

MACKENZIE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TWIZEL COMMUNITY BOARD HELD IN THE SERVICE CENTRE TWIZEL ON MONDAY 10 MAY 2010 AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT:

John Bishop (Chairman)
Phil Rive
Peter Bell
Dave Pullen

IN ATTENDANCE:

John O'Neill (Mayor)
Cr Simon McDermott
Paul Morris (Acting Chief Executive Officer)
Garth Nixon (Community Facilities Manager)
Nathan Hole (Manager – Planning and Regulations)
Rosemary Moran (Committee Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Elaine Curran who had expressed her interest in standing for the Community Board at the next elections.

I APOLOGY:

Resolved that an apology be received from Khandro.

Dave Pullen/Phil Rive

V VISITORS – RATEPAYERS AFFECTED BY THE CORRECTION OF AN ERROR IN THE TWIZEL VALUATION ROLL NUMBERING:

The Chairman welcomed six members of the public who attended to speak to the issues raised in a letter to him dated 5 May 2010. The letter referred to notification by Council to the owners of 111 assessments in the Twizel area which had been assigned incorrect property valuation assessment numbers.

Jill Selbie said some of the affected property owners would be subjected to a substantial increase in rates as a result of the correction of the error. The letter submitted that the Community Board consider alleviating its effects by introducing:

- a graduated rate increase
- a differential rating system
- capital value rating,

and they asked that ongoing developments be transparent and consultative.

Mrs Selbie gave the Chairman a copy of the submission which was supported by the signatures of the owners of 23 affected properties.

Don Selbie and Cherrie Johnston supported Mrs Selbie's comments, noting that a sudden, huge increase (up to 65%) was unfair, unjust and unreasonable. They asked the Community Board to make representations to the Council on their behalf.

The Mayor said he understood the concerns. He clarified that incorrect numbers had been assigned by the Council's contracted valuation service provider, Quotable Value.

Mrs Selbie said that three months notice to ratepayers was insufficient and noted that an increase in GST would aggravate the situation.

The Manager – Finance and Administration explained that the Council had let people know about the error as early as possible after it had been discovered. He explained that the Council had the ability under the Rating Act to correct errors. He noted that the affected property owners had been paying Rural Works and Services rates rather than Twizel Works and Services Rates which funded assets such as the swimming pool and roading and footpaths in Twizel and was much higher than the rural works and services rate.

The Manager – Finance and Administration said the representations from the affected ratepayers would be treated as a submission to Council's Annual Plan for 2010/2011 which was to be open for public submissions from 18 May 2010. He said the Council would be hearing the submissions on 25 June 2010 and he invited them to attend the hearing and put their case to the Council.

Peter Bell, in expressing sympathy for their unfortunate position, noted that with the correction of the error, the affected properties had been assigned to the right rating area and consequently the owners would join with everyone else in the community in paying for works and services in Twizel. He said that while he was neither for nor against the submissions made, he had to point out that if anyone was given a rates discount, the effect was that the rest of the community had to pay more.

Ms Johnston said their section had not yet been built on and, faced with the huge rate increase, they might not now be in such a hurry to build. She said that while they had thought it would be their dream home, they were now weighing up whether to peg back their plans, remain living where they were or put their money into a city investment to get a bigger return.

Tim Gardner said a further issue was that in their area there were fewer services than in the town, eg kerb and channelling; there were also water restrictions in some areas and no street lights - services taken for granted in the township. He said they did not know what was planned in that regard and therefore did not know the increase in rates could be considered equitable. He considered that such issues had to be factored into the equation.

Peter Bell said the people in North West Arch had been within the town boundary from the beginning and didn't enjoy all services. He considered it would be better to push the town boundary out to enable Twizel to grow into it. He said he could not support a situation where people were paying rural rates and at the same time enjoying the town's services and using town facilities.

Cr Pullen advised that a Government Rates Rebate Scheme was available and suggested people who might be eligible contact the Council to find out about it.

Cr McDermott noted that the role of the Twizel Community Board was to make recommendations to the Council and commented that whatever the outcome of the situation, there would be an effect not only on the ratepayers concerned with this issue, but also on all the other ratepayers as well.

The Chairman thanked the visitors and said the Board had a good understanding of the issues. He undertook to let them know the outcome of the Board's deliberations.

II MINUTES:

Resolved that the Minutes of the meetings of the Twizel Community Board held on 19 and 29 March 2010 be confirmed and adopted as the correct records of the meetings with the following amendments:

1. To the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2010, Proposed Plan Change 15 - Twizel Zoning:
That the reference on the second page to *Western Boundary of Twizel Community* be corrected to ***Eastern Boundary of Twizel Community***.
2. To the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2010m ACTIONS UPDATE, **Car Parking at Kindergarten** - the resolution to read:
That the Twizel Kindergarten be advised of the Twizel Community Board's support of the improvements proposed for the car parking area owned by the Twizel Area School, but it is unable to provide funding at this time.

Phil Rive/Peter Bell

ACTION POINT

Car Parking at the Kindergarten:

The Mayor advised that the work on the parking area had been completed at no cost to the Kindergarten. The Kindergarten Committee had been asked to contribute by constructing edging.

Cr McDermott said the Committee was dealing directly with Whitestone Ltd and there were no plans to seal the area at this time.

III REPORTS:

1. FINANCIAL REPORT MARCH 2010:

This report from the Manager – Finance and Administration provided an update of the cost centres under the jurisdiction of the Twizel Community Board to March 2010.

Resolved that the report be received.

Peter Bell/John Bishop

2. EFFECT OF GENERAL RATE ON COMMUNITY BOARD RATES

The Manager – Finance and Administration explained the impact of the Council's general rate on the rates which had earlier been recommended by Twizel Community Board. He said the Council decided to offset interest from investments and dividends against the General Rate rather than the Works and Services Rates. This had the effect of reducing the General Rate but increasing the communities' Works and Services Rates correspondingly. All things being equal the effect should have been neutral, however due to the higher level of fixed-charge components in the communities' rates, this had resulted in an increase overall.

In the interest of keeping any rates increase to the level which had been originally recommended, the Community Board considered ways in which the effect of the Council's decisions might be mitigated.

Resolved that the budget for footpath re-seals and the sealing of Ruatnaiwha Road be reduced by \$30,000.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

3. COMMUNITY WORKERS MONTHLY REPORTS FOR JANUARY TO APRIL 2010:

These reports referred to the activities of the Community Worker for the months of January, February, March and April 2010.

Resolved that the report be received.

John Bishop/Phil Rive

4. REQUEST TO PURCHASE COUNCIL LAND ADJACENT TO TWIZEL RIVER, GLEN LYON ROAD, TWIZEL.

This report from the Manager – Finance And Administration was accompanied by a request from Grant Hocken to purchase a piece of land situated in Glen Lyon Road, Twizel.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the application to purchase a piece of land situated in Glen Lyon Road, Twizel, not be supported because of the Twizel River Reserve Group's Draft Management Plan for the development of the area.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

5. CHANGE OF HOURS – TWIZEL INFORMATION CENTRE:

This letter from the Supervisor of the Twizel Information Centre referred to discussion with the Community Board Chairman regarding a change to the

winter opening hours for the Twizel Information Centre to be operative from 3 May 2010.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the following change of winter opening hours for the Twizel Information Centre be approved:

Monday and Tuesday	9.00 am until 4.00 pm
Wednesday to Saturday	10.00 am until 4.00 pm
Sunday	12.00 pm until 3.00 pm.

Peter Bell/Dave Pullen

6. APPLICATION FOR RIGHT OF WAY ACROSS COUNCIL LAND – GRANT HOCKEN:

This report from the Manager – Planning and Regulations discussed the planning implications of Mackenzie Properties Ltd’s proposal to apply to Council for right-of-way access across Council owned land, zoned REC-P.

Cr Pullen said that the Asset Manager had advised that the right-of-way would be a sensible traffic management decision and that the Asset Manager had no problems with where it would exit on to Ostler Road.

The Manager – Planning and Regulations warned that freeing up access to the site could have a negative impact on the town centre.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That right-of-way access across Council owned land zoned REC P, for traffic management purposes, be supported.

Dave Pullen/John Bishop

Peter Bell voted against the motion.

7. ENFORCEMENT ACTION – RECKLESS USE OF TRAIL BIKES AND OTHER VEHICLES ON PUBLIC GREEN AREAS:

This report from the Community Facilities Manager referred to options for dealing with problems caused by the reckless use of trail bikes and other vehicles on Council administered land in Twizel.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received

2. That *No Trail Bikes* signs be erected to control the use of vehicles and trail bikes on reserves and that the situation be monitored for 12 months.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

7. CAMPING ON ROADWAYS AND RESERVES BYLAW:

This report from the Community Facilities Manager confirmed a proposal to control camping at Lake Ruataniwha Reserve.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Twizel Community Board recommends to the Council that the “Camping on Roadways and Reserves’ Bylaw be amended to prohibit:
 - non self contained camping on all roadways and reserves within the District, and
 - freedom camping at Lake Ruataniwha Reserve between 24 December and the second Monday in January.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

Cr Pullen voted against the motion.

8. TOWNSHIP CONTRACTS:

The Community Facilities Manager circulated notes from his meeting between Whitestone Contracting.

He suggested the Community Board meet with Whitestone Ltd within the following week to discuss the specifications for the contracts and levels of service. It was agreed that the meeting be held on Tuesday 18 May 2010 at 10.00 am.

IV GENERAL:

1. TWIZEL COMMUNITY RATING BOUNDARY:

In response to a question from the Chairman about the process for expanding the Twizel Community rating boundary, the Manager – Finance and Administration said the Community Board would need to make a recommendation to Council.

Cr McDermott warned that the implications of such a move could be huge, not only for the Community Board, but also for the District. He suggested a proposal could be modelled to provide information about what it would mean for Twizel ratepayers.

Cr Pullen said care would need to be taken in aligning the electoral boundary with the rating boundary because of ‘fish hooks’ in some areas, eg Hocken Lane, that the Community Board would not want to deal with.

Peter Bell referred to the issues raised by the deputation which had been received earlier in the meeting and his view that it would be sensible to have a rating boundary that the town could grow in to rather one that required changes to accommodate future subdivisions. He suggested it was not fair for ratepayers on one side of a boundary to be paying more than neighbours on the other side who had the same opportunities to enjoy the township facilities and services.

The Mayor advised the Community Board to submit proposals for a new rating boundary to staff to enable them to report on the implications.

V **VISITORS – RATEPAYERS AFFECTED BY THE CORRECTION OF AN ERROR IN THE TWIZEL VALUATION ROLL NUMBERING:**

The Chairman referred to the submissions which had been heard from the deputation received earlier in the meeting and asked for views.

The Manager – Finance and Administration said that while it was no fault of the affected ratepayers, they had never been paying the correct rates. He advised that setting a differential for them would have wider repercussions for both the Twizel Community and Rural ratepayers.

Cr Pullen suggested that a rates holiday of six months would give people time to arrange to pay the increased rates.

The Manager – Finance and Administration noted that the ratepayers were using the services. He acknowledged that some families might struggle with the increase - be they owners of properties valued at \$1m or \$.5m, the fact that payments might be due immediately or in six months time would be immaterial. He recommended that the rating system, warts and all, should speak in all circumstances, both for rises and falls in rates; however in the end it would be a decision the Council would have to make.

Cr McDermott suggested investigations be made into the option of phasing in the increased rate over a period of time, and charging the affected people the cost of capital.

The Manager – Finance and Administration advised that recommendations as to how the affected ratepayers might be assisted would need to be investigated in terms of the Rating Act. He referred to a similar situation regarding the Eversley Reserve Sewerage Upgrade which had triggered an amendment to the Long Term Council Community Plan. He said such matters needed to be dealt with by way of the rating system to provide security and the mechanism for them to flow on to new purchasers.

Resolved:

1. That the option of spreading the payment of the increased rates over one year be investigated on behalf of the ratepayers affected by the correction of the error in the Twizel valuation roll numbering.
2. That any interest incurred in the exercise be collected outside of the rating system.

Dave Pullen/Phil Rive

VI GENERAL:

1. LETTER TO THE EDITOR – TWIZEL UPDATE:

The Mayor referred to a letter signed by Community Board members which had been published in the Twizel Update dated 6 May 2010. He accepted that the Community Board members had not been contacted individually about the issues related to the error which had led to 111 assessments in the Twizel area being assigned incorrect property valuation assessment numbers. The Mayor said the statement regarding Plan Change 13 and negotiations about the Twizel sewerage ponds was wrong.

The Mayor suggested that when Board members needed clarification on planning issues or on any other matters, they should consult their Council representative on the Community Board.

The Mayor said the Council was negotiating to purchase land with John Lyons on behalf of the people of Twizel who would be paying the bills. There was no way the Plan Change 13 process could be connected with a deal to buy land for the Twizel sewerage ponds.

In response to the Chairman's comment that it was Mr Lyons who wanted a deal, the Mayor said that Mr Lyons had lodged an objection to Plan Change 13 to the Environment Court. The Manager – Planning and Regulations explained that Mr Lyons had made it clear to that there would be no deal on the Twizel sewerage ponds unless there was a deal on Plan Change 13. He confirmed that Mr Lyons had made that connection, however the Council maintained its position that the two issues had to remain separate.

The Mayor said the statement in the letter insinuated that the Council was letting the Twizel community down.

The Chairman reiterated Board Members' concerns that they felt they had been let down by not being given correct information with regard to their submission to Plan Change 13 and the subsequent process for objections.

Peter Bell said that the Board had ended up being cut out of the process. He suggested in future when community boards submitted to plan changes that they obtain legal advice because the issues were so complicated.

The Mayor said he took Mr Bell's point; however he reiterated that for their comfort Board Members needed to use their Council representative to find information or answers about issues and concerns.

Cr McDermott confirmed that the implication in the Board members' letter that the Council was frustrating negotiations to buy land for the Twizel sewerage ponds was misplaced. He noted that the price Mr Lyons wanted for the land had dropped dramatically from when the project had first been mooted a number of years previously. He said there was no benefit to be gained for the Twizel community in pursuing the purchase of the land in the meantime; the opportunity remained to delay spending ratepayers' money on it for about another five years.

2. TWIZEL RIVER RESERVE GROUP:

A report *Twizel River Reserve Draft Management Plan* was circulated to members. The report referred to the background and history of the area, its use and cultural significance, the establishment of the Twizel River Reserve Group, Executive Summary, Project Objectives, Financial and Legal Implications and Consultation Fulfilment.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Twizel Community Board supports the Twizel River Reserve Group by acknowledging them formally as the Twizel River Reserve Advisory Group.
3. That the Twizel Community Board supports the Twizel River Reserve Advisory Group in taking the draft concept plan out to community consultation.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

3. TWIZEL GREENWAYS STRATEGY:

The Community Facilities Manager advised that there at the meeting about the Twizel Greenways Strategy held earlier in the day a number of recommendations had been proposed.

Resolved:

1. That the price from Peter Hands of \$3,500 be approved subject to a formal contract detailing the extent of the work involved in the felling of trees on Glen Lyon Road from the State Highway back to the new plantings.
2. That a quotation be sought to grind 10 stumps through the greenways.
3. That a price be obtained from Whitestone Ltd to fell the trees on the State Highway frontage using an excavator.

4. That the Community Board proceed with the milling of the Douglas Fir logs in the Pony Club paddock as quoted.
5. The Twizel Greenways Strategy Group seek prices to clear up the stumps on the Pony Club paddock.
6. That the Community Board reimburses the cost of materials and other costs associated with the design works for the Twizel Events Centre.

Peter Bell/Phil Rive

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE
CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.18 PM**

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE: _____