transport have been consistent in their position that they will not do anything to Hill Street before the network (Puhoi to Warkworth, Matakana Link Road, Western collective) is formed. MP Mitchell heads a Warkworth transport forum which meets bi-monthly with NZTA and AT. This intersection currently has a plan which is supported by the community but needs a big push to get budget funding for which there is currently no priority. Beth Houlbrooke supported the MP in that we need to keep submitting at every step to get this project to attain some budget priority. There was a very strong message from the floor that this process needs to have more pressure applied to deliver a solution. MP Mitchell said it's important to apply pressure on the Government list MP's who are supposed to be representing us.

**The Chair thanked Mark and then invited Beth Houlbrooke as our Auckland Council Elected Representative and Local Board member to address the meeting.** Beth said that she attends MERRA committee meetings when possible and is informed by the minutes of local issues. She invites anybody to be in touch about local matters which are the responsibility of the local board. There are Local Body elections later this year the new board is committed to completing projects in the current plan. Discretionary budget is small and a significant amount of this was used to support dredging of the Mahurangi River. The transport targeted rate has been used to launch 3 bus services and to build 120 car parks at what is known as the Atlas ground and create a Park and Ride facility. The Local Board is trying to enhance the Mahurangi River as a focal point for Warkworth.

The Chair thanked Beth for her update.

### **Minutes of the 49<sup>th</sup> AGM 2018.**

The Chair moved that the minutes of the 2018 AGM posted on the website ([www.scottslanding.org](http://www.scottslanding.org)) were taken as read.

Peter Seers / Robyn Crocker

Carried

### **Chairperson's Report: Mark Croft**

Mahurangi East Residents and Ratepayers Association Chairpersons report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

The previous 12 months have been an active time for the MERRA committee who have met approximately every 2 months to work in the interests of our community. The report that follows, summarises the activities we have been involved in throughout the year.

#### **Revamped Charles St Noticeboard & Bus Shelter**

Work on refurbishment of the Charles St noticeboard was completed in the past year. Scope of works included the addition of a roof to provide functionality as a bus shelter, new noticeboard materials generously donated by Rob and Anna Friend, revised access to the noticeboard via a 2-way sliding Perspex panel, a concrete pad and a seat. The addition of Corten steel ties the structure visually with the Scotts Landing sign that was completed the year before.

MERRA wants to acknowledge the work of Stuart Windross who came up with the concept, project managed the job and contributed many skilful hours to see the noticeboard turn out as good as it has. Stuart was ably assisted by other community volunteers during the project who happily donated their time and some welcome refreshments/lunches. MERRA is also grateful to Matakana ITM who donated materials as well as private residents who also donated surplus materials.

MERRA added a produce share table under the Little Library this year where residents can donate and take fruit and vegetables. There has been no shortage of givers and takers since it was installed. Thanks again to Stuart who made and installed the table.

The Community now has a great asset which acts as a useful focal point for walkers, students, parents, pet owners, the curious and of course everyone to enjoy for years to come.

#### **Dome Valley Landfill Site**

While MERRA opposes the siting of the proposed landfill in the Dome Valley, we realise there are powerful needs and interests behind it. If it is consented, we will remain concerned at the extra 450 daily return trips that will be added to SH1 and the deadly Dome Valley. This will mean an extra 900 trips daily, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Most will be heavy vehicles. Given our community's

reliance on SH1 (incl. access to hospitals, airports etc) MERRA is advocating for the Northern Rail Line (which passes close to the site) to be upgraded and used to transport Auckland's waste north to the landfill. This would greatly reduce emissions, accident risk, noise and congestion. MERRA has engaged with Kiwirail and Waste Management (who are open to a waste-by-rail option) and have submitted to the Ministry of Transport who are working on a business case for a rail upgrade. A further concern is that rail viability is likely to depend on some Ports of Auckland operations being transferred to Northport. Auckland Council (as POA's sole shareholder) seems likely to oppose this for revenue reasons. We worry about the potential conflict of interest as Auckland Council is not only also the consenting authority but should be supporting rail over road in line with its own transport strategy. We plan to submit accordingly when consent hearings start.

### **Presbyterian Cemetery**

The Presbyterian Church who own the land where the old church once stood and where the cemetery remains to this day approached MERRA to have 2 seats on a newly formed Trust to administer the land and cemetery. MERRA's representatives are George Ireland and Greg Kasper and we thank them for their willingness to participate. The Trust will maintain the grounds and look for revenue opportunities in the future to make the cemetery self-funding.

### **Broadband Speeds**

MERRA's efforts to have Scotts Landing included in the next rollout paid dividends in the last year with Chorus agreeing to add our community to the current roll out phase which many will see happening now at Snells Beach and Algies Bay.

While Scotts Landing work is still a way out, currently expected to be happening before 2021, over half of the Community enjoys faster broadband already due to a fibre feed to the Chorus green box on the corner of Ridge Rd & Charles St. We hope in the coming year that those north of that box may also enjoy improved speeds as MERRA continues to lobby Chorus on making changes to the wiring that would allow for temporary improvements to speeds while we all wait for fibre to homes to be available.

The MERRA committee expresses its gratitude to Stuart Windross whose has made all these advances and continues to push for acceptable broadband speeds for all.

### **Defibrillator**

An AED or Automated External Defibrillator has finally been installed as part of the noticeboard upgrade on the corner of Ridge Rd & Charles St. This potentially life-saving device was generously donated to the Community by Auckland Council several years ago but due to inadequate thought going into the ongoing support for the device, this has meant that it has not been able to be commissioned until now.

MERRA has spent its own funds to house the unit in a specially designed secure box suitable for our marine location, registered its location into a national database and linked it to St John Ambulance via the 111 system.

Having an AED in our Community is not enough however to ensure its effectiveness in the event of a heart failure. Success comes from having a plan with your neighbours to alert St John and getting the AED to the patient, while someone is administering CPR. In that regard, MERRA is working with its Neighbourhood Watch structure and Citizen Response Group to run training sessions to help people

develop a personal plan for each household so that the alarm can be effectively raised as quickly as possible.

Time, every second in fact, matters in this situation and so people are encouraged to attend some neighbourhood training and to think about how CPR can be administered while simultaneously accessing the AED and getting St John on-route. The outside window for the AED is 10 minutes if CPR has been performed all the while.

MERRA urges all residents to attend a training session when offered, to develop a personal household plan including ways to raise the alarm and to have at least an annual practice run, noting timing from start to finish and thinking of ways to improve times and communications.

### **Plant Pests**

MERRA's Ngaio Bay project, phase one of which was largely completed this year, has significantly reduced the weed populations in the area adjacent to the car park and in the reserve to the north. Weed eradication and native plantings have both contributed to an enhanced amenity for the Community.

The job on weeds is never done however and so Auckland Council have developed a plan for sustainable control of that area and others which MERRA will support in the coming years.

Residents are reminded how important it is to identify plant pests on their own property and to eradicate them before seeding takes place. Pests like wild ginger, tobacco plant and pampas are everywhere and while MERRA does its best, our work can be amplified if residents prevent these species from flowering and take steps to remove and dispose of them to arrest these populations over time.

We also remind residents of our in-house supply of herbicides we have courtesy of Auckland Council and invite residents to contact us via the MERRA web site to discuss supply and advice on plant pest issues.

Thanks go to Heather Mackay and Chris Russell for their ongoing efforts with plant pest control.

### **Animal Pests**

MERRA ran a successful animal pest workshop during last year. Over 50 residents attended to learn about the habits of these pests and best practices to control their numbers. Those attending received a free trap/bait station. This workshop was a part of MERRA's revamped animal pest plan which we have developed in conjunction with the Forest Bridge Trust who were our guest speakers at last year's AGM. As a result of this association, MERRA activated a line of 29 doc 200 traps in the community at the beginning of this year targeting mustelids and to date have trapped 6 stoats, 5 weasels and several rats. The traps are managed by 15 volunteers who work during 4 pulses in the year to bait and check traps in their care.

In addition, MERRA's 195 bait stations have been modified to carry rodent blocks as we move the target species from possums to rats.

Our northern boundary near the Macadamia farm is now heavily fortified with traps and bait stations, all targeting possums. Any that survive the border will be managed with Timms traps located close to sightings.

Residents are reminded to visit the MERRA web site to report sightings or individual trapping of pest animal.

MERRA thanks the many people who volunteer to keep the traps and bait stations armed and ready to go during the year. The effort is very much appreciated.

### **Roading and Walkways**

MERRA was very pleased to see the retaining of the eastern slip at the foot of the Ridge Road hill. This subsidence has been going on for years and finally Auckland Transport have put a permanent solution in place.

Other roading issues continue however and the significant slip that occurred two years ago on Ridge Road towards the Scott Point end. This slip is both dangerous and likely to worsen.

MERRA continues to watch all issues with the roads and walkways and continues to promote action by Auckland Council and affiliate organizations.

### **Historic Places, Talking Trails and Seating**

As a future project, MERRA has been developing the idea of formalising walking trails and places for rest across the peninsular aligned with places of historic interest.

MERRA hopes to offer this project in the next year or two using modern GPS technology available on smartphones for residents and visitors.

Thanks to David Legg for heading up this project.

### **The Fire Team**

The fire trailer shed received a makeover this year with a new roof and door hinges. MERRA thanks Alan Seelye for donating the new roofing iron and Stuart Windross for once again heading up the team of restorers who did the work.

The fire group continues to look for a permanent leader to take over from Bill Townson who has been leading the team on a temporary basis – for two years now - while the search goes on. We remain very grateful to Bill for his time and expertise training the fire team.

### **Neighbourhood Support**

Anna Friend has done an excellent job in her first year of leading our Neighbourhood Watch team of street coordinators and residents. Anna has become well connected with local police and the wider neighbourhood support organisation and now receives regular updates on crime matters and goes on.

MERRA welcomes all new residents with a knock on the door and an invitation to join the community via its various activities.

Residents are particularly vulnerable to burglaries via the sea and this year, MERRA attended a meeting of stakeholders onboard the Police vessel Deodar 3 to help coordinate local and police efforts to deter wood-be opportunists.

MERRA encourages all residents to be active inside their own neighbourhood watch group, know other members of their group well, lookout for each other and their property and generally support the system. Report anything suspicious to Anna via the MERRA website if time permits or call 111 if necessary.

### **Civil Defence and Community Response**

MERRA continues to maintain some preparedness in the event of a natural disaster that might affect our community. Fergusson House is the headquarters where radios, generators, BBQs etc. are stored and where operations would be centred in an event.

MERRA continues to be a leading voice inside a revamped Auckland Council Civil Defence process however this process remains poorly funded and of questionable use should a disaster strike our area.

MERRA urges all residents to have their own emergency plan which considers how they would cope over at least three days without road access, power and phone communication.

Peter Seers has done an excellent job in transforming not only our preparedness as a community but also revitalizing the whole area including Warkworth, Point Wells, Omaha, Snells Beach and Algies Bay. Thank you, Peter.

### **Website**

MERRA's website attracted sponsorship from Real Estate companies in the last year and so it now provides listings from active agents working the area. As a result, the website is now self-supporting financially.

We have seen quite a bit of resident activity this year with listings and enquires, animal pest reporting and contributions to historical data.

If you have not visited the website for a while, MERRA encourages you to do so and bookmark the page while you are there.

### **Events**

MERRA ran several successful events during the year including our annual clean-up day, the BBQ which this year served up kebabs under near cloudless conditions, a morning tea for new residents which was very well attended and the New Year's Day cricket match.

MERRA would like to acknowledge the generous support of New World Warkworth and their assistance with this year's BBQ.

The idea of a fishing competition has been raised which we think may be a popular event MERRA could run in the future. Any feedback would be appreciated.

### **Thank you**

In closing this report, I would like to extend my personal thanks to the Committee members this year for their hard work and dedication. The efforts of the Committee improve Scotts Landing in so many ways both big and small, so thank you very much indeed.

Acceptance of the Chairperson's Report      Stuart Windross/Peter Speers      Carried

The Chairman was thanked for his supreme effort particularly concerning pest control but also as the Chair for his leadership and support on behalf of the committee and the residents and ratepayers, thoroughly approved by acclamation.

The Chairman asked the Treasurer Susan Jelich to present the audited financial accounts.

### **MAHURANGI EAST RESIDENT AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

Financial Report for the year ended 31 March 2018

<b>Income</b>		2019	2018
	Donations	1010	842
	Interest	158	160
	Subscriptions	1054	1068
	Sundry/Sales - Events	169	55
	Sponsorship	300	
		<b>2691</b>	<b>2125</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
	Advertising		194
	Barbecue / Catering	704	293
	Depreciation	240	180
	Fire Trailer Maintenance	63	161
	Maintenance		
	Pest Control	70	0
	Subscriptions	176	166
	Sundry Expenses	68	37
	Website	251	645
		<b>1572</b>	<b>1675</b>
	Operating Profit	932	450
	Council and Community Grant	650	2000
	Net Profit	<b>1582</b>	<b>2450</b>
<b>Balance Sheet</b>			
	Value of MERRA as at March 31st	9455	9455
	Current Year Earnings	2450	2450
	New Value	<b>11905</b>	<b>11905</b>
	Represented By		
	Bank Accounts	8633	9002
	Fixed Assets	4531	2544
	Less prepay Website Renewal	474	593
	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>13638</b>	<b>12139</b>
	Liabilities – 2019 Subs / Bus Shelter Funds	151	234
	<b>Net Equity of MERRA</b>	<b>13487</b>	<b>11905</b>

## **Auditors Report**

I have carried out an Audit of the financial results of MERRA for the year ended March 2019.

This included a spot checks of the Receipts and Payments records for the year, I am satisfied accurate records have been maintained. The written down value of the fixed assets of MERRA I consider correct with depreciation for Defibrillator Cabinet and Bus Shelter to start 1 April 2019.

The format of these Accounts meets the criteria of MERRA to give an informative picture of the year's activities.

Roger Harvey  
24<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## **Subscriptions 2017/2018**

MERRA Treasurer Susan Jelich recommended that the current subscription be retained.

Accept Financial Report	Stuart Windross/Bill Townson	Carried
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## **General Business**

Jim Farnell introduced himself to the meeting in his capacity of Honorary Harbourmaster. He advised that he would be relinquishing this position as he no longer lives in the area.

Bill Townson asked about the status of the slip approaching Scotts Landing and was advised that it has been well reported to Council/ Auckland Transport. Andrew Hay advised the meeting that he has seen both surveyors and engineers at this site in recent times. All were encouraged to report to Council to try and hasten repair as very unsafe at present. Bruce Trethewey advised that his lawyer daughter had asked to see the risk assessment report. This was not forthcoming but did result in signage and barriers being erected. Other areas (cemetery corner) on Ridge Road are starting to crack/collapse and these will be advised to Council.

Sue Stevens questioned the cutting of the fence at Ngaio Bay. MERRA is aware of this but not of the reason why. She advised of dangers down there such as abandoned vehicles and the wires on the fence. The Park Ranger and the Ngaio Bay group are working to improve this area. It is thought the fence may have been from the time when the area was privately owned but returned to council for access granted to that landowner from Ngaio Bay Road.

Andrew Hay addressed the meeting as local oyster farmers. He advised the oyster farmers did a clean up in late February and picked up a lot of nasty rubbish. Lisa Hay asked that if any oyster farming equipment is found if they could be advised to collect it. Andrew was asked about the water testing which he said was carried out regularly by the oyster growers. The results of the tests are sensitive information for the growers. They were asked to mention to oyster workers their vehicle speed and consideration for other road users in the area.

## **Election of Officers**

There was no nomination received for the position of Chair and as such that position is vacant. Other nominations matched available positions the following being elected with affirmation for 2019/2020 with ability to co-opt as required.



Chairperson  
Honorary Secretary            Heather Mackay  
Honorary Treasurer           Susan Jelicich

MERRA Executive Committee  
Mark Croft  
Stuart Windross  
Anna Friend  
Lindsay Crocker  
David Legg  
Chris Russell  
Peter Seers

The meeting closed at 11.59 am