

**Whareroa Guardians Community Trust Inc**  
**Minutes of 10th Annual General meeting**  
**7pm, 3rd April 2017 at the Paraparaumu Library**

**Present:** Theo Barsanti (Chair), Laura van Peer, Sandra Rowland, June Rowland, Gay & John Hay, Jan Nisbet, Kieran Brocklehurst, Shane Cave, Michael Keith, Glenda Robb, Jonathan Waterworth, Ian & Penny Redward, Bruce Bulmer, Tony & Helen Griffiths, Liffet Stewart, Thomas Porter, John Porter, Dawn Bush, Ruby Durrant-Bush, Jenny Rowan, Paul Callister, Michael Stace, Ann Evans, Jean Fleming.

**Apologies:** Don & Mary Beggs, Rachel Salive, Sue Blaikie, Jill Waterworth, William Beetham.

## **2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

*It was moved that these be accepted as a true and correct record (moved Jonathan Waterworth, seconded Helen Griffiths). Carried.*

## **3. Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

## **4. Chairperson's Annual Report**

Theo publicly thanked everyone who had contributed over the last 12 months and said there were 4300 hours put in as well as other hours not recorded. He also thanked Kieran for the LUV; Richard for mowing paths and tracks, Don & Mary and Penny & Ian for building tables and seats, weed eating, and removing fences; and Helen Griffiths for the bird count. Thanks were given also to Jan and Ann for the school programmes and Liffet for leading the weeding programme.

Theo reported that some work had been done to provide an orchard, driven by Liffet. Trees are ordered and will be delivered in the next couple of months.

## **Our Volunteers and Supporters**

The last 12 months has seen significant progress at Whareroa largely through the efforts of our supporters. Our volunteer group is as strong as it ever has been although the aging process means we do need to encourage more "young blood" to our circle of staunch supporters and workers. In the last 12 months our supporters and volunteers have clocked up 4300 hours of contribution to Whareroa. The Trustees take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts and contribution of our volunteers and supporters. Volunteer activities include: -

- Planting – 4500 in the ground this year in the Ramaroa Wetlands and above Kohekohe Bush
- Pest control numbers to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 since April 2013
  - Possum 642
  - Weasel 82
  - Stoat 28
  - Rats 1583
  - Others 1196
  - **Total 3531**
- Mowing of tracks and paths
- Noxious weed removal
- Fence removal from retired land
- Track building
- General maintenance of the retired land

## **Walking Tracks**

June 2016 heralded the opening of a significant new walking track – the Te Ara Ramaroa, attended by over 75 supporters and friends. Work is well underway to open the Catchment View track in the next few weeks that will take the route from the water intake up to Campbell's Mill Road. Transpower have been supportive by providing earthworks and new fencing/stile on Campbell's Mill Road. Our walking track activity has been strongly supported by the Walking Access Commission through funding for signage. On March 7<sup>th</sup> this year the Whareroa Guardians were presented with a Walking Access Champions award, presented by Louise Upton, Associate Minister for Primary Industries at Parliaments' West Foyer.

## **Our Stakeholders**

This year has seen the consolidation of our relationships with stakeholders we work with:

**DOC** – Rob Stone accepted a new role with DOC last year and we have established a strong relationship with Kieran Brocklehurst – Senior Ranger Operations (Recreation/Historic). DOC has also provided a Light Utility Vehicle for use on Whareroa. We meet with DOC on a regular basis. The Guardians also signed a management agreement with DOC last year that defines responsibilities for Farm maintenance and Health & Safety regulations.

**Beetham Pastoral** – Beetham Pastoral manage the farm lease for both Whareroa and QE Park. We have developed a positive working relationship with both the Farm Manager – Drew Brown and the Managing Director William Beetham. We meet with Drew and William on a regular basis.

**GWRC** – the Whareroa Guardians participate in a Whareroa Collaboration Group chaired by GWRC. The purpose of this group is to work together to develop biodiversity and recreational activities across Whareroa Farm, QE Park and Nga Uruora Kapiti Escarpment.

### **Next 12 Months:**

**Fencing and Planting** – funding has been received from the DOC CCF (Community Conservation Fund) to fence additional retired land in the Ramaroa Wetlands (stage 2). Planting activity this season will focus in this area.

**Review Farm** - the Farm Plan is a formal agreement between DOC and the Whareroa Guardians Community Trust. The review will ensure that the current plan is still relevant and achievable.

**Open Catchment View Track** – hopefully within the next few weeks

**Resolve Security Issues in the Car Park** – unfortunately there have been a series of thefts from vehicles in the car park. We will work with DOC and the Police to address this problem.

*It was moved that the Chairperson's annual report be accepted (moved Bruce Bulmer, seconded Jan Nisbet). Carried.*

Shane reported that the security cameras in the shed are working and Suzie has given a key to DoC's shed for a security expert to look at how they can extend security surveillance in the parking areas.

## **5. Treasurer's Annual Report**

Michael Keith presented what is now called a Performance Report (attached) and explained that Guardians are just a small operation and there are very few complications.

*It was moved that the Treasurer's Performance Report as circulated be accepted (moved Ann Evans, seconded June Rowland). Carried.*

## **6. Report from DoC**

Kieran Brocklehurst reported that maintenance people are still doing work on the farm which has one of the region's most active voluntary groups; the safety plans and contracts are all good; the tray for the LUV has been bought and is on its way; there is a need to keep working through the safety and health issues, and Jack Mace, Regional Operations Manager, is very supportive of what the Guardians do. He said regarding pine trees in the Ramaroa block each one would take a couple of days work and would cost \$20,000 to \$30,000 so it would be better to find another way around them. Asked about the two culverts on the main farm race Kieran said the issue is in the capital process. Also DoC is aware of the risk of the bridge below the toilets at the hub being washed away in a flood situation.

Ann said gorse is gradually encroaching on the downhill and connector tracks and Kieran agreed DoC would look at that.

## **8. Election of Trustees**

Laura van Peer advised she would be retiring from the Trust as from after the AGM.

June Rowland said Laura had been diligently helping with morning tea and cooking sausages ever since the Guardians started planting and in the early days would be sitting on a box in a tin shed boiling water and cooking sausages on a primus.

Laura was sincerely thanked for turning up for all those years and for her home-made chutney to accompany the sausages. She is not retiring from the volunteer group so more chutney to come!

It was noted that three trustees (Sue Blaikie, Liffet Stewart and Michael Keith) terms were due to expire but each had agreed to stand again and were re-elected unopposed.

Ian Redward was nominated by Penny Redward and was elected as a new Trustee.

## 8. Other Business

(a) **Bird Counts** – Ian asked for a brief report on the bird counts and Helen said nothing had changed very much over the last year. It is a case of having to wait another ten years until the re-afforestation has taken shape when things will be more noticeable. There are more signs of Tui, Kereru and Bellbirds and a Falcon has been seen a couple of times only.

(b) **Congratulations** – Jenny Rowan congratulated the Chairman and the committee and said the Trust needs to be acknowledged and given due thanks for their very serious work. In the Wellington conservation region Guardians are at the top of the heap. Jenny also offered congratulations on the Walking Access Commission Award and said two of the six awarded came into the Kapiti area. She also offered congratulations on the \$15,000 awarded out of a very limited DoC funding source and said Whareroa is right up there for what is being achieved and how clear the thinking is on what is needed. It is appreciated that younger people like Kieran and Jack Mace are coming into the area with new energy and under the new culture of DoC. They cannot function adequately without the 4000 odd voluntary hours worked in this reserve and similarly elsewhere. Jenny said there is integrity and mana now with the Whareroa Guardians that allows them to participate in wider conversations. People who know what they are talking about are really needed and Theo is one of those as well as a Trustee.

(c) **Thanks** – Bruce Bulmer said that Dick Caldwell has made a brand new table and is always at planting and working bee days. He wished to acknowledge him again for the great work he does.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

After a supper break Ann introduced leaders from the **Kapiti Biodiversity Group** who outlined the various stages their projects were at.

Glenda Robb said it was the beginning of the group's third year and another accountability report had been produced. She spoke about aspirational goals and how to bring science research and the community together, to work through some of the basic common ground events and to make links between the groups.

Sue Blaikie said 5 minute bird counts had been done every month at 14 different sites. All the information is being collated into graphics so will be presented in a more visual way. It will be 10 years before any significant difference could be potentially observed. A survey had produced 15 households that had penguins on their property. Most people enjoyed having them and wanted to continue to do so. It is hoped to form a penguin group and a penguin expert from Massey is very keen to establish some new colonies on the Coast. They are very vulnerable to dogs and DoC and KCDC have been approached regarding signage in Ames Street for their protection.

Steven Whittle spoke about plants in the dunes and said an initial survey found one patch of *Coprosma Acerosa*. Those plants have been protected and there are now 500 at various stages. The original plants are vulnerable to storms and have been difficult to propagate so will be planted further back on the dunes to try and keep the population alive. *C. Acerosa* is good lizard food. Weed growth had been prolific this year.

Gay Hay said she had been working with Eco Gecko and with young children. Monitoring was started in QE Park and Whareroa in 2016 but all that was found was one Northern Grassland Skink. Farming and the Marines have impacted on the environment. This year two sites were set up at the end of QE Park and five sites at Whareroa Farm and there were a few lizards present.

It was noted that trappers had been exploring different technologies but it was too early to tell if a difference had been made to bird populations.

Jan Nisbet said she had sent a report to the Ministry for the Environment which explained where the weta houses are placed in Whareroa, QE Park and the escarpment. She said more questions had been raised than answers and more base data is needed. Jan was trying to get some college students involved who could look at it as a project.

Jean Fleming spoke about a survey questioning volunteers about motivation: what do they like and what are barriers, and the benefits of being a volunteer. She also described trial planting projects in QEP comparing different tree species for stream cover.

Liffet thanked the presenters for their commitment and noted how important "citizen science" is in expanding knowledge in local environments.