

Whangarei District Council meeting - 23 November 2011.

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)

We are asked to all stand for 'His Worship, the Mayor', but some didn't.

At 1000hrs he remained standing and recites the following few quotes made by John F Kennedy -*35th president of US 1961-1963 (1917 - 1963)*

1/ And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your Country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man. [John F. Kennedy](#), *Inaugural address, January 20, 1961*

2/ Our problems are man-made, therefore they may be solved by man. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings.

Morris adds "I think that is important"

3/ So, let us not be blind to our differences—but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved.

Morris also adds "I think this is a real good quote for today"

4/ There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.

Read more: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/j/johnfkenn124671.html#ixzz1eUnMcyrE>

Morris continues his grand entry "I ask council to be bold and brave today, not to be frivolous and reckless but to think about moving things forward". "I declare the public meeting of 23 November, open".

Does this guy just like to hear his own voice or what? Most people can stand up and recite someone else's wisdom. Is this really what we get for \$118,800-00? Could he be done for gaining money by deception?

There was an apology for Cr Kahu Sutherland received at 1002hrs.

Item No.1, the 'Public Forum' .Council had not received any applications to speak at Public Forum at the time the agenda closed so there was no one to speak.

Cr Sue Glen addressed His worship saying that it's now been three months and no one has come to speak in the Public Forum and was it going to carry on like this.

Could it possibly be after the way Vivienne Shepherd was treated on 25th May 2011 in the Public Forum when her rights were obstructed by Deputy Mayor Cr Phil Halse, who was filling in for Morris who was on Sick leave?

Morris replied that they will keep the opportunity there for the sake of 'open and transparent council'. *That's why they have Confidential Sections regularly.*

Mayor Morris Cutforth advised that "By the way we have Maori TV in here today, they are taking a few shots of the, um, council meeting and they are not recording anything they need to hear of today. Thanks for attending and thanks to the public for attending; no teapots here today?" *Morris you should know.....the public who attend regularly are not offered tea or coffee from ratepayer funding. Just ask Simo, why?*

It was now 1003hrs. Item No. 2, Minutes of a Meeting of the Whangarei District Council held 26 October 2011 (page 2) No discussion was required for this item.

With time 1004hrs it was Item No.3, Minutes of an Extra-ordinary Whangarei District Council Meeting held 9 November 2011 (page6)
No discussion was required for this item either.

With time 1005hrs it was Item No. 4, Police Report (page 8)

* Read the report, some very interesting statistics there to make one ponder over what is happening in our society while you are tucked up safely in bed.

Mayor Morris Cutforth invites Area Commander Clifford Paxton to come forward for the police report. *He just can't get it right; Morris, it is Inspector Clifford Paxton, Northland Police Road Policing Manager (Relieving Area Commander for Whangarei/Kaipara.) Lucky you aren't in the military Morris, you would be before a court-martial for non recognition of the ranks. Sergeant Syers may be able to help you with recognition skills, from his extensive military training.*

Inspector Clifford Paxton highlighted some of the issues police are dealing with; there were a number of incidents underway involving serious matters. Aggravated Robberies in Whangarei, Home Invasion in Maunu, cyclist injured in Otaika Valley/Cemetery Road.

They have commenced foot patrols policing alcohol affected areas and training has commenced for Neighbourhood Policing Teams. They will be focusing on CBD hotels during the festive Christmas/New Year season.

Cr Crichton Christie questioned if they were continuing with normal patrols at places like Whananaki.

Inspector Paxton confirmed beach patrols will be all on over the Christmas and New Year holiday breaks.

Cr Greg Martin congratulated Inspector Paxton on the reduced road toll; claiming none of us like getting tickets, but its keeping the road toll down. *Greg I think you would pay your tickets if you received one; not like Councillor John Williamson who weasels his way out of them, for a miserly \$60-00.*

The time now at 1009hrs. Item No 5, Liquor Management Bylaw Amendment on page 11.

Cr Merv Williams explains it's the end of a process taking place regarding liquor restrictions in response to the community wishes; hopefully we will see the benefit of it.

Cr Shelley Deeming wished to support what Cr Williams had said adding that there had been 6 submissions, most wanting liquor ban areas extended.

Cr Sharon Morgan also supported this recommendation explaining the success of this depended on monitoring by the police.

The time now at 1012hrs. Item No. 6, Deloitte Appraisals of the Hundertwasser Art Centre (page 44) Mr Andrew Boyd and Mr Thomas Ford, both representatives from Deloitte were on site and gave a power point presentation of the project.

(Read the disclaimer on page 5, where is accountability?)

It is interesting when reading the report where famous quotes made by Group Manager District Living Paul Dell during his addresses to council like; "sense of place", "Cultural arts precinct", "revitalise of the Town Basin". Who is pinching the quotes, from whom, or were these in the 'directive' given to Deloitte?

Cr Jeroen Jongejans thanked them for the report. He felt they were conservative with the number of figures given for visitors to the project. He believed the spending figures quoted were also extremely conservative and he believed it to be about \$6mill/p.a. *(let's just wait and see eh who is most accurate?)*

Cr Brian McLachlan didn't want to doubt their professionalism but felt there was no need to review the whole report, but visitor numbers were in question.

Thomas Ford explained these figures were publically available.

Cr John Williamson claimed it indicated it was a 'one of' and were there established multiplying factors around the world for this. *(WDC has its own multiplying factors;*

when they fudge the figures of OIA requests by certain people to attempt to expose them in NZ Truth. They use a multiplying factor of 3 to boost the number of OIA requests up to make it look like certain members of the community are being a problem. Just ask Mr Deeming.)

Thomas Ford explained that multiplying factors were available from about 5 sources in NZ and it is what NZ Statistics use.

Cr Merv Williams asked where was the assumption about operating costs.

Thomas Ford explained that would depend on shared services arrangements.

The recommendation was Cr Jeroen Jongejans and seconded by Cr Warwick Syers.

Mayor Morris Cutforth asked if there were any comments. *You may have not wanted to ask that as lots may come out of the woodwork.*

Cr Aaron Edwards was first off the start line; the main issue is that it was not in the 2009-2019 LTCCP (Long Term Council Community Plan) so there are no ratepayer funds. There was also no mention in the 2011-2012 LTP (Long Term Plan). They had already spent in excess of \$300,000-00 chasing down this project; they need to hold off for proper public consultation as they hadn't had the dialogue yet. There was also no provision in the plan for repayment for this project. *Will Warwick want to borrow more money to see how high he can get away with the increasing debt?*

CEO Mark Simpson advised that the repayment of debt was no different than that for the stadium, (*not 'multi events centre' now*) the museum or the library, as they were part of social infrastructure.

Cr Greg Martin interjected that the stadium was built by the Regional Council. (As I understand, for what it's worth, the Regional Council 'took over' the project to save ratepayers some money as Whangarei District Councils wild plans, were to spend \$39million, not the \$18million they (NRC) trimmed it down to)

Cr Warwick Syers explains "it's really that you can't make scrambled eggs without breaking the eggs" *What he missed out was you have got to be able to 'afford the eggs'; don't 'break the bank' and 'borrow' to buy the eggs.* He continued "Funds put into this are not significant \$300,000-00, as similar gets spent on consultants for road works and the likes". "It's impossible for council to put this in the LTP without this investigation, this sets the tone so we can move forward" *He, the financial guru, has just told you all where money is being wasted.....CONSULTANTS, just like we have always said.*

Cr Crichton Christie confirmed that Warwick Syers is right, the report is valuable; (*about \$300k*) any report has assumptions and is a 'well informed guess'. There are 3 questions that have to be answered 1/ Can we afford to fund it? 2/ Can people afford to use it? 3/ Can council afford to maintain it? We need three ticks. *Crichton go look at some of councils infrastructure; can they afford to maintain it? NO; check out our sewage pump stations, check out the pensioner housing, Check out our sewerage system, check out the Blue Goose, check out the old NRC building, check out the Paper Mill, check out foot paths (\$50million waiting to be repaired with an annual budget of*

\$1mill) I could go on; I think number three has been answered, a big fat NO. He continued that they don't yet know how to fund it; they don't want ratepayers to pay for all the \$13million of it. It has to be done by trustees. This recommendation is not a financial commitment although it is a significant project for Whangarei. Everything with social infrastructure has its benefits to the community.

Cr Merv Williams asks "what is the purpose of No 2 in the recommendation".

CEO Mark Simpson gave a reply about the transfer of the property to a trust.

Cr Merv Williams, quick to reply, said we have to get the funding right and the business plan right. *What business plan? Have they done one?* Council has a history of Council Trusts gone wrong so it must be done properly. He would vote for the motion but wanted an amendment to no 2.

Cr Greg Martin was concerned about the affordability; debt is already at \$150mill as discussed in the earlier Finance meeting. He hoped they were not being manipulated to a point of no return. *Been there before Greg? Recognise the symptoms?* It is not in the LTP, we are a step ahead of where we should be; my conscience will not let me vote for this.

Cr Warwick Syers, addressing His Worship, 'this is not saying we are going with this; public can have full knowledge of the information and Cr Martin has been privy to the numbers discussions' *That's a contradiction Warwick, the public haven't been privy to these meetings.*

Cr Sharon Morgan agrees with Cr Syers (*surprised? No; this is a natural process, as Sharon always does agree with him*) We are being accused about not being open and transparent; we want to hear submissions, people should have the opportunity to have their say.

Cr Sue Glen added 'that if they don't put this in the LTP how do we hear from our community?' She wanted clarification on this.

Mayor Morris Cutforth looking lost with big smiles turns to CEO Mark Simpson for his comment. *There is nothing written down for Morris to say, you know.*

Cr Sue Glen believes it should be in the LTP then after consultation, form a trust. *Are they are just trying to 'short circuit it'?*

Cr Shelley Deeming explains she was supportive of Cr Merv Williams change to the recommendation. They have had 3 years of discussion and now need to go to the public first with consultation. Is it feasible to have it in the LTP? "We have the two extremes of the project in the gallery" *Shelley I was sitting in the gallery; can you explain who is in which camp. It would be nice to know, rather than innuendos.*

Cr Brian McLachlan, pretending to flip a coin, 'up till now it's been heads or tails, now we can make an informed decision'.

Cr Warwick Syers, Cr Williams has asked for a business case, he has encapsulated what we need. The business case has to stack up for us to go to the community.

Cr Sue Glen advised that this project has brought her a lot of difficulties as a lover of the arts. She had bought a Hundertwasser book some time ago; "I need to put myself aside with this and work for my constituents. Whangarei is the gateway to the North and we have an unsettled economic climate. I must make decisions carefully with money which is not mine. Forecasts are uncertain so we need to see what the people think". *Just tell the people what impact it will have on their rates each year; dollars, that is what they understand. At what cost.* Sue Glen confirms she will vote for the recommendation, for procedural matters, but doesn't agree with it all.

Cr John Williamson advises that he would hate any member of council to be accused of 'predetermination'. *Councillor, didn't you predetermine you were going to have your wife's parking ticket cancelled?* Cr Greg Martin needed to be aware of that. This is the first time this project has been debated in this chamber and he was in favour of the process. *You are right Mr Williamson, when Mr Smart, from Hundertwasser Foundation and others spoke it was just a forced, ram it down your throat, publicity stunt.*

Cr Phil Halse confirmed there should be no pre determination. All councilors had taken an oath to represent all ratepayers. *Now, has that got some of you squirming who don't see it like that? Some that can't be bothered just because of who you are?* Phil continued, "that it will be in the Long Term Plan". *Have you taken the wind out of Morris's sails? I'm sure he has been waiting to speak; someone must have written him a note by now to 'recite'.*

Cr Jeroen Jongejans in his right of reply "It is a great opportunity here" (*predetermination?*) "Is the question 'Can we afford to do it?' With Whangarei having; the most unemployment, low GDP and high crime rate, shouldn't the question be 'can we afford not to do it?'"

Mayor Morris Cutforth, going back to one of his original quotes, (*knew he would have a note written*) "There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction. "

Cr Greg Martin asked for a division.

Cr Aaron Edwards and Cr Greg Martin voted against the recommendation.

The recommendation was carried and there were some cheers from the public gallery from members present of Whangarei Economic Development Group (WEDG), chairman Dennis Maconaghie, Barry Trass, Tony Jelas, Brett Sawyers and Dan Johnston, who departed the chamber after the item had finished

Item No 7, at 1117hrs. Cameron Mall Extension and Town Basin Landscaping

(This item can be found on page 148)

Cr Phil Halse claimed he hoped this would get a simple vote.

Cr Merv Williams explained he was happy to put this out for consultation. He assumed the retailers won't be driven with the process over the Christmas New Year period. They

need to be conscious about that happening and hope they get some good ideas back from the process.

Cr Sue Glen still had concerns the funding had not been set aside.

CEO Mark Simpson confirmed these points would be confirmed in the LTCCP (Long Term Council Community Plan)

Group Manager District Living Paul Dell, to his feet? (*standing? Not sure if he was or not?*) He confirms that the park needs to be in the LTP.

Cr Aaron Edwards informs that he is happy for this to go out to the community; there are a number of options and it's going to the public.

Cr Brian McLachlan advised that he had voted against this previously. In the Annual Plan \$2.8mill had been budgeted for the Cameron Street Mall, but now this option was for \$4.3mill so he would be voting against it.

Cr Shelley Deeming claims 'It seems clear we need to do something to our CBD area; she is happy for it to go out to consultation, as Cr Edwards says. She feels it needs an extended period of consultation. She has problems with the funding of this; we can't do what we want to do, before doing things we have to do, but does support it going out for consultation'.

Cr Sharon Morgan wished to compliment the people that had put the plan together and; liked the idea of choices. *Isn't that how it should be on many projects when spending ratepayer funds?*

Cr Sue Glen claims she is happy with this; it seems we have got it right and will support it.

Cr Crichton Christie explains he has no problem with it going out to consultation; the process is right, get one of the options out there.

Cr Greg Martin really throws a cat amongst the pigeons, "All these designs have the Hundertwasser project in them". *Now is that, or is that not, PREDETERMINATION? Good on you Greg!*

Cr Phil Halse informs that this is a plan of an 'iconic structure'. *Gee I thought the bridge was an 'iconic structure' and the library was an 'iconic structure'. Will or 'debt sculpture' be an 'iconic structure' also? How many 'Iconics' do you need in a rural supply town?*

Mayor Morris Cutforth advises that people approach him all the time and say "Don't stop now". *Tell me was he sleeping, or sitting on the roof of Forum North?*

Morris thanked Mr Andrew Boyd and Mr Thomas Ford, from Deloitte for attending and informed it was now time to close the open section of the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1130hrs, the public excluded before going to a **confidential** section of the meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL INDEX

Item No Page No

C.1 Agreement (page 1)

*Didn't Morris campaign that he wanted open and transparent council? Yeah right.
(Why do they always want a confidential section then?)*

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