

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER'S REPORT

Report to: Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board
Member Name: Manuela Gmuer-Hornell
Subdivision: Opua – Russell
Date: 19 July 2021

Meetings

Date	Meeting
25/06/2021	Go Green Awards - Russell
08/07/2021	Community Board Meeting - Waipapa
19/07/2021	Russell Town Hall Committee Meeting – Russell

Issues/Feedback

Our Community Board needs to make sure that management doesn't forward difficult decisions to the Community Boards without consulting or informing us in an appropriate timeframe. The no-surprises policy has to be both ways!

Recently, some Wattle Trees got removed in Russell; I have initially requested this work to be undertaken via RFS – the request was turned down as there was no budget. A couple of months later, these trees were removed without any consultation or communication. The lack of consultation is insulting to the Community Board.

During our May Community Board Meeting, some questionable behaviour from FNDC and FNHL came to light concerning Opua School (and with this, the Opua Community) - The Opua School footpath extension (budgeted at \$3000) has been on top of the list for our ward for a while. As per FNDC, this work will be carried out by FNHL as part of their resource consent conditions; FNDC only added this condition recently; the footpath was scheduled before FNDC granted the resource consent.

A senior staff member told the Community Board that the school's behaviour is difficult; hence FNHL can't carry out the footpath work.

I represent the Opua Community at the Far North District Council, and I have been involved with these issues for many years.

-The school is asking FNHL for its previous promises to be kept (i.e. a playground) when the community went along with the second stage of the Bay of Islands Marina Development.

-The school refuses to sign FNHL pre-written permission to agree to the controversial developments on the hill (now occupied by hapu and iwi).

-The school wants FNHL and FNDC to ensure safety to the entry of the school gates.

FNHL have tried questionable tactics, and the Mayor has been in attendance to "mediate" at a couple of meetings. No progress has been made. The footpath should have NOTHING to do with FNHL and their battle with the school and the wider community.

Yet another episode where FNHL is pushing a community out of their town. And yet another episode where FNDC is interfering with FNHL business to get a deal over the line.

How can this be solved in a timely (within the next two months) and respectful manner?

Unfortunately, the rubbish bin issue for Russell is still not solved, nor has FNDC made any effort to come up with solutions – the community, on the other hand, has proposed several solutions to FNDC. I have been informed that FNDC has applied for funds from MBIE to supply smart bins for Russell and Paihia. I've since learnt that these "smart bins" are not working well in Kaitaia; maybe we need to look at a different solution.

This is what the FNDC customers – the ratepayers – are after, prompt replies and action to everyday needs. FNDC's average customers – the ratepayers – is not overly interested in how quick the turnaround is for building and resource consents. The average customer – the ratepayers – want their basic needs looked after, rubbish, water, sewage and roads. Time to look at the customers' – the ratepayers – view (not the property developers from out of our region)!

Roading Issues seem to get the cone treatment and justified as a "fix" – this is totally unacceptable and dangerous as well as very unsightly – we have several of these around my subdivision, and we get zero replies on follow-ups.

Issues with our small-town water supply in Russell, and yet again, staff need time to go through the historic agreements. This is a working system, and FNDC has no idea how and who is drawing water from a council-owned bore? This issue has been raised in October 2021.

Time to pull your socks up, FNDC, and face the hard facts! You are letting communities down with their very basic needs of a sound sewage system and freshwater. FNDC needs to stop being risk-averse and start fixing aging assets, AND maybe it would help allocate funds to EVERY town in your district to keep up with the maintenance. An 80-year plan won't resolve our needs today.

The Russell Rubbish Tip Contract was on a Council Meeting Agenda just last month. I was pleasantly surprised to receive phone calls from two Councillors (Smith & Vujcich) to understand how the community sees the future of this facility. All kudos to Rachel & John for reaching out and understanding how the locals feel and think.

Resource Consents

NIL received

Requests for Service/Information

22/04/2019	RFS-3975374	Oasis Car Park
01/12/2019	RFS-3988901	Russell's Rubbish Woes
09/12/2019	RFS-3996575	Petition Okiato Boundary for paper road
11/02/2020	RFS 4001004	Mark Car Parks outside of Tennis Club
21/02/2020	RFS-3997123	Footpath Damage York St
20/05/2020	RFS-4005808	would you please mark the diesel tank intake at Russell Wharf
17/06/2020	RFS-4010977	Sign and barrier smashed by a car
17/06/2020	RFS-4011525	collapsed drains etc
10/07/2020	RFS-4014411	two small slips - been semi tidied and cone placed
24/08/2020	RFS-4021868	erosion by Matauwhi Bay (tree)

10/09/2020	RFS-4025200	Arcadia Lodge Lemon Track eroding
21/09/2020	RFS-4026086	Russell Sewage Plant Issues
05/10/2020	RFS-4028183	Russell Museum Sister City
06/10/2020	RFS-4028271	russell township maintance
19/10/2020	RFS-4029293	tree to be removed Wellington St
27/10/2020	RFS-4031104	Water Mains Breach Russell
19/11/2020	RFS-4034886	Fire Hydrant Marking RSA Russell
06/01/2021	RFS-4046814	eroded track to Opuia Beach
22/03/2021	RFS-4052859	Duffus Estate Land breach driveway
02/06/2021	RFS-4063234	Russell Hall - birds nesting inside
02/06/2021	RFS-4063241	Washout Long Beach (far end)
02/06/2021	RFS-4063258	Boat Ramp Russell – grass area, dug up by a truck

In progress

- Opuia Resource Consent non-notified for development Franklin St/Kellet St – petition tabled at CB Meeting 3/2/2020 – this has now gone to a full (over 100 attendees) community meeting 8/3/2020 – and we have just been told FNHL has sold the land to a private developer. The land is now occupied by hapu and locals. This is a community being pushed out of their town.
- Carpark for Oasis Community Centre – this has been ongoing since 2018
- Lack of rubbish collection point and recycling collection during peak season around Russell Wharf (owned by FNHL) and this is still NOT solved
- Footpath Kellet Street – Opuia School – been approved but not carried out – after been promised to be finished by September, it is now "scheduled" for January 2021 and as per this report, this is now FNHL project – I am opposing this decision.
- Petition Okiato Boundary for paper road RFS-3996575 – tabled at CB meeting 9/12.19 – the cost to be carried by petitioners. Motion passed in November 2020 CB meeting
- Include re-doing the FNHL terms of reference/objective in their comments about what the next annual plan and long term plan should cover. – tabled at CB Meeting 3/2/2020
- Walls Bay, Opuia – to be occupied by local hapu
- Speed Limit Review
- Maintenance in Russell Township to be outsourced to a local community group
- Mark boundaries at the "Walls Bay" Opuia reserve clearly with bollards
- Contractor Work (to remove a dead tree) in the middle of Russell, starting at 6.40 am!