

Louis Toorenburg – Members Report – Kaikohe – Hokianga Community Board – February 2019

2019 – another year, my 6th as part of the Kaikohe – Hokianga Community Board, hopefully a fruitful and successful year for our board, there have been many achievements over my previous 5 years, which includes a new I-Site for the Hokianga, many happy community groups that have been able to provide for their communities through the Community Grant Scheme, and hopefully progress on our footpaths, wastewater, water, rubbish and roading issues.

Water I have been part of a group that pursued funding for various groups to make improvements to water supplies in our area, Rawene, Omanaia, Waima, Whirinaki and Pakanae were all successful in getting funding to make improvements to their water supplies from the Ministry of Health with Opononi missing out. Work is about to begin on improvement to the Rawene/Omanaia Scheme, which will see Omanaia finally getting treated water after so many years. Changes were also made to the way Rawene rates were collected, and reductions were made to depreciation charged because of government subsidies.

2019 will also be big year for the Opononi Water supply, in August as part of FNDC's water resource consent, is required to leave a minimum of 14 litres per second flow in the Waiotemarama Stream up from 10lps, this for stream health and downstream users. This could cause disruptions to the water supply especially over dry summer months. Resource Consents to make design changes to the weir at Waiotemarama will be needed to allow increased flow in stream.

Council was able to find water to supplement the loss from the Waiotemarama Stream, via a bore at Smoothy Road, flow after tests appears adequate and of good quality and maybe be able to provide much of the need of Opononi and Omapere. Tests were done on some of the springs nearby to see if there was any reduced flow that may affect users that draw water from these springs. FNDC will need to apply for Resource Consent to use water found. There may be some community resistance to taking yet more water from the Waiotemarama Catchment, however there may be less reliance on the stream itself thereby making improvements. Some concerns expressed that testing was done during a particularly wet year.

Water tanks especially for new builds also need serious consideration as a way to help alleviate serious water shortages over the dry summer months.

Recommendations

- **That regular reports and updates on community water supplies in our ward be provided to the Community Board.**
- **That the Board be advised of resource consent applications with regard to water issues.**
- **That the issue of water tanks be considered as a tool for water shortage management, and that FNDC look at ways of supporting those who wish to install extra storage on their properties.**

Wastewater - 2019 also a big year for the wastewater scheme in Opononi and Omapere, it is required to get a new consent in August 2019. There is considerable community opposition for the status quo, with concerns of high e-coli readings and abatement notices in place since 2016. This has seen Council try and make improvements largely through desludging, first attempt making very little improvement, so a much more concerted effort is being made. Hopefully this will be successful. There are also concerns with the removal of largest wetland cell from the purifying process, it is hoped this will be reinstated, and also concerns about the state of the rest of the wetlands. There are also concerns about the outlet pipe into the Hokianga Harbour, much of it broken off due to bad weather.

There are wider concerns about the state of the Hokianga Harbour, large areas of shellfish beds are dying off, beaches becoming unsafe to swim at and concerns about all the amount of waste entering our harbour. Waste that comes from not only the 3 Hokianga communities of Rawene, Kohukohu and Opononi but also from Lake Omapere and Kaikohe, and also from the extra septic waste from much of the district, being added through Kaikohe and Rawene.

There is a ground swell that Opononi waste water scheme should become part of the solution and not be part of the problem. The community is asking for a hydrological survey being done of the harbour and Council to seek funding from central government to make improvements to the scheme, especially seeing that many of the users are visitors or tourists to the area.

Recommendations

- **That a report be prepared for the KHCB on the issues affecting the Opononi – Omapere Waste water plant. Including issues related to:- Abatement Notices, broken outlet pipe, wetland cells, resource consents.**
- **That a wider study be done on the state of the Hokianga Harbour, which includes:**
 - 1 - a hydrological survey of the harbour**
 - 2 – study of all sources of contamination of the harbour, including Opononi, Rawene, Kohukohu and Kaikohe wastewater schemes, including the affect of septic tank wastes. Also the effect of run off from farmland and Lake Omapere.**
 - 3 – a report be done on the state of the shellfish beds and seafood in the Hokianga Harbour.**
- **That funding options be investigated, and request made to central government for funding to upgrade the Opononi – Omapere Wastewater Treatment plant, to help cope with the influx of tourists and visitors to that community.**

Footpaths - 2019 will hopefully see footpaths network extended in our ward, five years ago I commended Council on its efforts to spread the footpath network in each ward by providing \$150,000 each year or \$750,000 to date to the Community Boards for its allocation. Sadly our ward has seen very little of the work it recommended being done. People of the small Hokianga

communities seeing its aspirations being dashed year after year, let's hope that this year this will change.

Let us also see footpaths and street lighting go ahead in Taumatawiwi Street in Opononi, proceeds from the sale of surplus lands in that are being used to do the job.

For a number of years I have requested to see the repairs and maintenance schedule for footpaths in our ward, hopefully these we will get soon.

Recommendations

- **That a report be done to KHCB on the work done on footpath extensions in our ward, and that work previously recommended by the board be done this year, to the value of funds previously allocated ie \$150,000pa or \$750,000 to date.**
- **That footpaths and street lighting in Taumatawiwi Street in Opononi be done, and that income from the sale of sections in that area be used to pay for that.**
- **That community board members be kept informed on footpath maintenance and repairs that are scheduled in their areas.**

Roading - 2019 will hopefully bring more improvements to our roading network in our ward, I have noticed considerable improvements on some of the roads in my area, more frequent and better grading work, more metal put on our roads, new culverts put in.

Recommendations

- **That FNDC continue to make improvements to roads in our ward, and that the Board is advised on what work is planned in each area on a regular basis.**

Rubbish – Many of the RFSs I have put in last year relate to rubbish, from crashed and abandoned cars, to illegal roadside dumps and discarded litter from vehicles. Much of what is being dumped is recyclable. Many of the comments on social media, say we are a poor area and people cannot afford the extravagant charges being made, several hundreds of dollars per trailer load. One person even suggesting hiring a skip, which takes much more rubbish, they come and drop of the bin and pick it up and it is cheaper than taking a trailer full. Another case somebody took a trailer through couldn't afford to pay the charges and dropped the rubbish of somewhere on the way home. There have had a number of suggestions for inorganic collections.

2019 let's see a review of our rubbish problem, a problem that is likely to increase because of recycling changes with regard to plastics.

Recommendations

- **Investigate possibility of having inorganic rubbish collections in various parts of our ward.**
- **A look at charges for dumping waste at transfer stations around district, investigate reports of overcharging .**

