



MINUTES

Tekapo Community Board Meeting

13 March 2019

**MINUTES OF MACKENZIE DISTRICT COUNCIL
TEKAPO COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING
HELD AT THE TEKAPO COMMUNITY HALL LOUNGE, LAKE TEKAPO
ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2019 AT 4.00PM**

PRESENT: Ms Stella Sweney (Chairperson), Mrs Lyn Martin (Community Board Member), Mr Steve Howes (Community Board Member), Ms Carol Simcox (Community Board Member), Cr Russell Armstrong (Councillor)

IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Morris (Group Manager Finance), Garth Nixon, (Group Manager Facilities), Charlotte Borrell (Committee Administrator), 5 members of the public

1 OPENING

The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

APOLOGY

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TKCB/2019/135

Moved: Cr Russell Armstrong

Seconded: Mr Steve Howes

That the apology received from Mayor Graham Smith, Suzette van Aswegen (Chief Executive) be accepted.

CARRIED

3 PUBLIC FORUM

Wilma Van den Bosch spoke of the success of the Saturday market. A total of six markets can be held during the year. She thanked Karina Morrow and the council for working with them to make this happen so quickly.

The area near the four square car park is untidy and a fire risk. Garth Nixon will investigate having this area tidied.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TKCB/2019/136

Moved: Cr Russell Armstrong

Seconded: Mr Steve Howes

That Council include Simpson Lane and surrounds in the regular maintenance schedule. And to mow urgently due to the fire risk.

CARRIED

Roy Callow (local resident) spoke of the area off Barbara Hay behind his property. Mr Callow has been mowing it for last 20 years and is no longer able to maintain it. It is a fire risk. Could the council consider doing something with this area to make it a reserve? Mr Nixon is currently working through mowing with the contractor. Mr Nixon requested the Community Board visit the site if necessary and make a recommendation for the area. Revisit the landscape plan presented to the board in 2018.

Walter Speck spoke to the board about the Sheepdog Statue. He queried if the work is complete? He commented that the steps are beautiful and the rock wall is lovely. But the outside does not appear to be finished. Mr Nixon replied that there is finishing work yet to be completed and handrails will be installed. Supplementary planting will also be completed. Mr Speck brought up car parking as an issue. Mr Nixon is not aware of further works at the Sheepdog Statue carpark aside from car park marking. The Abley report once complete may change this.

Residents are concerned about speed through Pioneer Drive. It is currently 50km/hr. A lot of walkers use the road in the evenings and it is hazardous with the amount of vehicles at speed. Cr Russell Armstrong recommended it be brought up with Council.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TKCB/2019/137

Moved: Ms Caroll Simcox

Seconded: Mrs Lyn Martin

That Council review the speed limit on Pioneer Drive and investigate a reduction in speed limit or traffic calming measures.

CARRIED

Paul Morris (Group Manager Finance) spoke of how the Genesis Grant operated currently and the need for a formal process to be implemented to manage this grant effectively. The Community Board would will have a large input in this, however the Council must account for the grant spending to Genesis. There needs to be transparency as to what it is being spent on. Approximately \$19K is yet to be spent from previous years. Retrospective amounts can be allocated. Council already have a grants application process which could be altered to suit option 2 below.

Mr Morris put forward 2 suggestions with the second being preferred. Option 1: As part of budgeting process work out where funds be allocated. Option 2: Implement a contestable process to apply for expenditure of the grant money.

Tekapo Promotions are currently struggling for funding to promote Tekapo. Mr Morris recommended Tekapo Promotions apply for a grant from Council, endorsed by the Community Board so they can to continue until the Genesis Grant process is in place.

Stella Sweney tabled an email (see below) from a local resident.

Mr Nixon explained how the enforcement officer operated in the district. If there are known hotspots they can be targeted. The enforcement officer makes runs after hours, morning and evening. Most infringement notices are in the morning. Mr Nixon recommended residents phone the council after hours number if they have issues.

There was discussion around informing residents of information they could pass on to freedom campers such as a list of places to camp legally, also to refer people to the CamperMate App.

Email received from Stephanie Hagen

I do not consider myself to be unresourceful. Where there is a problem I like to resolve it.

I have trust in our local Council to do what it says it will do and yet...

Freedom campers. Not particularly the self-contained white boxes on wheels. I mean the cars and vans with the glaringly incorrect self-contained stickers slapped to the rear windscreen...

There are people sleeping in our streets in their cars. There are temporary staff sleeping in cars in laybys. Yet there is no evidence of enforcement to prevent this health danger.

In desperation after moving on a number of illegally overnight parked vehicles at the Tekapo bus carpark at 7.30 one morning recently, I endeavoured to contact MDC to advise of the problem. Now who is it I ring? Surely there is a dedicated line to deal with this? I scrolled the MDC website and the closest contact I could find was a submission form – well after the fact the campers had left in fear of my threat of enforcement on its way. One month later I have had no acknowledgment of my submission – where did it go? Seeing yet more young people sleeping within the village in cars, I rang MDC. I was told that I needed to talk to Garth but that he was not available. Essentially the message is loud and clear that no one is regularly patrolling and there is no timely action to complaints. Freedom camping problems are not a priority.

We desperately need regular patrol and enforcement to get the message out to the vanning community that freedom camping within our village is illegal and that non self-contained vehicles will not be tolerated anywhere. What is it going to take to get action?

The resounding message I hear from these young vanners is that they “cannot afford” to stay in a camping ground. This is not our problem. If they can afford to come to NZ then perhaps accommodation should be factored into their budget? We need high value tourists not backpackers soiling and spoiling.

Apart from the rubbish and toileting issues, there is evidence of close calls of fire pits being laid around the shores of Lake Tekapo. Vanners have been prevented from lighting fires by vigilant locals. It is not party central – our environment is fragile and vulnerable. God forbid a fire in this hot summer. So few locals now to contribute to FB and St Johns.

I accept that our locals need to step up and take responsibility to report inappropriate and illegal behaviour but we need support from those tasked to enforce. The general arrogance and threatening behaviour of the young vanners makes for an unpleasant interaction when questioning their intent.

My very clear message to MDC is that we must have a daily enforcement officer at dusk and dawn. Until then we are the laughing stock of the online travellers who know full well a wet bus ticket is the worst they will receive, if in fact any challenge.

I request not only daily enforcement but broadcasting online to the community the action to take to get timely response from MDC. Clearly there is no prompt path to action.

Many locals have told me they are at boiling point on this issue. One wrote to me and I quote from his email after a recent experience

“Called the after-hours number to report freedom campers and was told they would pass it on to the council in the morning. I asked why they didn’t just call the warden and they had no idea that a new one had been appointed.”

Local businesses are casting blind eyes to the fact their staff are sleeping in cars. I am hugely embarrassed and horrified to hear that staff say they have to sleep in a car as there is no accommodation. This is a business resource issue not a council issue. However if the laws were enforced we would not have this problem and some employers would be less cavalier. I am seriously concerned about the health and well being of our community and environment, the quality of visitor experience and the message we as a responsible community are sending to our visitors. We are not a third world country. First world countries do not allow people to sleep in cars in residential zones. Time to act MDC . And I haven't even started on the rubbish... and toilets.... and excessive visitor numbers per property... and chaos in our lanes and roads...

Tekapo is becoming an investor's playground with increasing overnight visitor accommodation reducing the amenity value of our village. Recently we have lost a number of permanent residents and they are not being replaced. Those of us who live here, pay our rates and respect governance are getting desperate.

Stephanie Hagen

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 REPORTS

5.1 MINUTES OF TEKAPO COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING - 30 JANUARY 2019

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TKCB/2019/138

Moved: Mr Steve Howes

Seconded: Cr Russell Armstrong

1. That the Minutes of the Tekapo Community Board Meeting held on Wednesday 30 January 2019 be received and adopted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

CARRIED

5.2 TEKAPO COMMUNITY BOARD FINANCIAL REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

That the Tekapo Community Board are updated regarding the financial performance of the Tekapo Community as a whole.

Paul Morris (Group Manager Finance) and Garth Nixon (Group Manager Facilities) spoke briefly to the report.

5.3 TEKAPO COMMUNITY BOARD MATTERS UNDER ACTION

Walkway from Simpson Lane to Main Carpark: Progress is relying on access permission from the supermarket. The board would like this escalated to get temporary access short term.

Eastern (Godley) carpark and Western (by public toilets) carpark: The Eastern Carpark is with Council for approval. The board would like to be kept updated. Scott Mackenzie (Roading Manager) to update the board on the result from council meeting.

Village Walkway: The board would like Scott Mackenzie mark yellow hatching lines for a walkway through the village, as per church. It is working very well there.

Church of The Good Shepherd: The gates are on and temporary fences will be removed. Landscaping is to follow. This is progressing well.

MacLaren Footbridge Plaque – The Lions may want to plant a tree with a memorial plaque for Chris MacLaren on the wishing well side of the bridge. For the change of name Caroll Simcox will get the plaque made and invoice to council. The plaque is to be stainless steel, MacLaren Footbridge, maybe with the year 2019 to show it has been renamed. Colin MacLaren to be consulted regarding adding the year.

Mobile Trading Sites – No change, the trial was to April and will be reviewed. Community Board to be updated with result of review.

Landscaping Walkway between Andrew Don Drive and Bill Apes Lane: Work has commenced and planting is next on the schedule.

Establishing Trees on Reserve Opposite Tekapo Hall: Mr Nixon recommends the board decide on future use of the area which will dictate the landscaping plan. Lyn Martin will consult with Don McConchie and Steve Howes will consult with the school to get their input.

Technology at Tekapo Hall –Mr Nixon will liaise with Steve Howes to purchase technology.

5.4 GENERAL BUSINESS AND INFORMATION UPDATES

Lochinvar – Walkway signage and tidying up. Mr Nixon will find out where the signage is at.

Rubbish –Mr Howes and Mr Nixon have discussed the requirement for more bins in Tekapo. It was agreed that one set of bins will be added. Mr Nixon is currently implementing the installation of a three bin set. The Community Board thanked Mr Nixon for acting quickly.

Mackenzie Development Group: This is going well. Ms Sweney will attend the next meeting.

Budget: Mr Morris gave clarification around budgets being completed at the moment, this is later than usual due to the council reorganisation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the information be noted.

5.5 WARD MEMBERS REPORT/ REPORT FROM MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Cr Russell Armstrong spoke of the organisational restructure process. The council had the Dark Sky Board visit and they gave the council a plaque to hold for display and safekeeping. There is a conference planned to be held in Tekapo in the future.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

That the information be noted.

5.6 MINUTES FROM OTHER COMMUNITY BOARDS

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the minutes be noted.

Attached are the minutes of the most recent meetings of the other two community boards in the Mackenzie District. They are attached for your information. Please note that these minutes have not yet been confirmed as accurate at the next meeting of the board.

The Meeting closed at 6.10pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Tekapo Community Board Meeting held on 17 April 2019.

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CHAIRPERSON