

Minutes: Hikurangi Swamp Working Group Meeting Thursday 20th March 10.00 a.m, Kauri Room, Walton Plaza

Minutes of meeting held at the Whangarei District Council Offices, Walton Plaza, Kauri Room on Thursday, 20th March at 10.00a.m

Facilitator	Councillor Crichton Christie
Purpose	Open forum to discuss the Hikurangi Swamp Scheme Issues
Present	Cr Crichton Christie (facilitator), Andrew Carvell, Andy Keith, Phillip Hindrup, Simon Donnelley, Ken Finlayson, Jack Illich, Andrew Illich, Neville Thorne, Evan Smeath, Tess Dacre, Cr Susie Bretherton, Wendy Holland, Gay Kerr
Apologies	Mark Simpson, Conal Summers, Te Raa Nehua, Simon Weston, Adam Twose

Councillor Christie addressed the floor, opened the meeting welcoming members and staff representatives from the Whangarei District Council.

Item	Description	Action
Apologies	Accepted	Moved/Second Cr Christie
Pending Legal Action	Monday 17 th March 2014 we received \$24,723.83 which is 50% of the Court order costs. We should receive the second half by 13 th April 2014.	
Assets	<p><u>Pump Availability</u></p> <p>Three pleuger pumps which need to be rewound or replaced;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Te Mata - Ngaratunua - Okarika <p>Te Mata switchboard tender has been awarded to SPI/McKays. SPI had the lowest price of \$72,000. There will be an 8 – 10 day period where no pumps will be operational at Te Mata. Insurance is going to pay for the switchboard rebuild and we just need to pay a \$5,000 premium. This project should take a maximum of 3 weeks.</p> <p><u>Okarika Moire Tell Tales</u></p> <p>Now fitted and will be monitored every month to find out about movements. Channel developed once the earth around the station settled causing problems.</p> <p>Discussion that a vertical flow pump is need and that we need to take action and apply for funding. Evan Smeath to get a contact number for someone in charge of funding.</p>	
Fencing	Fences need to be installed along the river in order to keep cattle out of the river. A number of parties will be monitoring that cattle cannot access the river and will be taking photos if any are. This is an environmental concern.	

<p>Budget</p>	<p><u>Opex Finances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Done over a three year period - Based on the previous period and inflation - Andrew, Adam and Andy review actual spending against budgets and forecasts as the year progresses. <p>1020 - Major Scheme and Drainage District rates are grouped together when they shouldn't be. Questioning about where all the money for drains is going.</p> <p>Everyone should be paying for Major Scheme and only land owners on the Swamp should be paying for the Drainage.</p> <p>Farmers should be going around and deciding which drains are most important rather than Andy going out and costing them more money.</p> <p>2720 – Payments to external contractors is currently budgeted at \$295 000 but only \$80 000 of this is for the Hydrotech contract.</p> <p>2860 – Depreciation is calculated but not charged back onto rates. It was questioned why we aren't charging depreciation back into rates but was determined that farmers decided years ago not to chargeback depreciation.</p> <p>Last year we were under budget with an actual spent figure of \$360,654 and a budget of \$452,654.</p> <p>Farmers would like to see a breakdown on Hydrotech in April 13 with an unusual expense of \$11,498.27 for inspections and reporting. We need a better breakdown for farmers to see where all the money is going.</p> <p>Could we email farmers a copy of the Hydrotech reports so they can see the breakdowns of the costs per month.</p> <p><u>Forecast for 2013/14</u></p> <p>Currently we are \$140 000 under the forecast. If we manage to keep under budget by \$60 000 it means we could repair up to \$80 000 of the pumps to be rewound and the electrical supply issues.</p> <p>Issues were raised around why don't we get funding and replace the pumps rather than rewinding them. AC pointed out that by keeping the older pumps it saves approximately \$700 000 in interest charges. Neville argued that we need vertical flow pumps. Therefore if we upgrade the pumps we will never end up paying off the debt owed to council.</p> <p>We have one 240 HP replacement pump, however in order to get spare pumps we need to fix the three pleuger pumps.</p> <p>We are proposing to fix two of the pleuger pumps and the electrical supply issues as the cost for the electrical supply issues could now be up to \$20 000 from \$5 000.</p> <p>An issue about farmers not paying their rates was raised and Cr Christie is finding it difficult to go to council asking for more money when farmers aren't paying their rates. Evan Smeath has concerns about how we are going to full council when Neville Thorne, those who seeked legal action and himself haven't paid their rates. He estimated an amount of \$78 000 hasn't been paid. Evan had concerns about how they can go to</p>	
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	<p>Council claiming to have been fully paid.</p> <p>AC informed farmers that when the reporting is done they may not be aware which rates have been fully paid.</p> <p>Neville Thorne has requested that Mark Simpson hold a public meeting to tell the farmers where the rates are going and exactly why it is going there before they will pay their rates.</p> <p>Evan Smeath to send his targeted rate proposal to Cr Christie and Cr Bretherton.</p>	
<p>Stopbank Cuts</p>	<p>Questions addressed were surrounding what is happening with the topping of the stop banks. There is not enough funding available to complete this.</p> <p>Cr Christie and Cr Bretherton are to attend an annual plan meeting and take their concerns on the stopbanks to the meeting as well as addressing concerns that the financial obligation that council has to fulfil under the requirements of the resources consent is not being met.</p> <p>Neville Thorn had heard from Opus that they have undergone investigations on the retention dams and would like this to be followed up.</p> <p>Neville Thorne and Evan Smeath mentioned the NRC silt monitoring which was triggered on the 13/2/14. Tess Dacre explained this was triggered on and samples were collected and sent off to NIWA.</p>	

<p>Fonterra – Wendy Holland</p>	<p>Update: CIW – Kaipara Harbour</p> <p>Have progress on the start up projects around the Hikurangi Swamp which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline Monitoring Contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Established a baseline with the Hikurangi Swamp Complex, including water quality, ecological values and habitat condition. This was signed on 19/12/13 with Kessels Ecology. - Gillet Farm – Cole Drain Planting Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To showcase 200 meters of riparian planting in the Hikurangi Swamp Complex on the Cole Drain-Graeme Gillets farm. <p>We are now planning for the big stuff and working with the key stakeholders to see what input and ideas they have. There is an opportunity for restoration on the flood plane.</p> <p>There is a farmer engagement group which the farmers wanted to be apart of. Evan, Neville, Iwi at the Whakapara end, Peter Richards and Mark Benton are a few involved in the group.</p> <p>This project would like to work with council towards oxbows and fishing around the Hikurangi Swamp Complex.</p> <p>Wendy will provide a contact list that council can circulate for people in the community to contact if they have any questions or issues.</p> <p>Cr Bretherton suggested advertising information about the projects in a bulletin or The Leader to inform the whole of the community about this. Andrew will organise for a notice to go in The Leader.</p> <p>Actions will start in June. There is \$ 2 million for Kaipara over ten years. These projects will not just benefit Fonterra farmers but everyone that is involved with the swamp.</p> <p>An update on the CIW – Kaipara Harbour can be found here: \\internal.wdc.govt.nz\dfs\private\zanah\Desktop\swamp update 20140320100602.pdf</p>	
<p>Drain Cleaning</p>	<p>Greg will be checking Maruarua tomorrow.</p> <p>General feedback is that the contractor cleaning the drains is moving very slow. The drains need to be completed in the next three weeks.</p>	

Meeting closed at 12.20pm

Next Meeting: TBA