

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF OMAHA BEACH COMMUNITY INC. (“OBC”)

held at the

**OMAHA BEACH COMMUNITY CENTRE
AT 11 AM SUNDAY, 10th JANUARY 2021**

PRESENT: more than 146 members were present, along with Chris Allan (President), Murray Beatson (Vice President), Rob Zubielevitch (Treasurer) and Committee Members Debbie Lee, Paul King, Tony Marks and Rohan Meuli, as well as several guests.

1. WELCOME: Chris Allan welcomed everyone and confirmed that there was a quorum, covered H&S aspects and then acknowledged Beth Houlbrooke and Tim Holgate from Rodney Local Board, along with Allison Roe and Martin Dancy from the Matakana Coast Trail Trust. He also noted that Chris Martin from Insite Security was moving away, reviewed some of Chris’ earlier newsletter comments, thanked him for his years of service to the community and noted that Scott Donaldson (Chris’ son-in-law) will be taking over at Insite to continue the strong relationship with OBC.

2. APOLOGIES were received from Peter Jackson (Life Member), Greg Sayers (Auckland City Councillor), Terry Brailsford (Committee Member), Simon Martin (Committee Member), Richard and Elenor Brabant, Elizabeth Hicks, Tony and Mary Coupe

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES: it was agreed by the members present that the minutes of the previous AGM held 12th January 2020 be taken as read. No matters were raised in relation to the minutes.

Motion: That the minutes of the previous AGM be accepted as a true and accurate record. Agreed. Moved by Debbie Lee and seconded by Murray Beatson.

4. PRESIDENT’S REPORT 2020: following on from the President’s Report in the 2020 newsletter, Chris Allan commented on:

- **2020 Newsletter** - thanks to Sally Blyth, editor of the newsletter, Debbie Lee, all the contributors and Rob Zubielevitch
- **Omaha Drive Walkway/Cycleway** - funding has now been approved by the Rodney Local Board with work to start by mid-year, with special thanks to Beth Houlbrooke and the Local Board, Ian Hutchinson and Harley Norton of Hutchinson Consultants for their pro bono work, Peter Jackson and Martin Dancy, as well as the past and present Golf Club and OBC committees
- **Community Centre Roof and Guttering** - the roof and guttering have major leaks, as a result of a design fault, and Council has agreed to fix them, with work expected to start in April and run for approximately 90 days. Whilst the building will be wrapped to allow the work to be undertaken, the centre will be open as much as possible throughout that period.

5. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS: Rob Zubielevitch presented the OBC’s annual accounts ending 31 October 2020, commenting:

- there was income of approximately \$66k from subscriptions and donations
- membership continues to be a challenge, especially in the northern end, though the recent membership drive has been quite successful
- the major expenses in 2019-20 were for cameras, the newsletter and security patrols
- the major expense budgeted for 2020-21 is for additional camera(s)
- there was \$30k left over from the Omaha Park campaign some years ago and this remains in a trust account in case the issue comes up again
- currently, there is \$100k in the OBC accounts, along with a provision of \$10k for legal costs (in regard to the Community Centre lease) and some \$40K in the Community Centre Maintenance Fund.

Motion: That the Annual Accounts as presented be accepted. Agreed. Moved by Graham Painter, seconded by Chris Allan.

6. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEE: Rob Zubielevitch advised that the Committee had confirmed that the annual subscription will remain the same for 2020-21 at \$70 but he also noted that this may well need to be reviewed for next year.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Chris Allan reported that the current committee have all stood again and, with no new nominations having been received, they were all re-elected. Chris also encouraged new people to consider joining the committee and Rob Zubielevitch commented there was a need for a new Treasurer.

8. OMAHA SHOREBIRD PROTECTION TRUST (OSPT): Denis O'Callaghan spoke about the OSPT and its ongoing mission to protect the endangered birds on the north Omaha reserve from wild cats, stoats, rats, commenting on the initial trapping work undertaken that lead to the establishment of the OSPT and the erection of the predator fence; intensive trapping continues, augmented by the local Pest Free group's trapping work. Denis also noted the continued threat from human interference (eg tents, BBQs, dogs, etc) from the increasing number of visitors but he is not keen to bar entrance and would prefer to see Council-appointed wardens. Cats are also an ongoing problem and he encouraged residents to keep them inside at night, while rabbits are also an issue as they disturb birds and create holes in the fence. Denis explained that the predator fence terminates at the high tide mark and, while the previous proposal to extend it was rejected, this is now being reconsidered, subject to funding. He also noted that unfortunately some of their cameras have been stolen. There was also a question from the floor in relation to rabbit control and if it was the Council's responsibility. Beth Houlbrooke undertook to follow up on this point.

9. MATAKANA COAST TRAIL TRUST (MCTT): Martin Dancy and Allison Roe presented on behalf of the MCTT. Firstly, Martin gave an update on roading around the district, including the provision of 4 lanes for the Matakana Link Road; the consideration of a Sandspit link road to avoid additional traffic coming through Sharp Road; funding now approved to start planning for Hill St improvements; and the need to consider at least designating a Matakana bypass. He also gave thanks to the Local Board and Hutchinson Consultants for their funding and work on the Omaha Drive walkway. Martin then introduced the MCTT and their mission to link the local towns and villages from Puhoi to Mangawhai for walking, riding, etc (up to 750,000 people per year) and noted:

- a local fundraiser has been employed and there is a full time programme manager funded by the NZ Walking Access Commission to work with the Council, Auckland Transport, etc
- the MCTT is looking to raise funding of up to \$30m
- there has been very good progress on various sections of the trail, with the Omaha Road walkway and the Pt Wells to Country Park section expected to be done in the not-too-distant future
- the trust is also looking at options for a walkway at the southern end of Omaha (by the Taniko forest)
- consultants are now assessing all viable options through the whole route

Finally, Martin outlined the 3 ways that people could help the Trust:

- become a friend of the trust (as they are looking for up to 1,000 signatures to demonstrate community support)
- ask friends, neighbours, etc to also become a friend
- they are also looking to raise 5% from the community to show the large donor trusts that there is financial support from the community

Those present were asked to provide their contact details if interested in supporting the MCTT.

10. RODNEY LOCAL BOARD: Beth Houlbrooke congratulated the OBC Committee members on their reappointments, noting that she had now been to 8 OBC AGMs but that next year's meeting is intended to be her last.

She strongly encouraged the community to give feedback on Council's forthcoming draft 10-year budget (Beth had distributed a handout entitled "Your voice is important") which is particularly challenging given the effects of COVID-19 on the Council's income. Roads are the most common issue raised with the Rodney Local Board so the Local Board regards this as the #1 priority for advocacy with Council and she encouraged the community to support this priority in their feedback on the draft budget.

Beth confirmed that funding for the Omaha Drive Walkway/Cycleway had been approved by the Local Board and that the call for rabbit culling at the last AGM had been followed up on, and was undertaken during the year.

She also pointed out that the absence of wardens is a major concern as Council is not emphasising compliance; she stated that the community is welcome to contact the Local Board (through Beth or Tim Holgate) about any issues and she also encouraged people to report problems to the Council directly.

11. OMAHA BEACH SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB (OBSLSC): President Linda Crisford thanked the community for supporting their activities which cover the sea, beach and estuary from Tawharanui to Leigh.

She noted that the Government provides very little funding (only 15% of life-saving costs, not for example training, etc) so OBSLSC has organised a gold/silver/bronze sponsorship program if businesses are interested to support them.

Linda encouraged people to pass on their thanks to lifeguards (who are generally volunteers) and she encouraged people to visit and indeed join the club, no matter what their age!

She raised the issue of jet skier behaviour and the need for them to keep to the established speed and safety regulations.

Linda asked for feedback about how the club should communicate with residents and she

also noted that they were looking for funding assistance for a new canoe.

Another resident later noted, in regard to jet skiers, that a new sign including the rule about the 5 knot limit within 200m of the shore had apparently been erected recently but it may need to have the rule about 5km within 50 metres of another vessel, craft or person added.

12. INSITE SECURITY: Chris Martin addressed those present and commented that he had been living in Omaha for 16 years and will miss his friends here as the family relocates to Mangawhai; he gave his thanks for the support and friendship from the Committee, Beth, Alison & Martin, Denis, etc.

In regard to Insite's work, he noted that the patrols have been busy this summer, especially with new visitors to the area who may not respect the community quite as much.

He stressed the importance for Omaha of keeping up standards on issues such as golf carts, fires on the beach, rubbish, etc

On behalf of the community, a presentation was made by Rob Zubielevitch to Chris in gratitude for all his work.

13. GENERAL BUSINESS

Boat Ramp - Chris Allan advised that he had written to the Rodney Local Board (Beth) about water blasting of the ramp (which has now been done but should be regularly done), the removal of gardens to make more parking space (which has yet to be done) and the provision of a warden (especially for weekends) particularly to educate the boaties.

He also thanked Richard Carbines and Rob Zubielevitch for monitoring ramp traffic, talking with Council, etc but not much progress has been made so far and he observed that it may well be the main issue for 2021.

Chris also asked Beth if the reserve status of the ramp car park can be changed so parking rules can be made and enforced. In the hope of such a change, the OBC Committee is looking at using the roundabout cameras to count/monitor vehicles with boats from outside of Omaha, so we can start assessing options for possible user-pays at the car park.

Norm Thompson later asked about low tide issues at the ramp (where the ramp drops away) and Chris confirmed that they had been included in the ongoing discussions with Council.

A comment was made from the floor that the water blasting of the boat ramp must be done at low tide or the job ends up being only part done.

Shorebird Sanctuary - Rob Zubielevitch acknowledged Michael Van Houtte's written submission about closing the sanctuary during nesting season and the need to fix the sliding doors which are currently faulty. Michael also spoke about the need for better signage.

Rabbit Control - Michael also requested that Pindone be allowed again for rabbit management and Rob advised that, while Council will no longer use it, residents can apparently use it on their own property. Rob also noted that the contracted culling exercise organised by the Council last year was reasonably successful and is expected to be repeated at some stage this year but, in general discussion, it was pointed out that total eradication of rabbits is very unlikely.

Orange Rubbish Bags - Chris Allan advised that the OBC Committee will this year be looking at how we as a community could be handling rubbish in a more environmentally sustainable way, preferably to avoid the need for plastic bags altogether (in the same spirit as banning plastic bags in supermarkets). This follows the survey undertaken by the OBC a couple of years ago, and also the continuing problems with rubbish from broken plastic

rubbish bags being strewn around following seagulls breaking into the bags which have been put out prior to collection day.

Warrants - Graham Painter looked to move a motion to encourage the reinstatement of bylaw warrants that could be issued to Insite Security (as used to happen under Rodney DC) to police noise, dog control, set nets, etc; though this couldn't be voted on (without prior notice), there appeared to be widespread support from those present for the suggestion.

William Fraser Reserve Toilet Block - Susan Taylor raised the Council's plan for the new toilets and changing rooms and the issues of cost, safety, etc. The concerns were around the location on the Reserve and also the cost (understood to be circa \$1m).

Linda Crisford from OBSLSC confirmed that the existing toilets are not part of the club and the club had significant ongoing problems with people looking to use OBSLSC's own facilities when the Council's existing facilities are inadequate, as well as having to deal with back-flooding, etc when there is a drainage problem. Barbara Thomson confirmed that the current toilets under OBSLSC are well below the necessary capacity.

Chris Allan conveyed that Council had advised that the new block has been consented and was expected to go ahead later this year.

Rhys Jones expressed concern about the Council consultation process, especially as it had apparently happened during a COVID-19 lockdown period, and Graham Painter, as a long-time past President, pointed out that AGMs and newsletters have covered the proposed new block over quite some years.

Bank Erosion - in regard to the erosion of the sandbank north of the jetty, Chris Allan noted that the Committee understood from Council that there is a "Coastal Plan" which will apparently be issued soon and submissions can then be made about erosion control so this is a work-in-progress

Chris Allan closed the meeting at approximately 12.35 pm.

Those present were invited to stay for refreshments.

NB the Committee was later advised that, due to the larger than expected turnout, there were a number of people without seats so this will be looked at for the next AGM.