



**Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting of the Mahurangi East Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc. held 10.30 am Sunday 07 May 2023 at Scott House**

**Present:**

Chair: Peter Seers  
Treasurer: Debra Mickelborough  
Secretary: Heather Mackay

**Attending:**

25 Residents, Ratepayers and MERRA committee members

Chair Peter Seers welcomed all to the meeting including invited guests Holly Fleming from Terra Pura for Mahurangi Land Restoration Programme (MLRP), Auckland Council Local Ranger Michael Boyle who is also a resident and Greg Sayers from Auckland Council. The Chair advised the meeting of housekeeping matters and for the use of Scott House for which we thank Auckland Council.

Peter advised the meeting of the passing that morning of Lindsay Crocker a MERRA committee member who has contributed willingly and will be very sadly missed. Acknowledgement also of the passing recently of Derek Light a past president and long serving MERRA committee member. Sincere condolences to their families.

Apologies as received and from the meeting.

**Apologies:**

Mona and Bill Townson	Dayle and Dennis Bygrave	Suzette Eastmond and Barry Mein
David and Sue Stevens	Linda and Fraser MacFarlane	Anne and Doug Hamilton
Rosalind and Paul Stancich	Joyce Anderson	Corene Humphreys and John Taylor
Grahame and Claudia Struthers		Bruce Trethewey and Jan Turley

**The Chair introduced Holly Fleming** from Terra Pura a consultant who, along with Sophie Tweedle are managing the portion of the MLRP project that Scott's Landing residents are a part of. Holly explained that the project has a goal of reducing sediment into the Mahurangi Harbour, a 13,500-hectare catchment which includes 206.6km of rivers which discharge into this catchment. This is the second year of the 5-year project where plants have been available for private landowners in the area. Process has been more refined this year compared to last year when more than 3000 plants

were distributed, and other sites because of multiple landowners being involved. Some properties in this area may require archaeological assessment to ensure no inappropriate ground disturbance. There is a measuring tool being developed to assess the effectiveness of the planting on the sediment reduction into the harbour.

**The Chair then introduced Michael Boyle** the Auckland Council Local Park Ranger (who resides in Ferguson House). Michael is responsible for Scott Point as well as Ngaio Bay, Mahurangi East Regional Park and Scandrett. He explained there is a mixture of land pockets on this Peninsula owned by different organisations which makes co-ordination of overlapping environmental projects challenging. The recently enlarged Mahurangi East is a 95-hectare park still accessible only by boat. The land has been retired of all grazing and there have been 120,000 trees planted. The next step is to develop pedestrian and cycle access for which attendees offered their assistance. Michael agreed to work with MERRA to utilise volunteer working bee type labour for specific projects. He asked that those doing volunteer work such as in Ngaio Bay email him their hours worked as these hours help boost Auckland Council projects in the area. Michael said that Councils current policy is not to use solid structures to protect the foreshore.

**The Chair then introduced Mark Croft** who has been heading MERRA's Pest Control programme for many years of which the last 15 months have produced the most head winds. The DOC land programme was halted and with the help of Restore Rodney East (RRE) Merra finally got the pesticide application approved and met all other requirements. Baiting was able to be restarted in early 2023 with those runholders noting the impact of pest control neglect in these 3 areas on the peninsula. A funding cut has resulted in a lack of bait being supplied by the Council despite paying a targeted rate for biosecurity needs expressly for that purpose. There are 31 volunteers doing pest control covering the whole peninsula from the northern boundary of the macadamia farm south.

MERRA with very grateful thanks to Mark Croft was successful with an application to Predator Free NZ for funding to extend pest control work onto private residences. The funding allows for purchasing of assets – bait stations and traps. It is hoped that families will learn to become good trappers. Mark has formed a steering group with Craig Maskell, Helen Russell, and Joy Paxton to bring this to fruition.

**Greg Sayers our Auckland Councillor was then introduced by the Chair.** Greg commented that Beth Houlbrooke is now working for AT in this area. Beth has been a good Local Board ally for MERRA in the past and may be able to assist CAS references reported to AT for roading issues. He then spoke about the progress the new Auckland Mayor is making with the FIX Auckland project. The 295million deficit could be addressed by a 15% rate increase but has been settled at a 4.5% increase. After 15 years of the Supercity the employee level of 11000 is now decreasing. The Council's position on selling it's 18% stake in Auckland Airport will be decided in June. There is a feeling in Council that there is cost saving happening and an appetite for such change. He advised that the Warkworth Council Service Centre is to be closed and amalgamated with the library. Greg also spoke about the Hill Street intersection and how with community expertise input in developed design will lead to a better outcome. The redesign is within the allocated 18million dollar budget with construction expected to begin within 6-12 months. The condition of Sharp Road and the intersection of Sharp and Matakana Road were raised as potential future problem areas. Greg pointed out that AT funding is \$ for \$ from the Government which dictates how the funds are spent. Current policy is to prioritise walkways and cycleways.

The Chair thanked all speakers for their updates and their interest in our community.

## **Minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> AGM 2022.**

The Chair moved that the minutes of the 2022 AGM to be posted on the website ([www.scottslanding.org](http://www.scottslanding.org)) were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Karen Windross / Alan Seelye    Carried

## **Mahurangi East Residents & Ratepayers Association Chairpersons Report May 2023**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This has been another testing year; we appear to have moved from covid lockdowns to climate change. I express our thanks to Auckland Council for the use of Scott House today. I have been part of the MERRA committee for probably 8 years or so. I have been impressed by the effort of each member and the professionalism we have on our committee. Our website and newsletters and regular communications through our Local Area Network help keep you all informed.

It is with a very heavy heart that I must inform you all of Lindsay Crockers passing away at 4am today. Lindsay had recently been admitted to hospital for another small skin operation and was subsequently diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas and liver. He has had a long battle with health as you may know, our thoughts are with Lindsay and Robyn.

Further I acknowledge the sad passing of Derek Light earlier this year. Having lost his partner Dennis Withers he determined that he would see out his days here. Thanks to all neighbours and residents who assisted Derek in his later years.

### **MERRA COMMITTEE**

We hold bi-monthly meetings to manage portfolios and to further projects considered important to our community. I will give a brief update on these portfolios. MERRA committee members support each other and share tasks between us all. The following report is testament to their continuing hard work.

### **PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

#### **Website and newsletter**

I would like to acknowledge Lindsay Crocker's commitment and dedication over the past few years to maintaining our website, more recently Lindsay took on our newsletter as well. One of his last communications to me was that he was in hospital again, but that he would attend to his duties when home.

#### **Local Area Network**

Our Local Area Network coordinators, Suzette Eastmond and Annie Bradley, with the help of Secretary Heather Mackay, have been very busy this year updating the Merra database with all residents' details and completing compliance for the new Privacy Policy. Thank you to everyone who signed and returned their forms.

Up-to-date, revised street groups with coordinators were then able to be set up. Thanks to the new coordinators helping.

The Local Area Network liaises closely with the Rodney Neighbourhood Support and is used to convey messages from them and other emergency agencies when required. Luckily, we had the groups set up, as they were needed in the recent flooding and cyclone events.

One of the learnings from the cyclone event was that we needed an alternative system to get messages out if our phones went flat or the cell towers went down due to extended power outages. That has now been addressed with a network walking tree mapped out.

A New Resident's Morning Tea was held at Rosedale on Charles Street in December. It was great to meet new residents and to be able to mix, post-covid restrictions. Thanks to the street coordinators for supplying the delicious food. At the morning tea we presented the new residents with a copy of the new Welcome Pack which is a simplified A-Z guide on all we need to know if living at Scotts Landing. It was well received, and each household has now been sent a copy electronically. It can be updated, so if something is missing let us know.

When we were once again able to meet as a whole community. We held a lovely picnic in early March at Scott House, attended by around 80 people. The street coordinators once again stepped up to help, along with the Merra committee. Thanks to New World for their sponsorship again this year.

### **Broadband Fibre Instal and Power Supply**

Final residential fibre connections have been finished over the past year and MERRA has retired this project after 8 years of work.

While our power supply is far more reliable than in the past it remains vulnerable to extreme weather and especially tree damage. Please advise Vector if you see trees that are within 1.2m of network high voltage lines (the bare top ones) or within 500mm of low voltage lines (the lower ones with insulation). Thanks to Stuart Windross who is now finally enjoying the fruits of his labour being one of the last to receive his connection.

### **Scott's Landing Fire Party**

Ken Jordan has attended over 500 emergency callouts as a real firefighter and he manages our group of local volunteers who make up the Fire Party. We are trained as a first response team to combat the type of fires which our area can expect. We have equipment locally and our team concentrate on getting to a fire fast to delaying it until help arrives.

Our Fire Party concentrates on repetitive training on our equipment, but it is the local knowledge and training that makes them especially useful. Please call 111 if there is a fire, then call someone on your fire team.

Our Sunday morning trainings are, whilst for a serious reason, also designed to build team support for their fellow members' abilities and to be enjoyable.

### **Historical Trail**

All six illustrated commentaries are now available online ([www.scottslanding.org](http://www.scottslanding.org) search 'historical trail') and five of the six handcrafted wooden and corten steel benches are now installed with their QR codes operational. Locations are the Cemetery, the Community Garden, top of Williams St, Schoolhouse Bay, and Ngaio Bay. The final bench will be installed as part of the Council's Scott Point seawall project adjacent the jetty. An all-weather directions map has been added to the

noticeboard/bus shelter on the Charles St corner. We invite you all to check them out. MERRA thanks JSC Timber and Malcolm Scott for his donations of timber for this project.

### **Roading and Walkways:**

Auckland Transport's failure to adequately maintain roadside drains, culverts and edge bunds continues and recent weather events resulted in new slips including on the unsealed section of Ridge Road. As with the previous slip there seems little commitment to a timely, permanent fix.

Sadly too Auckland Transport unilaterally withdrew its funding from the run-off prevention pilot works in the same area that MERRA had successfully bid for, meaning that both the project and substantial Government co-Funding are at best deferred (and possibly lost).

MERRA will continue to push for better preventative maintenance and fixes

### **Scott Point seawall rebuild.**

The seawall is being rebuilt to reduce runoff and erosion. There will be a new seawall constructed of concrete faced with rock to replace the tipped rock structure we have. As mentioned already, the last of our heritage seats has been approved for installation in a prominent position at the southern tip of the carpark which will enjoy wide views of the harbour facing Pukapuka Inlet. There will be a fence structure to provide safety which was a requirement of the permit, but we hope this will be like the fence on the jetty. Merra has provided input into this project, and we expect to have delineated trailer parking on the eastern side.

### **Community Response Group**

MERRA activated our community support after the weather events providing much needed power through distribution of our MERRA owned generators to those in the community who needed them. We continue our weekly Civil Defense radio checks with our radio and I seek volunteers interested in helping reinvigorate our Community Response group to please speak to me afterwards.

### **Animal Pest Control**

Reported by Mark Croft in his guest address to the meeting.

### **Plant Pest Control**

MERRA remains committed to the eradication of Pest Plants in our precious coastal environment. Many of the pest plants found here originally escaped from our own gardens, so we encourage the Scott's Landing Community to look around their own properties, berms, nearby open spaces, walkways etc. to identify and commit to eradicating these plants before they spread even further compromising our valued native plant species.

Chris Russell heads our Plant Pest control and he can assist you with council supplied sprays, local advice, and reading material to help. Contact can be made through a MERRA Committee member or via the MERRA website.

### **We live here because we love it so let's send those pest plants packing.**

I take this opportunity to thank the members of our current committee for their efforts and support through the past year.

My thanks to Secretary Heather Mackay, Treasurer Debbie Mickelborough, and committee members Stuart Windross, Chris Russell, Lindsay Crocker (retiring), Annie Bradley, Colin Harvey (retiring), and Suzette Eastmond, and to our additional co-opted members Barry Mein, George Ireland and Craig Maskell who supported us with their skills during the year.

The Chairs Report moved to be accepted by Susan Gower / Jude Nye

Mark Croft then thanked the Chair, Peter Seers, on behalf of the community.

The Chair asked the Treasurer Debbie Mickelborough to present the audited financial accounts.

## MERRA Financial Report 31 March 2023

The financial accounts for the year ending March 2023 have been prepared by Debra Mickelborough and are summarised in the following manner:

### Statement of Account

#### **Total Income of \$4,070.95**

- Donations of \$2,423.00 – All General Donations which is a \$531.00 increase on last year.
- Interest \$227.55 – increase of \$205.69 on last year.
- Sales Events - \$90.40 – being Sale of Air Horns \$10.00, Generator Use \$45.00 and Picnic Receipts \$35.40
- Subscriptions \$1,330.00 – 111 Membership subscriptions received up by 19 on last year.

#### **Total Operating Expenses were: \$3,539.78.**

- Cost of Goods Sold \$39.00 – purchase of 8 Airhorns for resale.
- Bank Fees \$0.20
- Catering \$524.86 – Picnic Expenses net of \$200 Voucher from New World
- Depreciation \$1,707.00 – including depreciation of Security Camera \$1,141.72
- General Expenses \$251.99 – Gifts to several residents as appreciation for work done over many years.
- Neighbourhood Support \$51.60 – printing costs for New Resident Morning Tea and Mail Merge Software Subscription
- Plant Pest Control \$53.37 – new DOC Signage
- Repairs & Maintenance \$294.33 – Timber and Drycon Concrete for Track Steps, Bench Installations and Fire Trailer Repairs
- Subscriptions \$179.40 – Annual renewal for Xero Software
- Website Expenses \$438.03 -Annual renewals plus \$80 Consulting

#### **Net Surplus: \$531.17**

## Balance Sheet

### **Net Assets: \$21,784.82 – Represented by**

- Bank Account combined Balance Total \$14,679.20 – 00 Account \$6,986.11 and Saving Account \$7,693.09
- Prepayments \$199.52 – One year remaining of 2 Year Website Hosting and Security renewal
- Fixed Assets \$7,085.50 – no new assets this year

Total Liabilities \$179.40

- Accrual of \$179.40 to be rolled bank 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

**Total Equity \$21,784.82**

## Auditors Report

With no additional Assets bought this year it comes down to a simple exercise of reviewing the Bank Statements.

The year end profit plus the non-cash item of depreciation is reflected in the increase in the Bank accounts.

Could I suggest that in presenting the accounts you show the comparative figures from 2022.

I have no hesitation in confirming the accuracy of the financial statement.

Roger Harvey ACA retired.

24 May 2023

### Footnote

I mentioned to you that with the introduction in recent years of the website and with acknowledged need for security on the peninsula our operating expenses have increased

2021 \$1890 this compares with Subscriptions \$1248

2022 \$2037 \$1104

2023 \$3501 \$1330

Great that donations have been more than generous and I'm sure will continue.

Your excellent comments mention an increase in households from 104 in 2022 to 111 in 2023.

Could I suggest to the committee that consideration be given to lifting the subs not necessarily to cover the \$3501 but to at least match the cash costs of operating expenses(i.e. leave out the non-cash item of depreciation...\$1707).

To cover the 3501-1707 equals \$1794 if the households paying in 2023-24 are the same as for 2022/23 we'd need to lift subs by 40%.

I personally would be more than happy to pay \$20....the picnic alone is worth double this.

My congratulations to the committee on another excellent year.

Kind regards

Roger Harvey

Once again, sincere thanks to Roger Harvey for auditing the accounts and his suggestions.

### **Subscriptions 2023/24**

MERRA Treasurer Debra Mickelborough recommended that the subscription per household be increased to \$20. All attending were in favour of this increase.

	Debra Mickelborough / Peter Seers	Carried
Accept Financial Report	Debra Mickelborough / Peter Seers	Carried

The Chair sincerely thanked Debra Mickelborough for her first year as Treasurer of MERRA.

### **General Business**

There were no items raised for General Business.

### **Election of Officers 2023/24**

Colin Harvey has resigned his position and is sincerely thanked for his valuable contribution to the committee over many years.

Mike Brooker offered to join the committee with all other 2022/23 members available. With Lindsay's passing the Communication/website role will require co-opting. The following being elected with affirmation for 2023/2024 with ability to co-opt as required.

Chairperson	Peter Seers
Honorary Treasurer	Debbie Mickelborough
Honorary Secretary	Heather Mackay

#### **MERRA Executive Committee**

Stuart Windross	Suzette Eastmond
Chris Russell	Mike Brooker
Annie Bradley	

Peter Seers / Chris Bradley      Carried

The meeting closed at 12.12 pm.