

Minutes of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Operational Liaison Group Annual Meeting held in Bay of Plenty Regional Council corner Fenton and Pukaki Streets, Rotorua, on Monday 25th July 2022 commencing at 10:00 am

Chair: Jim Stanton

Present: Jim Stanton (Chair) Mary Stanton (Ngāti Pikiao and Okawa Bay Resident), Andy Bruere (BOPRC), Graeme O'Rourke (BOPRC), Michael Gill (Former Okawa Bay Resident), Hilary Prior (Lake Rotoiti Community Association, Alesha Watkins (RLC), Roland Kingi (Ngāti Pikiao) Sam Sutton (Rotorua Rafting) Matt Pearson (RLC), Justine Randell (Lakes operations BOPRC)

Apologies: Joe Tahana (Ngāti Pikiao), Matt Osbourne (Fishing and Game), Richard Lyons, Phill Thomass (Chair Rotorua Lakes Community board)

1 Karakia

Rawiri Bhana Opened the meeting with a Karakia at 10:07am

2 Introductions and Welcome

Jim Stanton (JS) opened the meeting

3 Minutes from Previous meeting and matters arising

Michael Gill (MG) requested an alteration to the minutes (Page 2) the new gauge on Lake Rotorua weir, is terrific that is incorrect, it should read lake gauges on the new telemetry BOPRC Data Portal is terrific.

JS raises that there is an item on the minutes for herbicide maintenance, with the possibility of using steam, he asks GO if he found anything out about this

GO informed no further progress here until we have the hearing

CARRIED

4 Election of Chairperson

JS has been elected chair for 3 years. The chair can reside for up to 5 years and he expressed is available for re-election this year 2022 but wishes to vacate position next year. He mentions that in past years there has been a deputy chair from the Kaitiaki group however Kaitiaki group members are ineligible in accordance with the Terms of reference which do not call for a Deputy Chair.

AB nominates JS as chair

HP Seconds JS as chair

JS suggests someone from the community would be best for the nominations, also a good background about the lake levels.

SS suggests that maybe some more education in this area would be helpful

AB closed the election.

CARRIED

5 Consent Holder Annual Report on Okere Gates (RC65979) and Ohau Weir (RC65980) – July 2022

GO Presented his report, the community focus is on the lake level management, it is becoming volatile with the weather. There is a fine line between the achievable lake level and a desirable ranges.

Today's presentation if an executive summary of the lake level, and is a requirement of the consent, performance, also any issues arising of the structures. GO has an apology for not having the AGM sooner, a result of personal issues.

Penny McCormack entered 10:24am

AB announced Penny's arrival and who she is, she will slowly be taking over GO, this will be a 2–3-year period.

JS welcomed Penny.

AB mentioned that there will be a meeting tomorrow with AB, PM and GO to discuss the handover. AB apologised for PM not getting a meeting invite.

Presentation started GO went over the lay of the land, Lake Rotorua 80 sq. of lake is only 10m deep, GO showed a map, Lake Rotoiti around 33 sq. metres, and is much deeper at around 30 metres deep and they are about the same body of water. Metservice warnings are giving out to certain groups ahead of time.

Elevated levels around the Rotorua, recently he acknowledges this, there are Ohau stoplogs that sit and high flows, we simply pull the stoplogs and lower Lake Rotorua.

The focus would be water quality. Lake level comes second. The importance being here that Lake Rotorua and Lake Rotoiti are not mixing (reflux)

MG showed GO a printout of his graph, shows the two flow levels

GO will follow up with the flows later in the presentation.

GO shared the rating curve, lake level and gives a plus and minus is an indication of the flow that we need, it gives us a number, lake level and it's within a range. Has a margin of error of plus or minus 8%

MS mentioned numbers are confusing for our own people and means nothing, she usually looks visually to see if there is any flooding.

GO points out where the gauges are located. He visually checks the staff gauges every month to see if they align with the records, he also checks for erosion, corrosion and vandalism and does a camera check.

AB consent changes we had a meeting and progressed with a lake draw down, Lake Rotoiti and the trial, in a resource consent to 100mm under the normal operating range, for a period of about a month 5-10% of the operating year, have been doing this now for 12 years. has been doing this faster flow to create in Ōhau Channel see if we can create scour, he acknowledged that Ngāti Pikiao prefer a lower level, beaches are improved, and cultural sites can be observed, he mentions that there is a cultural management plan and BOPRC to address in the consent, and has worked closely with Ngāti Pikiao. In 1982 control gates were installed and it has changed the lake level, it prevented very high levels, stopping some flooding and very low levels. He acknowledges that the lower lake level is a concern to the community. Having the control gates open helps with the input and output, will be going ahead when lowering the level it is important that this is done as slowly as possible.

Roland Kingi (Ngāti Pikiao) enters the room 10.46

JS introduces Roland Kingi (Ngāti Pikiao)

GO gets alarms to his phone, and he is being pragmatic about his approach, and he is always watching lake levels trying to keep them in the desirable range. He mentioned that he has already had communication with MP from Rotorua Lakes last week in regards to come of the issues that have been coming though with the high lake levels at the moment, such as erosion, stormwater issues.

MP- Lake levels in Lake Rotorua in august the Lake was high and outlets have been blocked, he touched base with BOPRC regulatory team about the issues here. He understands that the weather is a contributor, and this winter has had high rainfall. There has been some complains made to RLC with some of the issues caused by blockages, mainly sand that is getting through into stormwater causing blockages. Two weeks ago there was concerning issues with flooding, similarly to the 2018 floods.

JS agrees here with the issues, noting the outflows here have been high, suggesting that there maybe some sort of floodgate or filter system to stop the sand getting into the stormwater

MP has acknowledged that there is not really an easy solution, as a flood gate with sand on it, is impossible to move.

GO mentions that Ngongotaha has had a flood. BOPRC are currently reviewing this flood scheme.

AB reminds others that there will be a meeting tomorrow, to discuss this. Probably a good idea to have better communication but we are all mercy to the weather. They will look at how high the lake has been and how to manage this. Rotorua weir has been upgraded. He acknowledged that some areas are low lying and managing the lake levels with this can be difficult at times, and communication is the key here.

SS left the room 11.01

AB discussed that BOPRC develops plans, and they are not sustainable over time and thinks that there can be better communication.

GO goes back to the graph, going through his numbers when the trigger goes, we make the call and get a 100 ton crane to get the reach.

GO Fire and emergency can manually control the gates and they have a key, for emergencies so if GO is not available. When we open the gates 10 cumecs per hour and can go up to 36

cumecs when closing the gates at about 5 cumecs per hour, and this can take up to 2-3 hours, it needs to be this slow for the lake banks, so it does not create any erosion.

GO mentions that rafting has had a lot of available days, the past 3 years have been good.

SS enters the meeting 11.22

Last on the conditions list, need to only supply 26 cumecs anything above that is considered dangerous for rafting, it is maritime law and 13 cumecs is within the commercial range. Communication is key and giving the rafters the heads up about the forecast so they can cancel bookings in advance, we consider their needs and their environment.

SS confirm that adventure health and safety not maritime he confirmed, he says that 26.7 is the highest they go, this is reflected in their safe operating procedures.

MG wants changes for the notice to the rafters, would like an approximate to be added after the cumecs amount, he wanted some calcification here about the numbers.

GO confirmed here that the gages are not absolute, and it's a range of 16%

JS clarified the misconception here, that the maritime and health and safety do not use the numbers here

GO advises that he punches 500 but sometimes it comes out at 500.18 the big gates are held by steel ropes they can become bouncy and not completely accurate

MG raises concerns that it could be a legal issue, he would like the approximate after the number to the rafters notice.

GO confirms that there is auditing on this matter and in the past, we cannot rely on the sensors

SS agrees with the addition of approximate to be added to the notice

GO as long as the redline is above the blue line, he pointed out the blips on the graph and maybe an operation error sometimes and perhaps a delayed response, when reflux occurs, we get these notices on our phones

Operational no issues with the stoplogs post our Ohau last installed 17 October, Rotorua water harsh on steel and when removed these were extremely corroded

Both lakes were very low levels but now high in the last month, maintaining outflows with lower Rotoiti levels during dry months

Consultation was last year 5 August, with Kaitiaki groups there has been no communication since with Joe or Hohepa

JS asked if anyone has approached the Kaitiaki groups or did we approach them

ACTION: Touch base with Kaitiaki group to see if the consultation here will be left with Regional Council

JS Ōhau ki Rotoiti Kaitiaki group set up with Regional Council with any issues in a MOU signed in 2016. No significant changes over the past year

RK confirms there is a new group formed, but not official and that Joe Tahana is still the lead

GO 17 gauges are established in the delta, and 8 in the wet land. The shape of the channel has changed over time, very little change here. High lake levels at Tamatea St around Phill Thomass's place, a permanent staff gauge there. Wet land level probably 400 today for instance, wanted to clean the drain, it's very congested at the moment, DOC are very protective about the Mire or wetland, and the houses in this area have a high water table these days.

GO touches on any concerns or complaints, there has been some phone calls, and a formal complaint laid in the past 10 years and held under the two consents

MP wants more information about the formal complaint process, he has had noncompliance his RLC consent, and sometimes the lake level as effects on RLC assets

GO its weather dependant, and 140 is our consented level

JS would like to know if there was any response back from compliance, he asked GO

AB mentioned that there may be an issue, will clarify at tomorrow's meeting about levels, and we may be able to manage this better

MP would like better communication with RLC

SS left the room 11:38am

GO has stated that PM will be helping with next year's report, and he will be onboard for at least the next 3 years

AB Justine has operated the lake karaka, projects are slowly shifting over to the Rotorua Regional Council and will get more staff on board with the management of this

JS thanked GO for his years in service and due diligence on the lake levels, and encourages that PM will also do a good job here

AB to update on the resource consent application and the only change here is the lower lake level trial and consenting Getty owners, lakeside properties and with the hearing on September 6-7 we will put this forward, he also mentioned the names of the two commissioners, and a Māori cultural commissioner

JS The application has been processing for past 3-4 years. The Notification details in August 2021 have led to considerable community opposition regarding the parameters for lowering the lake and holding at proposed level for observation. LRCA has negotiated with BOPRC to enhance the proposed conditions to better meet community expectations if the Application is approved.

AB – he thanks JS for working with the community association. He raised questions on what are the issues with refilling the lake, when going back and looking at the data, and if there are at least two big rainfalls and the lake will be full again

SS mentions that globally there are some major weather events, therefore the lake level is higher, and with more rainfall due we need to take this into consideration

JS there has been concerns over the lake level. He believes that the outflow and inflow levels are managed correctly and feels that there needs to be more understanding by boaters on the lake, but any lowering of the lake level should be done after easter

AB confirms that the council takes rain levels into consideration, and we need to work our way through these issues

GO mentions that he is also a flood manager, explains that the Matahina dam is with trust power, mentions the rain situation weather event at the moment, the whole weather pattern is challenging and even two days out it can change

JS confirms that large rainfall is sometimes hard to predict at times

6 General Business

JS would like to look at the list of attendees, needs to be a representation of the community, are these people still current and should be represented at the next meeting, or does it not matter should the invite just go out anyway, he feels that it is too large

ACTION: MA and AB to revise the list when possible

JS BOPRC is to put out a report annually, he suggests that an annual meeting still go ahead to raise any issues and any other matters and look to have this around June 2023

7 Closer/Poroporoaki

Roland Kingi closed the meeting with a karakia

Meeting ended: 11:30am

Next meeting: June 2023