
ORDINARY MEETING

OF

MAKARA/OHARIU COMMUNITY BOARD

MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

Time: 7.30pm
Date: Thursday, 18 June 2015
Venue: Makara Hall
366 Makara Road
Makara
Wellington

Business

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Report on NZ Community Boards Conference – Bay of Islands – 14/16
May 2015

Firstly, thank you to WCC for the opportunity to attend this Conference, I found it useful and informative, and one of the most enjoyable is the time we got to meet and talk with other Board members all around New Zealand. There is a wide variance in the delegations the Boards have, which made many interesting discussions.

The theme of the Conference was “Influencing Change” and was attended by community board members, mayors, councilors, council staff and other persons interested in making a difference in their communities from throughout the country.

Unfortunately, we were told a short time into the Conference on the first day that we did not need to take notes, as all speakers presentations would be uploaded onto the Local Government Commission website within a week of return. Unfortunately this has not occurred, the reason supplied was that with the GWRC amalgamation announcement, the person tasked to do this was very busy, (I would have thought a month since the Conference would have been sufficient). So I have only my memory to go by, and with so many speakers over the few days, I can only recall the best.

One of the first was Hone Mihaka, who was from Ngapuhi descent, KeriKeri, left school with no qualifications, employed in the meat works, spent some time we understand in Social Welfare homes, and later, from what we understood, prison. He came back to set up Taiamai Tours to offer tourists an authentic experience in Ngapuhi culture, from traditional welcoming ceremony to re-enacting the first contact with European settlers. His role in mentoring and supporting the community’s children has elevated him to the status of role model, communication skills learned on the way has used now to develop partnerships with community groups, entrepreneurs, public service organisations and government ministers. A most interesting speaker.

Talent NZ: Creating a place where talent wants to live – Wendy McGuinness, founder and chief executive of the McGuinness Institute. Her session discussed the role of strategy and why a focus on creating a place

where talent wants to life will deliver good outcomes for New Zealand. A really good speaker, with interesting ideas worth following up on.

Local Government Commission – Recently had a Colmar Brunton poll to review the opinion which people have of what local government does, what standing it has, to provide strategies to improve reputation and influence. To lift performance, there were five key initiatives – governance and leadership, financial, assets, engaging with business, and engaging with the public.

Growing Great Neighbourhoods

Denise Bijoux works with Inspiring Communities and in this role works with communities and organisations in Te Tairāwhiti, Whanganui and Wellington as well as Auckland to assist with community led development and assist local people to notice the differences they are making. She suggested small projects with short planning, and little cost to start, community projects, such as stream and catchment restoration, local clean ups, getting involvement in the community to keep the things they want, and to change others that they do not. Lots of good suggestions.

The Conference was definitely worth attendance.

**Report to Wellington City Council and Makara/Oharui Community Board
Proceedings of the New Zealand Community Board Conference 2015
Theme: Influencing Change.**

The conference was held at Waitangi in the Bay of Islands and drew a more diverse range of participants than the 2013 conference in the South Island.

The two primary key note addresses, presenting different examples of influencing change, were given by Tania McInnes, Deputy Mayor of Far North District Council and David Hammond, Thames Coromandel. Tania McInnes described a community driven process to turn a Paihia carpark into a foreshore community park at Paihia. She stressed that people organise around stuff they care about and exercising leadership, bravery, putting your head above the parapet, and standing for something are important aspects of influencing change and exercising leadership.

David Hammond largely repeated his 2013 conference presentation, describing the significant devolution of powers and funding to community boards across the Thames Coromandel area as a model of empowered local democracy and leadership.

Gerard Lindstrom from Chorus described how they have worked with local councils in the roll out of broadband. Also, how some small communities without access to broadband have been connected (on the basis of those communities paying the cost of getting the fibre there).

Malcom Alexander from Local Government NZ (LGNZ) focussed on the organisation's restructuring and rebranding over the past two years. He spoke about LGNZ commissioned research which shows that communities want community board and local government members to lead, and that only 1% of people engage in long term plan processes or read the plans, and that these are not a good way to either engage or inform people.

Creating a place where talent wants to live. Wendy McGuinness, McGuinness Institute

I thought this workshop provided the best value of the three I attended. It focussed on using good data, foresight and future thinking to see what is about to jump out at us, but which we can't presently see, and on identifying what our community treasures and choosing those qualities as the preferred future. She presented a process to help people who have trouble seeing an alternative to begin to see and understand, and put their support behind, a clear preferred future. She stressed the importance of good quality data and analysis (evidence) to foresee potential futures. For example, asking what can Community Boards do locally about the impacts of climate change. The risks associated with accepting community and societal myths as the basis for planning, without testing these, was stressed. Her advice was to find the person in our community who is most future focussed, and get them involved in developing a vision the Community Board can support and work toward.

Coromandel: turning good examples into everyday normal. David Hammond, TCDC

Thames Coromandel has Boards with devolved powers over many devolved areas of council activity, planning and spending. To evolve local services to Boards you need senior council politicians on board and to recruit a CEO whose officials will enable and support it. He described this as a whole eco-system change. TCDC has 30,000 residents, 30,000 absentee owners and 120,000 visitors daily, which puts a huge strain on infrastructure. Board members exercise many of the same powers as our elected councillors. The TCDC resources the Boards with the same sort of support as provided to councillors.

Influencing change through fair and equitable public participation. Michelle Bicavs, IAP2, Australia

This workshop was about formal processes of community engagement, from a largely local government officials perspective. The presenter's examples of small communities in Australia would be considered large communities in New Zealand, so the transfer of ideas was somewhat lesser as a result. The presenter spoke about community engagement as a planned, purposeful process, not just a community survey, stressing there is always a new voice to be heard to add to decision making. She highlighted the importance of trying new things in our community to be more fair and equitable in how decisions are being made. She stressed that Boards don't have to do everything the community is saying, or what the small handful of loudest or most obvious voices say.

Summary

This conference attracted more women, Maori, younger people, and small and rural Boards than in 2013. On the theme of Influencing Change, I thought this not so well represented in some keynote speakers and workshops. In particular, the lack of acknowledgment or involvement with the Treaty of Waitangi as a key influencer of change, or with the Treaty grounds that were just next door.

The opportunity to network with members of other Boards, to share ideas and compare notes was extremely useful, and in many ways, the most valuable aspect of the event. It stood out that Makara/Oharui is one of the few Boards without its own plan of local projects and issues to support, an elected councillor attached to it, or devolved funding to support local projects, and that other Boards experience real advantages from having these.

Margie Scotts