

Whangarei District Council meeting - 25th May 2011.

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)

With Deputy Mayor Cr Phil Halse in the chair this meeting is underway promptly at 1000hrs. Phil welcomes Councillors, staff and members of the public.

An apology is received for Cr Jeroen Jongejans.

It was now onto Item No.1.the 'Public Forum'

First was Aroha Paea Paki who spoke in regards to suicide prevention. We were informed John Kirwan was a supporter of the programme. It was about supporting the people with suicide prevention and had praise for the Whangarei Suicide Prevention network. They spoke for 2 min 14 seconds.

Next it was Vivienne Shepherd who spoke passionately about the Northland and Auckland Rail Line. [Link to Speech.](#) Vivienne was not at all happy in regards to the about face turn and the recent media release from the 'Caretaker mayor' and 'his flip flop'. She thought he had stood as independent and not party affiliated.

It was very interesting to see Group Manager Support Services Alan Adcock giving 'T' hand signals from the sideline to the referees at the top table. *Looks like Alan Adcock may have taken the official 'timekeeper title' from Jazz Singh who had had some earlier difficulties with the technical calibration and operation of timepieces.*

Busy tapping his fingers, propped up with a cushion in the big chair, Phil-In mayor tried to subdue the speaker, but no, she was indeed going to get it all out. Congratulations Vivienne, our council lacks people with the testicular fortitude to tell it as it is. Vivienne was on a roll and it resulted in a 5 minute 20 second allocation.

At 1010hrs it was Item No. 2, the Minutes from the Whangarei District council meeting, 27th April 2011.

Cr John Williamson wanted clarification about Morris Cutforth's non presence at that meeting but his name being registered alongside some of the items.

Meeting Officer, Carolyn Brindle gave some clarification to the issue, but it appeared John failed to agree with her. *John get some advice from CEO Mark Simpson and he may get Group Manager Environment, Paul Dell to squash it for you, just like the traffic infringement eh? Perhaps any advertising is good advertising.*

Item No. 3. Minutes; Extra-ordinary Whangarei District Council, Monday 9th May 2011. This was a report on the hearings for the Draft 2011 2012 Annual Plan. As there was no need for discussion at 1011hrs, this was all over in seconds.

With time at 1012hrs it was Item No. 4. Minutes; Extra-ordinary Whangarei District Council, Wednesday 11th May 2011. This was in regards to Leave of Absence for His Worship the Mayor. No discussion was necessary on this item.

Ex mayor Stan Semenoff arrived at 1012hrs and sat in the front row to observe the remainder of the meeting.

Item No.5.the Police Report and Area Commander Inspector Paul Dimery, was here to present his report at 1012hrs. Paul explaining they had had a busy month. There had been a one man crime wave with him being responsible for a number of car conversions. He had a bouquet as communities were starting to not tolerate domestic violence. Controlled Purchase operations of liquor outlets was proving most were well run and a measure of success will be with the catching of no one. He had a good meeting, with Owen from WDC, on Organised Crime and great effort had been put in by all his staff.

Cr Merv Williams explained his attendance at an alcohol forum at Otangarei and it was great to see the community in support of liquor bans and council need support it and not stall it.

Paul Dimery confirmed it was a testament to the community themselves, it was a good community and they needed to support it.

Cr Merv Williams also had a bouquet for the police in the way a recent incident that occurred at 1230am when a window was damaged in Cameron Street and how the officer who contacted him how great his actions were. *Merv is manager for the Strand Arcade, hence his involvement.* The use of cameras helped identify the culprit.

Paul Dimery also had praise for the CCTV cameras claiming they use them all the time as they are good for capturing evidence especially on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

Cr Crichton Christie queried the developments of the unwanted visitors to Whangarei as previously reported as the owner of the building had evicted them so where had they gone to. The media recently reported how one of them had been arrested on drugs charges.

Paul Dimery explained the Rebels were still in the premises and on Saturday night they had a do with 150 -200 attending, adding that they only tell the community what they want to hear. *Gee Paul that sounds just like the council. Have they trained them with their sentiments, of only telling the community what they want to hear?*

The time now at 1023hrs. Item No. 6. Local Government New Zealand Conference. This was about who was attending the conference from 10-13 July in Wellington.

Cr Phil Halse moved that Cr Williams and Cr Deeming attend. The conference agenda had given an indication that spatial planning was to be addressed and these two had experience in that area.

Cr Greg Martin supported Phil stating that they need to send the right people as the conference was intensive and hard work. *Do you wonder Greg why you weren't chosen?*

Whangarei District Council Mayoral Disaster Relief Fund Trust - winding up, Item No. 7.

It's now 1024hrs and the economics of this fund show it should be wound up at this stage. Audit fees alone make it uneconomic to keep it operating in times of non requirement. *Of course, we must tighten the belt on this sort of thing, while others waste hundreds of thousands and sometimes millions of dollars on projects for their own specific interests.*

It's now 1025hrs, Item No. 8. Contract 10010 - Professional Services for Regulatory Services. This item is in regards to animal control, excessive noise control, parking and by law enforcement and now the inspection of swimming pools.

Personally five years ago I would have seriously queried the title 'Professional Services' as there were indeed some bad practices being carried out. In 2007 a review was carried out and a number of changes have since been made. There has been a vast improvement in the style of enforcement by this organization. As found in the review, Councils monitoring had not been to a high standard, therefore it was unfair to solely blame the contractor and staff when the council had failed to set and monitor the boundaries and performance.

Cr Crichton Christie informed the contractor had been there a long time. He had given them advice a few times and the manager had learnt a lot.

Cr Kahu Sutherland wanted assurance that the response times to noise complaint callouts to Whau Valley Road could improve from 1.5hrs.

Group Manager Environment Paul Dell said KPI's and detailed performance measures had been set along with performance bonuses which won't be paid if they don't perform. He agreed with Crichton Christie that the contractor had moved a long way since the first contracts.

Kahu Sutherland again emphasized that a 1 1/2 hour response for a noise complaint 10minutes up the road was not good.

Paul Dell again stated there will be times when KPI's will not be met.

Cr Greg Martin believed it was probably the most difficult job we have, dogs, noise and parking tickets. *Why Greg are you looking over at Cr John Williamson, Road safety*

advocate, AA executive, professional committee person, etc etc. etc? Ah yes I remember he got off a ticket, but that shouldn't reflect on the contractor, they had done their job properly, but the powers to be (Mark & Paul) over rode it.

Cr Sue Glen insisted it was a 'Job from Hell'. *How would she know? And is that all they are going to get paid for it? she added. Sue, do you really think \$3.36 Million with bonuses of up to \$36,000-00 is to be sniffed at for the contract? Or did you miss a set of 000's off the end of the figure?*

Cr John (*disappearing ticket*) Williamson asks if the new contract will decide to do other things or processes, like WOF and Registration checks.

Paul Dell said there may be new bits of business or activities.

Cr Sharon Morgan asked Paul to elaborate on some of the initiatives Environmental Northland has instigated.

Paul replied quoting; Public Education, brochures, other documents, the dog park, dogs on beaches programme, sponsorship of sports and other activities.

The contract was awarded for three years with council's discretion to extend it for another year if it wished to.

Good wishes to the management and staff of Environmental Northland Limited, for a safer environment for all.

It's now 1031hrs, Item No. 9. Granting of Easement - Taurikura

Cr Aaron Edwards had no reserves in supporting this as it appears all the correct evaluations had been done on this issue.

It's now 1132hrs, Item No. 10. Hundertwasser Art Centre Whangarei.

Cr Kahu Sutherland, to his feet speaks to the item. He believes it's a step in the right direction, it is very much in the public eye and they are keeping an open dialogue. *Many believe it's a done deal, let's wait and see.*

Cr Greg Martin explains last year there was no council funding, on 27th April we were locking it into the LTCCP and now it appears to be a budget creep. We need to be careful, are we pre-empting what the public are going to say.

Cr Phil Halse said the staff needs to see all options. *Wake up Phil, there have been no other options seriously investigated, or have you not noticed?*

Cr Aaron Edwards referring to Mr Simpsons comments (pg 26 para6) where he says 'people are drawn to nitelife'. He adds he is the same Mr Simpson that was instrumental in the ruling about no bars allowing patrons in after 1am. Aaron also queried 'what will be the process about other options the public bring forward'.

Cr Phil Halse claims they have 'iconic reservations' for that area. *Hey Phil, what's 'iconic' about having an empty building in a state of disrepair, vacant, producing no income, with raw untreated sewage floating past most times we experience heavy rain, for at least 8 years? Where are your values?*

Cr Shelley Deeming felt the 'consultation' word is used too much, it was a 'discussion process'; it gives 'us' a signature and I would be happy to support it. *You are right Shellsie, 'discussion' let's talk about it and we (council) will do what we want anyway. We have seen the way it works submission process, after submission process. It's hard to listen when the 'listening senses' are or have been turned off.*

Cr Phil Halse states he is looking forward to tomorrow morning (Thursday 26th May) when they bless it at 0545hrs. *Hope that heavy rain, that's predicted, is not cleansing the city's sewerage pipes at that time.*

Cr Merv Williams asks if councilors had seen the TV3 programme 'The Nation' where some of Northlands problems came up. *(an interesting comment Merv, personally after viewing the item in reference, we were extremely surprised that no leader, councilor, business owner, or MP from Northland had taken the media to task over this item or attempted to clarify some direction our districts were taking to ease the situation, not one. Then again you have to acknowledge your weaknesses or faults, so in time you can make the changes necessary to improve the situation)* Merv continued, Northland was referred to as the 'basket case' a number of times. What we need to do is pick up the truths of that item.

[Link to 'The Nation' 8th May 2011](#) (24min21sec to end)

Merv added, there could well be some economic opportunities; it could be an 'adventure trail into art'. We have got to be careful, don't go out with a pre-decision, we want public opinion. Tomorrow people will look at it and possible place it in, one of three categories 1/ Love it. 2/ Hate it, but feel people may be attracted to it. 3/ Think it's ugly and will turn people away. If the first 2 outweigh it, fine but if it's 3 we must think hard about proceeding. It must be an economic driver, we don't want to spend 12 plus million dollars on a project, stuck with further operating expenses to operate a 'dead duck'. The process of gaining support and gauging our community is for the Long Term Plan next year. We are only presently gauging their opinion.

Cr Sue Glen asks 'how do we gauge what the public are thinking?' 'How do we physically know and get a judgment from everybody?' *Isn't this what councillors always do? Take the communities wishes to the council, or have you been accepting council's wishes and trying to convince the community they are 'right for them'?*

Sue continued suggesting 'a system similar to a baby beauty contest, putting numbers in boxes'. 'It's a thought but a pretty basic thought'.

Cr Phil Halse comments that this is not going to happen in a couple of months. *Who is he trying to kid? Will they rush it through, to get his name on the plaque in less than 4 months?*

Cr Sue Glen claims she 'wants the public to debate, not council'. *Don't we all?*

Cr Kahu Sutherland, again to his feet for the right of reply. 'This will be launched tomorrow' *see it is happening* "He has heard a lot of absolute rubbish, a lot of opinions have been formed. Some, to say, appeasing people. We can take ownership and drive

it. It can't proceed if 'Joe Public' are against it. This is about moving on, there is potential for this project. I am absolutely convinced we can't afford to not have it. The decision was made, a division called by Cr Aaron Edwards, who was the only one to vote against the recommendation. *Good on you Aaron, on all accounts you have been listening to your community.*

The meeting concluded at 1049hrs before going to a confidential section of the meeting.

Didn't Morris campaign that he wanted open and transparent council, or did the Puppet lie? (What don't they want us to know?)

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