



Minutes of the 56th Annual General Meeting of the Mahurangi East Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc. held 10.30 am Sunday 04 May 2025 at Scott House

Present:

Chair: Barry Mein
Treasurer: Debra Mickelborough
Secretary: Heather Mackay

Attending:

35 Residents, Ratepayers and MERRA committee members.

Chair Bary Mein welcomed all to the meeting and invited those attending to enjoy morning tea at the conclusion of the meeting and advised housekeeping matters.

Apologies as received and from the meeting.

Apologies:

Mike Brooker	Simon and Michele Revell	Peter and Derryn Seers
Doug and Anne Hamilton	Suzette Eastmond	Jim Cleland
Nick King	Roger and Mara Harvey	Philippa Walker
James Groenhart	Bruce Trethewey	

The Chair introduced Paul Steinkamp who made a very interesting presentation about the Kawau Coastguard. King Charles is the current Patron of the NZ Coastguard movement which was formed 1970-75. There are 63 units around NZ – 59 wet, 2 air and 2 operation centres on Channel 60 purposed with “Saving Lives at Sea”. The Kawau Coastguard has been based at Sandspit since 1997. They have 30 volunteers in the unit - 5 are qualified skippers. The unit has 3 crews who are ‘on call’ each 1 week in 3. They train every week and aim to be available 24/7. The minimum personnel for a call out are a skipper and 2 crew. The vessel for the Kawau Coastguard is a 10.3m Naiad it is 6 m wide so very stable but 14 years old so fundraising at present to replace this boat in 2026. Covering an area from Bream Tail, Mangawhai out to Great Barrier and down to South of the Mahurangi River there are an average of 2 callouts per week in the busy period October to April generally around 110 each year. 274 people were assisted last year a total of 3857 volunteer hours (rescues, training, fundraising etc.) all volunteers must live within 20 minutes of Sandspit. A couple of videos were

shown of rescues to illustrate that boat users should plan for events instead of waiting for them to happen.

Paul talked to the following points of the boating safety code

- Lifejackets
- Waterproof ways of communicating – VHF best as can reach a lot of people at once.
- Check the weather – if in doubt don't go out.
- Avoid Alcohol
- Check enough fuel – 1/3 in and out and 1/3 safety
- Do a trip report to Coastguard who will only follow up bar crossings if you don't return as expected.
- Have flares, food, clothing, First Aid equipment.
- Skipper Responsibility – tell passengers how to use radio/ lifejackets/ GPS (this gives the position of the cursor on the GPS, how to start the engine and pull up the anchor.

To belong to the Coastguard is \$150/ annum and non-members are charged \$350/hour of rescue time.

Those attending showed their appreciation for this information the presenter Paul being thanked by Barry on our behalf.

Barry then introduced Ken Jordan who is the Scotts Landing Fire Party Chief and has a volunteer fire fighting history of 40 years. The Fire Party is the first response firefighting team for our area which trains bi-monthly has local knowledge and can respond quickly. It is managed by MERRA and is sufficient to operate the fire trailer, connect to water and get water on before the arrival of the Mahurangi East brigade. The Mahurangi East volunteer brigade is funded by Council and looked after by Fire NZ and has specialised equipment such as required to enter a burning building which the fire party is not trained to do. Ken encouraged all residents to familiarise themselves with contact information for the fire party available on the website and the noticeboard. He also suggested that if your water source is not obvious or complicated you contact one of the fire party to tell them how and where to access.

Thanks were expressed to Ken for telling us what we can expect of the Fire Party in the event of a fire and for overseeing the Fire Party.

Minutes of the 55th AGM 2024.

The Chair moved that the minutes of the 2024 AGM as posted on the website (www.scottslanding.org) were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Chris Bradley / Christine Maskell

Carried

Matters Arising – nil

MERRA Chair's Report 2024/25

I'm pleased to report on what has been another busy year for MERRA. Compiling this report has been a good reminder of the wide range of community initiatives and activities that our members have been involved in, and the large number of people who have given their time and expertise to make Scotts Landing the special community that it is.

This is reflected in our membership numbers, which have increased this year from 114 to 130 properties (up 14%). This represents over 70% of the total households on the peninsula, which is a very high level of participation when compared to other similar resident associations.

Shortly after the last AGM, the incoming Committee agreed on a range of portfolios to help us manage MERRA's activities and projects. The next sections of the report cover each of these areas.

Environmental

The environmental portfolio has been managed by Chris Russell and Chris Bradley, and covers three main areas: weed control, animal pest management and the built environment.

Weed control

MERRA has continued to focus on the control of plant pests throughout the peninsula by supporting the efforts of residents to remove and dispose of pest weeds. Following a successful trial over Easter 2024, MERRA decided to continue with long weekend weed blitzes during Labour Weekend and again in Easter this year. This involved the provision of a skip from Northland Waste, which we managed to fill the skip on each occasion, despite the lousy weather over Easter. Thanks to Chris and Helen Russell for allowing us to use their frontage in Charles Street for the skip.

MERRA has also arranged occasional weed walks to remove pest weeds from the roadside and provides reminders via our newsletter and website of plant pests to be on the lookout for, and advice on how to remove and dispose of pest weeds. We also have a supply of chemicals which residents can access to help control pest weeds on private property and berms.

Chris Russell has been our go-to person for weed management on the peninsula for many years, and we wish to thank Chris for his ongoing work in this area.

Animal pests

One of the special pleasures of living in Scotts Landing is the fantastic volume and diversity of birdlife that we enjoy here. This is just one of the benefits that result from the ongoing efforts that our community put into animal pest management. Thanks to the involvement of 20 community volunteers, the MERRA pests programme has been able to maintain a network of traps and bait stations throughout the peninsula, with regular pulses aimed at eradicating possums, mustelids and rats from our environment.

In the last 12 months our 30 DOC 200 traps killed 21 rats, 4 stoats and 2 weasels, and a total of 77kg of bait was taken from our network of bait stations, resulting in an estimated 258 rats killed.

Since late 2023 this has been supplemented by a comprehensive backyard trapping programme, which has been enthusiastically adopted by the community. There are now 66 backyard rat traps in place. The programme has continued to report good results, with 236 rats, 96 mice and 3 possums killed since the project kicked off.

The continued success of the MERRA pests programme is a testament to the tremendous work that Mark Croft has put in to manage the programme over the past 12 years. Mark became a committee member of MERRA in 2012 and took over the animal pest control coordination role in early 2013, reporting then that he had tracked down MERRA's 12 stoat traps. Over the next few years several more traps were added, and Mark spearheaded the development of an effective line of bait stations across the Peninsula and developed a collaborative relationship with the Auckland Council biosecurity team, which enabled greater access to targeted traps and poisons.

Around 2018 Mark circulated a plan to eradicate animal predators entirely south of the line across the Peninsula around 332/359 Ridge Road. The plan included a focus on possums at the border line, converting existing bait stations (numbering 195) to use rodent bait blocks, a spread of DOC 200 traps to control mustelids, self-setting rodent traps in high population areas, and property owner engagement. In 2021 Mark worked with run volunteers to 'map' their runs using the TrapNZ site.

More recently, Mark led a successful application on MERRA's behalf for a \$5,000 grant from Predator Free NZ to introduce 'backyard trapping' onto the Peninsula. We now have 66 o backyard traps which are also connected to the TrapNZ site.

A successful animal pest control programme requires a wide range of skills, including strategic planning, managing and motivating a large team of community volunteers, controlling the ordering, preparation and distribution of traps and bait, communicating with the community, securing funding, and maintaining collaborative relationships with the Council, DOC, and several other organisations. Mark has combined all these elements, and his dedication has enabled the smooth operation of our pest control programme.

Mark has now decided to step down from his role, but he has carefully planned his exit to ensure that the operation can successfully continue by setting up a team to succeed him in this role. I'm pleased to report that Craig Maskell is taking over the pest management coordination role, with support from Joy Paxton, Helen Russell and Scott Lee. I'm sure that we will all support the team in their ongoing efforts towards a pest-free peninsula.

MERRA is indebted to Mark for all his work for our community over the years. Thanks so much for your efforts – the whole community truly appreciates it, and we wish you well for the future.

Built environment

The condition of our roads and walkways has been a matter of concern to MERRA for many years, but it is very pleasing to see the progress that has been made over the past year. Following many years of lobbying from MERRA and others, we finally have Ridge Road sealed all the way down to the wharf. This was done as part of a pilot project with the Mahurangi Land Restoration Programme, which is aimed at reducing sediment runoff during weather events and seems to have had the desired effect so far. The traction seal is a much less costly approach which does require regular maintenance, but this seems to have been followed up on to date, with a maintenance seal in the last couple of months. It is also pleasing to note the recent work address the uneven surface on the rest of Ridge Road.

In the last few months MERRA has formed a small team to help maintain and develop our network of walkways on the peninsula. Multiple ownership between Auckland Transport, Council (regional and local reserves) and DOC means that maintenance can be patchy. We have been in contact with the Council and others to ensure their maintenance programmes are fit for purpose and will be acting ourselves where necessary to improve the condition of key walkways. If you would like to be involved with this, please get in touch.

Mahurangi Land Restoration Programme

MERRA is proud to have been involved in the Mahurangi Land Restoration Programme (MLRP) which is aimed at reducing sediment entering the Mahurangi Harbour. Since 2022 MERRA has worked with the programme team to enable the funding and planting of eco-sourced native plants on private land throughout the peninsula.

In that time, the programme has funded the supply of over 8,200 native plants to 30 landowners, at a total value of over \$20,000. For their part, landowners are responsible for site preparation, planting and an annual weed release around the plants.

Collectively, these smaller restoration projects can have a big impact on erosion control and biodiversity. The programme finishes this year, and MERRA is grateful for the support we have received from the MLRP team, and to Suzette Eastmond for coordinating the programme on MERRA's behalf.

Community Response Group (CRG)

Recent weather events have highlighted the need for us to be prepared in case of civil emergencies, given our susceptibility to power outages during storms and the risk of being cut off through slip damage to our sole access route. We are fortunate to have a well-resourced Community Response Group (CRG) in Scotts Landing that allows the community to help look after each other in such an event. This includes emergency response and communications equipment and generators which can be made available to residents during extended power outages.

Over the past couple of years, the MERRA CRG has upgraded our equipment and shifted it to a more suitable location at Rosedale, thanks to the generous support of Chris and Helen Russell. We have also commenced the process of updating our community response plan to ensure we are ready and able to respond to whatever mother nature throws at us.

Peter Seers has been the driving force behind our CRG for the past decade but has decided to step down from the MERRA Committee. Peter was co-opted onto MERRA's committee in 2016 as civil defence co-ordinator. The following year he and others formed what was known as the 'Mothership' for the purpose of consolidating the various local area emergency management plans into a region wide plan and then personalising for separate areas. Peter was the Chair of this organisation before resigning to focus on Scotts Landing in 2020.

Peter was particularly active during the COVID lockdowns and the serious weather events in early 2023, making sure that the community was kept safe and had access to resources as required. In 2024 he obtained a \$12,500 grant from the Ministry of Primary Industries to support the recovery of rural communities affected by the 2023 weather events. In total \$12,500 worth of grants means that as a community we now have all the equipment required to cope in an emergency. As a community, we owe a debt of gratitude to Peter for all the work he has done to keep us safe.

Fire team

Fire is always a risk in a community such as Scotts Landing, with some distance from the local emergency services, and MERRA continues to support a local fire team that can provide initial response until the Fire and Emergency arrives.

Fortunately, there have been no fires over the last 12 months, but the team has continued to train on a bimonthly basis and is in a good position to respond quickly to any fire emergency on the peninsula.

Ken Jordan leads the fire team, and he will be giving the AGM an outline of what the team does and what you can do to help in the event of a fire on the peninsula. Ken is also stepping down from the Committee this year but will continue in his role as the fire team coordinator.

Local network

Since COVID, MERRA has placed a lot more emphasis on ensuring that neighbours are well connected by coordinating an active local network of street coordinators. They form a key link between MERRA and the various local neighbourhoods on the peninsula and enable a two-way flow of information, which is especially important in an emergency or when weather events or power outages can affect our normal communication channels. They also enable us to keep an eye out for our neighbours and help when needed.

The local network was revamped during the year, and our thanks go to Suzette Eastmond for coordinating this on MERRA's behalf.

As part of our efforts to be better connected, MERRA also supported the establishment of a Scotts Landing Facebook group last year. Thanks to Emily Raffills and Suzette Eastmond, the group now has over 50 members and is proving useful for keeping in touch with local matters: everything from lost and found pets, upcoming events, and breaking news. If you haven't already signed up, I encourage you to do so: the more members we have, the more effective the group will be.

Our annual community picnic was held at Scott House at the beginning of March. Over 80 people attended, and it was great to see so many people enjoying the sunshine and each other's company over lunch. It was especially pleasing to see so many new residents coming along to meet their neighbours. Thanks to all who made it along, and to those who gave up their time to help set up and clear up. A special thanks to Michele Revell for stepping in to organise the catering. We are also grateful for the generous support of Warkworth New World who once again contributed to the costs of the picnic.

Legal

MERRA is fortunate to have the services of two lawyers on our Committee, Mike Brooker and Chris Bradley. We have used their expertise to advise on issues such as privacy and health and safety policies, and to make sure we are meeting our legal obligations as an incorporated society.

A major effort in the past year has been a review of our Constitution to ensure that we meet new requirements of the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. The Act requires all incorporated societies to re-register no later than 30 April 2026 or they will cease to exist as a legally recognised entity. A separate notice of motion on the agenda for this AGM seeks approval to formally resolve to re-register.

Re-registration also requires MERRA to adopt a constitution to replace its current Rules. The MERRA Committee has spent significant time and effort drafting a constitution that meets the requirements of the new Act, and which updates MERRA's processes to meet its current needs. We are indebted to Chris Bradley for the large amount of work he has put in, with support from Mike Brooker and Heather Mackay, to get the Draft Constitution to the point that we are now able to share it with the wider membership. The Draft will be available on our website from today, and I would encourage you to take a look and provide us with any feedback over the next month so that we are able to formally approve it as soon as possible. We are aiming to hold a special general meeting in July to approve the Constitution, which will then allow us to lodge our application for re-registration well ahead of the 2026 deadline.

Communications and Advocacy

MERRA has endeavoured to keep the community regularly informed of MERRA's activities as well as local issues and matters of interest through the preparation of a regular newsletter which is emailed to those on our mailing list. We also maintain the Scotts Landing website (www.scottslanding.org) which has a host of information about the local area.

As well as staying in touch with each other, the Committee has also recognised the importance of keeping in touch with other groups in the surrounding area. As Chair I have attended bi-monthly meetings where the Warkworth members of the Rodney Local Board Warkworth meet with local community and environmental groups. These meetings enable us to bring our local issues to the direct attention of the local board members and share experiences with other local groups.

Over the past year MERRA has also made submissions to the Auckland Council Coastal Adaptation Plan, the Rodney Local Board Plan, and Auckland Transport's consultation on the Hill Street intersection proposals. We have also kept up pressure on Auckland Transport and the Council to address the slips which threatened to undermine the new seal on Ridge Road, and on the Harbourmaster to take action to ensure removal of sunken vessels.

MERRA Committee

As a new MERRA Chairperson in the past year, I have been fortunate to have with the support of a great Committee. Thanks to Mike Brooker's input as Deputy Chair, we established portfolios with clear role descriptions which have allowed us to remain focused and to make good progress on key issues. Mike has also been able to fill in for me during periods that I have been away.

Our long-standing Secretary Heather Mackay has continued to do a tremendous amount of work, much of it behind the scenes, to ensure that the Committee and the wider MERRA organisation operates effectively. Heather has wealth of knowledge that has benefitted MERRA and is very much the driving force behind a successful organisation, for which we are very grateful.

Debbie Mickelborough has been the MERRA Treasurer for three years and has done a great job as custodian of our finances, which remain in excellent shape as her financial report will attest. She has been particularly effective in helping to increase our financial membership, which is of benefit to us

all. Unfortunately, Debbie will be stepping down at this AGM, and on behalf of MERRA I wish to thank her for her dedication and commitment to the role.

Thanks also to the other members of the Committee including Chris Bradley, Chris Russell and Emily Raffills who have put themselves forward for re-election; and to Suzette Eastmond, Ken Jordan and Peter Seers who are stepping down from the Committee. Hopefully the content of this report has provided some insight into the valuable contributions that you have each made to MERRA over your time on the Committee, and we thank you for your service.

I want to particularly acknowledge Peter Seers' contribution to MERRA over the last decade. I have already mentioned Peter's role as our CRG co-ordinator over the past 10 years, but his involvement with MERRA goes well beyond that, and includes 5 years as Chair of MERRA, a role he held until last year. This involved a huge amount of work, often behind the scenes, to the benefit of our Scotts Landing community. On behalf of MERRA, I want to sincerely thank Peter for his commitment, dedication and hard work.

Our bi-monthly Committee meetings have been held at Rosedale, which thanks to the generosity of Chris and Helen Russell has become a sort of de-facto community centre. As well as Committee meetings, Chris and Helen have allowed Rosedale to be used for various events such as CRG radio training, the backyard trapping open day, fire team training sessions, and regular yoga groups. It is also used to store our CRG equipment. We are grateful for their generosity and ongoing support for MERRA.

Finally, a big thanks to all our members, who provide us with the support and encouragement we need to be a successful organisation. We are fortunate to have a very active membership, with many of you involved as volunteers in our various community activities. Thank you, and long may it last.

Barry Mein

MERRA Chairperson

4 May 2025

The Chairs Report moved to be accepted by Barry Mein / Debbie Mickelborough

Thanks, by acclamation were expressed to Barry Mein for his hard work, competence and commitment to the Chair role of MERRA.

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

MERRA Financial Report 31 March 2025

The financial accounts for the year ending March 2025 have been prepared by MERRA Treasurer Debra Mickelborough and are summarised in the following manner:

Statement of Account

Total Income of \$5,027.80

- Subscriptions \$2,608.00 – 130 Membership subscriptions received (up by 16 on last year). The Subscription rate remained at \$20/household.
- Donations of \$1,645.00 – All General Donations which is on par with last year
- Interest \$744.80 – increase of \$87.55 on last year due to higher interest rates

- Sales – Events \$30 – sales of Life Tubes and extra guests at Picnic

Total Operating Expenses were: \$4,548.18

- Catering \$704.44 – AGM and Picnic Expenses net of \$200 Voucher from New World
- Depreciation \$2,095.43 – including depreciation of items purchased with Grant Funds last year \$946.00
- General Expenses \$208.20 – Gift to past committee member for long term service
- Minor Assets \$135.45 – Washup grant spend and Outdoor Gazebo \$129.00
- Neighbourhood Support \$40.00 – Age Concern Rodney – Life Tubes
- Plant Pest Control \$860.35 – Bait Boxes \$126.35, Skip Bins for Labour and Easter Weekends \$734.00
- Repairs and Maintenance \$30.00 – Voucher for repairs to generators
- Subscriptions \$220.80 – Annual renewal for Xero Software
- Website Expenses \$253.51 -Annual renewals Elementor and Linux Hosting & SSL Security

Net Surplus from normal operations \$479.62

Balance Sheet

Net Assets: \$31,484.00 – Represented by

- Bank Account combined Balance Total \$20,922 – 00 Account \$7,174 and Saving Account \$13,747.00
- Prepayments \$213.00 – unused Portion of multi-year website subscriptions
- Fixed Assets \$10,349.00 – no new assets purchased or disposed of this year

Less Total Current Liabilities \$301.00

- Accrual of \$221.00 to be rolled back 1st of April for Xero Subscription
- Subscriptions received in advance \$80.00 (for 2026 year)

Total Equity \$31,183.00

Auditors Report

'In my opinion the Profit and Loss statement and Balance sheet of Mahurangi East Residents and Ratepayers Association, accurately reflect the results of the years activities and the financial position at 31 March 2025'.

Roger Harvey

ACA (Retired)

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

Subscriptions 2024/5

MERRA Treasurer Debbie Mickelborough recommended that the subscription per household be maintained at \$20. Debbie Mickelborough / Robyn Crocker Carried

Accept Financial Report Debra Mickelborough / Bill Townson Carried

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

Re – Registration of Incorporated Society

Chris Bradley told the meeting that the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 has been replaced by a new Act in 2022. All Incorporated Societies registered under the 1908 Act must re-register under the new Act by 30 April 2026 or they will cease to exist as a legally recognised entity.

MERRA has taken the steps required to prepare for re-registration and now needs to formally resolve to re-register. Re-registration requires MERRA to adopt a new Constitution to replace its current Rules. The Merra executive (especially Chris Bradley) has spent significant time and effort drafting a new Constitution to meet the requirements of the new Act which will update MEERA processes to meet its current needs and have increased governance.

The Motion Proposed by Chris Bradley and Seconded by Barry Mein

“That the Society (MERRA) apply for re-registration under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022”

was carried unanimously.

Next steps are to post the Draft Constitution for community feedback, resolve any issues and then hold a Special general Meeting in early July to approve the Constitution required for re-registration.

Election of Officers 2025/6

As mentioned in the Chairpersons report Committee members Debra Mickelborough, Suzette Eastmond, Peter Seers and Ken Jordan are standing down.

Nominations were received for the following being elected with affirmation for 2025/6 with ability to co-opt as required. A special welcome to new members Craig Maskell and Michele Revell and special thanks to those standing down for their service.

Chairperson	Barry Mein
Honorary Treasurer	vacant position
Honorary Secretary	Heather Mackay

MERRA Committee			
Chris Russell	Mike Brooker	Chris Bradley	Emily Raffills
Michele Revell	Craig Maskell		

General Business

Moth Plant

Joy Paxton presented a practical information session about Moth Plant bringing with her physical examples of the plants life cycle and explaining how best to manage this highly invasive pest plant. The seed pods carry about 2000 seeds which are both air and water borne. As they are a climbing vine you can manage by protecting yourself from the plant and removing from the top of the tree

especially when fruiting. Smaller plants can be cut and potted – ideally the plants should be pulled completely out of soft ground. Store in bags and dispose of with general rubbish to landfill.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 12.12pm.

Thanks very much to Helen Russell for preparing and hosting the morning tea which was enjoyed by all.