

# Northland Regional Council meeting - 15th November 2011

[LINK to appropriate Agenda.](#)

A drive up to Kaikohe for this month's meeting to Far North District Council chambers.

It was 1300hrs and Chairman Craig Brown welcomed all to the meeting and explains the emergency exits and position of rest room facilities.

Craig Brown reminds them that any 'Declarations of Conflicts of Interest' were to be advised item by item as they progressed through the agenda and they would be dealt with accordingly and then decided what, if any action is to be taken.

Craig asked for a minute's silence, in respect of the passing of an ex Northland Regional Council staff member, of 20+ years service, Mr Peter William Joynt, whose funeral was underway at the same time of this meeting.

Item No.1.0 and there were no apologies.

Craig informs the intention that 2 items; Item No. 6.4 Restricting the Transfer of Moorings in Mooring Zones and Item No. 6.5 Statement of Proposal – Amendment of the Navigation Safety Bylaw 2011 were to be brought forward with the approval of council to enable maritime staff to get back on the job.

## 3.0 PRESENTATIONS

Item No.3.1 Presentation on the Northland Energy Forum (1303hrs)

Mr Vaughan Wykes, Forum Chair from New Zealand Refinery Ltd. gave a detailed power point presentation on the Northland Energy Forum, their purpose and vision. An interesting comment was there were wastewater issues in Whangarei with it going into the harbour. There are a number of ideas they are attempting to instigate to ensure security of supply to Northland of energy. *A very pleasing comment was that businesses in Northland on the whole were a pleasure to deal with.*

Cr Ian Walker made comment that they were losing 1/3 of the wind farms at Pouto due to RMA (resource Management Act) hurdles and legislation. It needed to be more user friendly.

From the floor, Ruth Marsh, commented that Solar PV (photovoltaic) was already there needing organizations to realize its potential and tap into it. Vaughan Wykes agreed it needed to be looked at more in depth.

Item No. 3.2 Presentation on the Te Rarawa treaty Settlement by Paul White, Chair, Asset Holding Company for Te Rarawa (1324hrs)

Mr Paul White, from Hokianga, gave a detailed explanation with power point support on the process of Treaty Settlements in Northland.

The following two items were as previously discussed brought forward.

Item No. 6.4 Restricting the Transfer of Moorings in Mooring Zones (1345hrs)

Conflicts of Interest were declared by Chairman Craig Brown, Cr Tony Davies-Colley, Cr Joe Carr and Cr Bronwyn Hunt.

Cr Bill Rossiter moved the item and it was seconded by Cr John Bain.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley believed that there needed to be an efficient use of space but was concerned at profiteering.

Cr Ian Walker was concerned that it was a knee jerk reaction; we need to manage moorings in a better way and he was not happy to support it until a better strategy was available.

Cr Joe Carr believed this should be a draft copy and hearings should be part of the process.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley confirmed it needed a further look.

Cr Graeme Ramsey also felt it must go through the consultation process.

Chairman Craig Brown advised that he had both a mooring and a marina berth. He saw money coming out of swing moorings. The average kiwi, in his opinion, should be able to acquire and afford a swing mooring.

Cr Bronwyn Hunt felt compensation may be an issue if NRC were to bring in this bylaw.

Acting Chief Executive Tony Phipps informed that it should be on a 'buyer beware basis'. Council can change the rules through due process.

Cr Ian Walker was the only one to vote against the recommendation.

Item No. 6.5 Statement of Proposal – Amendment of the Navigation Safety Bylaw 2011(1401hrs)

No discussion was entered into on this item.

#### **4.0 COUNCIL AND CEO'S OFFICE**

It was now Item No. 4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – 18 October (1402hrs) there was no debate and this item required no discussion.

Item No. 4.2 Chairman's Report to Council still at 1402hrs.

No discussion was entered into on this item.

Item No. 4.3 Chief Executive Officer's Report to the Council at 1403hrs.

Cr Bronwyn Hunt queried "how many CEO's attend the NIF meeting" (Northland Inter-sectoral Forum) (page 15)

Diplomatically answered by Acting Chief Executive Tony Phipps, saying the meetings were well attended by 'representatives'. *That has not really answered 'the question', Tony.* He added that some valuable projects have progressed. *Name them.*

Cr Graeme Ramsey thinks we need to have another look at NIF

Cr Bill Rossiter (page 32) believed the Super Gold Card Scheme had been refused by the Ministry of Transport in Dargaville and Kaitaia.

Cr John Bain commented that they were not sure about the future of the 'gold card'. *But if Winnie gets back in we can be sure of its future.* John also made comment that the Stock Effluent Disposal sites (page 33) that were completed were working well. *He sure should know, as it's all about B\_Il Sh\_t.*

Cr Bronwyn Hunt queried 'what point were they at with the meetings. (Te Uri o Hau; page 21)

Cr Graeme Ramsey advised he had a number of questions; He had a query about where were the minutes of the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance. He was pleased that the Kaipara District Plan sat well with the Regional Policy Statement (Page 23). He queried about Dairy Effluent and Cr Tony Davies-Colley suggested to the chair that be discussed with Consent section as all the information was there.

#### Item No. 4.4 Representation Review and Māori Constituencies (1423hrs)

Cr Ian Walker believed there needed to be more discussion before changing this policy.

Cr Joe Carr asked if a poll at the 2013 elections would assist in the process.

Cr Ian Walker insisted that they needed to start working on it now.

#### Item No. 4.5 Update on Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST) Review (1431hrs)

**A MUST READ** To enlighten you on how the Helicopter Trust is seen in the eyes of PwC (Price Waterhouse Cooper)

[Link to NRC Funding Contribution to Northland Emergency Services Trust](#)

Cr John Bain advised that he had a Conflict of Interest and he would sit in the gallery. *Shouldn't one with a 'serious' conflict of interest remove them-selves from the chamber completely, as some of the weaker members on council may be intimidated by his staring eyes?*

Cr Tony Davies-Colley wanted to raise a few points;

Firstly it's a good service that Northland needs.

In regards to a comment (page 5 of the PWC report, paragraph 5) directed to the chair, "I'm sure you wouldn't have given support without the council's approval".

On page 6, due diligence is all about transparency.

Cr Bill Rossiter said "I know Tony pushed for this and I think the \$20,000 *for the report* it's a waste of bloody money and they (Pwc) never actually came to Whangarei.

Willy was corrected and informed the amount for the report was \$7500-00.

*I have to ask, is that not money well spent investigating an organization that has a cloud over its management, for due diligence, which was an original requirement of the*

*contract when that same organization receives “between \$500,000 and \$600,000 to NEST each year for the past two years” of ratepayers hard earned money in Northland?* Cr Joe Carr advised that NEST had purchased a third helicopter and it’s questionable if it is needed as per the summary comments (page 15 of 18) and was the non-Northland component of the business offsetting the costs of the Northland services. We should move constructively on this document.

Cr Ian Walker suggested they not beat up on this project. It should not be demised with this process. *We must remember this IS PUBLIC MONEY and some people involved receive good payment (honorariums) from it also; remember they don’t want to disclose that though.*

Cr Bronwyn Hunt confirmed they needed this for the LTP (Long Term Plan) consultation round, but she was not sure if this document has delivered this.

Cr Graeme Ramsey felt this raised some more questions; the question wasn’t “was Northland needing a helicopter” or “should funding come from local government” or “is the organization operating this service operation in an appropriate way and need the funding”. “We must be accountable, transparent and operate with good practice giving value for money”. Large chunks of information were not provided, hence a series of key issues have been raised.

Chairman Craig Brown claims the Nest trustees should be invited to a council meeting to discuss some queries, if they require future funding.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley informs that this is an indictment on the Pwc report. It is shown in the report that it doesn’t go forward in funding. If we are going to meet, it should be in the public arena as it is public funding. *So rightly said Tony, shame some of the others are unable to see it like that.*

Cr Ian Walker feels some questions may be commercially sensitive. *Don’t you think it may be ‘sensitive’ that some people can’t afford to fund it either, when they don’t know where the money is going and to who?*

Cr Bill Rossiter informed that they may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. *Just another smoke screen Willy, to hide behind again. Bring it **all** out in the open and stop the uncertainty and innuendos surrounding this service and its operators, once and for all, or step aside from representing the ratepayers whose money it is.*

## **5.0 FINANCE AND IT**

Item No 5.1 Financial Report – 31 October 2011 (1459hrs)

No discussion was entered into on this item.

## **6.0 OPERATIONS**

Item No. 6.1 Confirmation of Environmental Management Committee Minutes – 25 October 2011(1501hrs)

No discussion was entered into on this item.

Item No. 6.2 Consents Decisions and Progress on Notified Applications in Process, Objections and Appeals (1502hrs)

Cr John Bain queried how many objections had been received on the Westpac Mussels Distributors Ltd application (page 83). He had heard approx 100. It was clarified to him via the office, that nearly 200 had been received.

Item No. 6.3 Report on Environmental Monitoring for the period 1-31 October 2011 (1507hrs)

Cr Tony Davies-Colley advised that compliance, construction and upgrades had been great for the dairy industry. Checks would be carried out twice yearly. The challenges had been put out to the industry recommending education, training and good management. They had given the industry a carrot to abide to resource conditions.

Item No. 6.6 Nominations for Waitangi River Liaison Committee (1513hrs)

Cr Joe Carr advised that a nomination had been received from Living Waters and they now had a full compliment.

## **7.0 PLANNING AND POLICY**

Item No 7.1 National Marine Park for Northland Working Group Update (1514hrs)  
Chairman Craig Brown had concerns that this National Maritime Park was not a “protection” area. He had concerns with the wording in the document.

Cr Joe Carr believed it should read ‘to enhance the marine environment’ and they should change the recommendation.

Acting Chief Executive Tony Phipps advised that ‘protection’ has various levels.

Cr Graeme Ramsey claimed ‘If we are serious about developing the North; our environment is our only selling point’. Our marine environment is of concern. *Great comments Graeme, you can join us on our next protest, if councils continue to ask for resource consent to discharge sewage into our streams, waterways and harbours. They continue to treat our environment as ‘dumping grounds’ and it must stop. There are other options available and will have better long term results.*

Item No 7.2 GE/GMOs Inter Council Working Party Recommendations (1526hrs)

Cr Graeme Ramsey advised that this had been a controversial issue for some time. If we are serious about regional leadership we must listen to our iwi and other Territorial Authority’s. ‘This is not to shut out GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) but to protect communities to unforeseen problems’. This is an opportunity to become involved in this process and have a liability process in place. He wished to add 3 more clauses to the recommendation; a/ take a precautionary approach and confirm our commitment to Northland Environment, b/ confirm our commitment to the ICWP (Inter council working party) and appoint Craig Brown as representative, c/ ask ICWP to develop a process and timeline to deliver a precautionary approach for Auckland and Northland.

Cr Ian Walker insists "I think this is scare monger; you are anti science, anti drug companies. I think you are short sighted. Look at the issues as they occur; it is a national issue; part of technology is going to be banned from Northland. They have been funding a radical noisy lobby group far too long. *Feel better now Ian, that you have that off your chest?*

Cr Bronwyn Hunt, in due respect Ian, I've heard no one say they didn't want science in Northland.

Cr Joe Carr wants the recommendation voted on point by point.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley believes this is a District Council issue on land use, not a regional Council one.

Cr Bill Rossiter claims we asked for due diligence on NEST but never on GE. *Bill aren't you going to bring up the GM medicine that you always raved on about and how it had helped you?* Bill continued that 'he had found some of the GE emails offensive". *Willy, just hit the DELETE button if you have an issue with them.*

Cr John Bain commented 'Ian has said everything I would have said". *Is this pay back for Ian batting for you, on the NEST discussion?*

Chairman Craig Brown claims it was never about banning GM, but reducing the risk with ratepayers having to clear up the mess. Out policy was quite strong but it has got watered down and it is not in the RPS (Regional Policy Statement), this is the opportunity to join our fellow councils, Northland to Auckland to consider the risks of GE. It's about reducing the risk to ratepayers.

Cr Joe Carr still wanted the vote item by item. Recommendation 1, 2, a, & b (above) all passed and only c failed to be approved. Ian Walker voted against b & c. Cr Joe Carr voted against c.

The meeting finished at 1543hrs, Chairman Craig Brown thanking those who attended and then the Councilors go into business with the public excluded.

We headed back to Whangarei to start on the report.

## **8.0 BUSINESS WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

8.1 Confirmation of Confidential Minutes – 18 October 2011

8.2 Securing Long Term Future of Rail in Northland – Investment Proposal