

NRC Regional Transport Committee meeting – 3rd October 2012

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The meeting today got underway at 1000hrs.

Chairman John Bain welcomed all for attending today's meeting. He also personally welcomed Steve Soole, Kaipara District Council acting assets manager and Senior Sergeant Steve Dickson to the meeting.

Apologies (Item No 1) were received for FNDC Mayor Wayne Brown for being late. *(Maybe there should be an apology for him being there? You'll see why later in the report!)*

It was **Item No 2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest.** The chair stated that any 'Conflicts of Interest' were to be advised item by item as they progressed through the agenda and any appropriate action to be taken would be decided by the Committee.

John Bain continued and explained the emergency procedures and exits and restroom facilities that were available. Emergency meeting area was in the car park.

3.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Time now 1002hrs and **Item No. 3.1.** Minutes of Regional Transport Committee Meeting 1 August 2012 (Pages1-5)

Moved: Cr Joe Carr, Seconded: Mr Ken Rintoul.

Page by page the minutes were checked with the opportunity for any questions to be raised. This item was accepted and no discussion was required.

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

Item No. 4.1. Upper North Island Freight Story (Page 6-11) (1003hrs)

Vaughan Cooper, Growth and Infrastructure Manager gave a power point presentation advising that any questions would be welcomed.

FNDC Mayor Wayne Brown arrived during the presentation at 1008hrs.

Cr Joe Carr, referring to the 'Strategic Road & Rail Constraints' slide. He believed that the State Highway 1 north of Whangarei had approx 7,000 vehicles per day. Having this road knocked out periodically was not good. Northland was about linking Northland not just linking with Auckland.

Wayne Brown, tended to agree with what Cr Joe Carr was saying, adding that State Highway 1 and State Highway10 were blocked about 7 days per year and unacceptable. He believed "the Marsden Point Rail Link was a 'figment in the imagination' of many, with some

of the roads in the Far North were of higher importance than the Marsden Point Rail Link.”
Would it be different if it was in his patch?

He continued that “he was disgusted with the red dot on the slide at Ngawha and whose idea was this?”

It was confirmed by a number that it was on his district council plan. *WHOOPS!*

Wayne also believed there should have been more red spots in his area as there were industrial subdivisions in a number of areas in the Far North. *He should know; some could possibly be his. The question is have the rates been paid on these properties?*

Mr Ken Rintoul, Economic Development representative, claimed they kept rating Auckland as the biggest growing area and explained why this was.

NRC Chair Craig Brown gave some details to substantiate some questions.

Mr Steve Westgate, Environmental Sustainability representative, asked how this information will be utilized.

Vaughan Cooper gave details to this explaining that each region will be making its own decisions, but it will enable more informed decisions.

A bit of debate, if you could call it that, erupted between Craig Brown & Wayne Brown but was shut down by the chair, John Bain.

Cr Joe Carr advised the meeting that they were overlooking a major factor in this item and that was availability of energy in Northland.

Mr Greg Martin, Whangarei District Council representative, commented that this was stage one and that they must deal with what we can control; the work done on this is very good.

John Bain added “that it is better to be inside the tent, than outside it”.

Moved: Mr Greg Martin, Seconded: Mr Steve Westgate.

Time now 1040hrs and **Item No. 4.2 Forestry Cost to Far North District Council Roads and the Options Available (Page 12)**

David Penny, FNDC (General Manager Infrastructure and Asset Management) gave a presentation on this item. One of the main points that came out was ‘are our roads fit for purpose?’ *The answer was sadly a big fat NO.*

Questions asked were: - What was the total rate take in the Far North? Answer = \$80million.

And what is spent on Roads? Answer = about \$35million.

Mr Steve Westgate suggested that maybe it was time for weight restrictions on some roads that were causing concern.

David Penny believed the answer was a much better planned harvest time.

Cr Joe Carr commented that the secret was to get the sub-grade dry and strong; not about putting metal on it. *This is something that Mr Ken Rintoul, who just so happens to be a roading contractor has been saying to this meeting for many, many months; so it’s not new. They just need to take some notice from those that know, instead of wasting ratepayer’s money.*

A question....when Mr W Brown gets his unitary authority he so badly wants, and when he and the others have spent the assets accumulated by the NRC clearing their own council debts, will he still need funds from other areas to fix his roads? Answer, probably a YES.

John Bain, interjects a discussion taking place between Craig Brown and Ken Rintoul, asking “Do you want someone to take the minutes over there?” Craig Brown replied “Yes, maybe you could John.”

FNDC Cr Steve McNally tried to make comment from the public gallery, but John Bain denied any speaking rights.

Mr Ken Rintoul brought up information on RUC (Road User Charges) and how maximum weights were now how it was charged on.

John Bain advised it would be recognized in the minutes that this presentation and report had been received.

Wayne Brown wanted a bit more in the minutes so proposed a motion that was duly accepted.

Item No. 4.3 Regional Road Safety Update (Page 13) (1115 hrs)

Senior Sergeant Steve Dickson gave some power point presentations for this item.

Wayne Brown had a go at this presenter claiming he didn't agree with his statistics as they made no sense. *Talk about shoot the messenger, time to take some anti aggression pills WB?*

There were some comments about the time that roads were closed after serious or fatal accidents. *When a serious or fatal accident occurs, the scene is classed as a 'crime scene' to collect evidence; and this is often the only opportunity to gain evidence that is uncontaminated for the future of investigation. If it was your loved one maimed or killed maybe you would be happy for the police to gain evidence for an honest, open, factual trial to be undertaken.*

Senior Sergeant Steve Dickson gave some details of procedures but said the best way to sop road closures was to 'not have accidents'.

John Bain advised that the process was different not so many years ago and didn't close roads for long.

Mr Howeth, Mountain Access and Mobility representative thanked Steve for the good work done by the police in Northland.

Cr Joe Carr, agreed that it should be acknowledged, that policing in Northland is good.

Moved: Cr Joe Carr, Seconded: Mr Howeth Mountain.

On to **5.0 INFORMATION REPORTS**

Time now 100hrs and **Item No. 5.1.** Northland Regional Land Transport Programme 2012-2015 (Page 14-34)

Chris Powell, Transport Operations Senior Programme Manager gave a brief on this item.

Mr Stephen Town, NZ Transport Agency representative, advised that they had met with each council and their CEO's to discuss projects.

Moved: John Bain, Seconded: Mr Tony Norman.

Cr Joe Carr queried about bridge repairs and replacements in Northland.

Mr Stephen Town answered this question.

Item No. 5.2. Proposed Changes to the Land Transport Management Act (Page 34-45) (10hrs)

Vaughan Cooper, Growth and Infrastructure Manager, gave details to the report. The report is worth a read to see the changes to the Land Transport Act.

There were a number of questions fielded for clarification on this item.

Mr Tony Norman had a question, followed by Mr Ken Rintoul asking why the report was 'city centric'.

Wayne Brown commented that it was a good report and thanked them for keeping them informed asking if they would be making a submission as a committee, or will we all have to make our own.

John Bain advised that hopefully it would be a combined submission from Northland as this committee works pretty well.

CEO Malcolm Nicholson suggested that maybe we ask everyone for a list of items for submission and then they can condense those to a suitable list and circulate it out for comment before the submission is filed.

Mr Steve Westgate had some concerns with the removal of certain wording from the 'Act'. (See page 35) He also had concerns about 'trust' in this.

John Bain confirmed that they send the items into CEO, Malcolm Nicholson, for discussion or email them to Vaughan Cooper. This doesn't include the individual ones that you are putting in.

Moved: Mr Rawson Wright, Seconded:?

Time now 100hrs and **Item No. 5 .3.** North Auckland Rail Line Review - Update (Page 46-47)

Vaughan Cooper, Growth and Infrastructure Manager, gave a brief on this about the lines in Northland. For those interested read this report.

Mr Ken Rintoul advised that he had concerns over a couple of points: - Kiwi Rail is too hard to deal with; there is something seriously wrong with the management. He made some suggestions how this could be improved. The day to day issues were in his opinion 'Same shit, different location' as they constantly repeated the same errors.

I believe your are correct Ken, Rail failed in New Zealand a number of years back because of bad management; pilfering of and damage to freight was a huge factor in people ceasing to rely on rail. Claims for lost and/or damaged goods were also an issue of the times people had to wait for claims. It is the old story; the proverbial brown stuff flows down from the top, bad management equals bad and unaccountability of staff at the lower levels. For rail to prosper there must be accountability, honesty, reliability and top service. Let's hope we can get all these to combine for a successful freight service into the future for the betterment of Northland and New Zealand. It works in other countries; why can't it here?

John Bain advised that they were trying to progress this thing.

Moved: Mr Tony Norman, Seconded: Mr Steve Westgate

It was now **6.0 DECISION REPORTS**

There were no decision reports.

John Bain closed the meeting at 1215hrs thanking all for attending.

All information in regards to this meeting's agenda and others are available on the Northland Regional Council website by clicking on this [link](#).