

Meeting Minutes Public Meeting	
<i>Date:</i>	4 October 2014
<i>Purpose:</i>	Public Meeting to obtain information for a Waste Water Scheme at Lake Rotoehu



<i>Venue:</i>	Otautu Bay, Lake Rotoehu
<i>Chair:</i>	Glenn Snelgrove, Deputy Chair of the Lake Rotoma/Lake Rotoehu Ratepayers Association
<i>Attendees:</i>	I McLean ,Chair, Rotoma/Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme Project Steering Group – RRSSPC L Meharry and P Thomass, Rotorua Lakes Community Board T Long, Bay of Plenty Regional Council <u>In Attendance:</u> A Bell, G Manzano and I Brell, Rotorua District Council

1. Opening

Glenn Snelgrove welcomed everyone present, and the meeting was opened with a karakia.

Mr Snelgrove explained that Lake Rotoiti and Lake Rotoma communities had been going through a process of looking at waste water solutions. A number of residents at Lake Rotoehu had indicated if there was an option available to them to have a reticulated system established in their community, could they have more information. Mr Snelgrove said that this meeting was an opportunity to engage with the community and look at options going forward.

Mr Snelgrove introduced the team who would be speaking at the meeting – Ian McClean, Chair of the Rotoma/Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme Project Steering Group; Terry Long – Consultant, Bay of Plenty Regional Council; Andy Bell and Greg Manzano – Engineers, Rotorua District Council; Leo Meharry and Phil Thomass – members of the Lakes Community Board.

Mr Snelgrove said a few years ago the Rotorua District Council we're looking at water quality and waste water solutions. A number of groups were formed at Rotoma to look at a waste water scheme. The community of Lake Rotoehu was also to be included. The biggest driver at the time were subsidies from central government and the regional council towards funding the scheme – instead of costing \$25000.00 per property the subsidy would of reduced the cost to about \$11000.00 per property. However there was a time limit imposed to take advantage of the subsidies. The proposed options were looked at and it was decided to have a reticulated scheme for Rotoma and Rotoehu – reticulated together. However the disposal field was to be placed very close to Lake Rotoma – and RDC received objections from the residents and local iwi – on cultural grounds - and the case went to the Environmental Court, who subsequently declined the consent. The Environmental Court asked the local community to reconsider what they wanted to do. Approximately two years ago RDC began the process again with a high level of community engagement. As part of this new round of engagement, the affected communities could elect to exclude themselves from this process. There was a series of votes at Lake Rotoehu, and the community elected not to participate in the process going forward.

The Rotorua District Council continued the engagement process with the communities of Rotoma and Rotoiti – looking at what the options are. This process needed to be completed by the end of September 2014 as this was when the time available to claim the subsidies would expire. However the government has since granted an extension of six months – to the end of February 2015, in which to claim the subsidies.

Ian McLean, Chair RRSSPC, explained that the project committee has representatives' from iwi, community groups' and from local authorities. There has been public consultation where seven different options have been presented and feedback from the communities received. There has been four general meetings and four iwi meetings. To date 220 responses have been received from about 700 households and 88% favour an option of piping back to the Rotorua Waste Water Treatment Plant. The Technical Advisory Group, which provided technical support, short listed the options. The Steering Committee further narrowed the options to:

- Option 1. Pipe back to Rotorua
- Option 2. Pipe to a single local treatment plant

And in both cases – in places where the above cannot be used:

- Option 5a. An organic Biolytix tank with discharge to a local carbon field to remove nitrogen and then to land disposal fields.

Local iwi took the initiative to apply to the Ministry of Health to extend the subsidy deadline – which was granted and extended to 20 February 2015. The Ministry of Health stated that it should not be assumed that there will be any further time extensions. The MOH subsidy for Rotoma is \$4.46 million. There are other subsidies from BOPRC, RDC and the Ministry for the Environment. All the subsidies total approximately \$18 million. An application is currently with BOPRC for a further \$4 million. This will need to be considered as part of the Regional Council's long term plan and with other proposals.

Ngati Pikiāo is currently engaged in assessing cultural issues. Most of the assessment to date has been on technical and economic issues. On the cultural issues, the RRSSPC will be listening to their iwi representatives from Ngati Pikiāo and Ngati Makino. A final decision will be made once all the information has been considered.

Mr McLean explained that with regards to Lake Rotoehu, the RRSSPC respected the decision that the community had been made and therefore the committee decided to take no further action to include Otautau Bay and Kennedy Bay. However individual members of the committee expressed their view that the Rotoehu residents would be welcome if they wanted to be included – under the principle of tātau tātau – we together. Any decision on Rotoehu will not affect the choices or timings for Rotoma and Rotoiti. These two communities must continue with the process. Rotoehu will need to be considered separately.

To conclude, Mr McLean said a recommendation will be made to RDC, by mid-November, as under RMA terms what the preferred option will be.

Terry Long, BOPRC, explained about the brochure that residents would have recently received from the Regional Council. The OSET plan, since 1996, has had some dates that by which onsite waste water systems would lose their permitted activity status. At a certain date, onsite systems will have to connect to a reticulated scheme; upgraded to an aerated waste water system with nutrient removing capabilities; or obtain a consent for another type of system.

Mr Long said that there are 2 key dates. By 1 December 2014, if properties are within 200 metres, of any lake, you must connect, upgrade, or obtain a consent for your existing system.

There are 5 lakes which have been identified as being of a priority with reference to lake quality – Lake Rotoehu being one of them.

Mr Long said that there are 5 approved aerated systems listed on the Regional Council's website and the average cost is approximately \$16500.00. There is also an option for obtaining a consent for an existing system. It would need to meet minimum standards, which are based on the 1982 standards of compliance.

The Regional Council will review the OSET plan in 2016 and there may be some changes.

Greg Manzano, RDC, said that some initial work was completed in the first round of the project – which at the time included Rotoehu. There are two parts to a community sewerage scheme – the collection system, a system which collects and transfers the waste, from the individual properties, to a community mainline and then the treatment and disposal part. There are two options for collecting the waste – the grinder pump system. Each individual property would have a small pump which collects the household waste and then transfers it to a community collection system. That waste is then pumped into a treatment and disposal system. This is similar to what has been installed at Lake Okareka and Okere Falls. The other option is the conventional gravity system. The waste from each property will be connected by a gravity system. Mr Manzano said that when the initial work was completed it was discovered that this system would very difficult to implement for the residents of Kennedy Bay and Otatau Bay.

The original proposal for the community saw the implementation of the grinder pump system. Should the community decide to proceed with a sewerage scheme the option of a localised treatment plant could be investigated or the option of connecting to the Rotoma/Rotoiti scheme could also be explored.

Mr Snelgrove said that today's public meeting was in response to the community requesting to be engaged with the Council to discuss options for a waste water scheme. RDC were not there to impose a scheme. The Regional Council were there to outline the issues of "stay as you are" on the OSET scheme and the implications. The issue of lake quality was stressed – for future generations.

2. Questions and comments from attendees

- Q Tony Lipanovic wanted to know about the social impact on the community.
- A Andy Bell –at this point in time the subsidies available from the MOH and MFE are not available for Rotoehu. Further research will need to be undertaken on the availability of government subsidies.
- Q Lack of evidence to the community about the impact of septic tanks to Lake Rotoehu and can the Regional Council remove or change the permitted use activity status.
- A Terry Long – the nutrient impact from septic tanks is minute – that is not the issue at Lake Rotoehu. There is a need to have modern, up to date, effective waste water systems for public and environmental health reasons. What has been found is that inadequate systems were installed (c1950); people habits and expectations have increased when visiting the lake – and waste water systems have failed. This represents a hazard to the community. BOPRC is working across the district to identify failing waste water systems to improve lake water quality. There are approximately 25% of systems in the Rotoehu community that do not meet a minimum standard. Under the Resource Management Act (RMA) the Regional Council are given the authority to implement change where there are inadequate systems. The Regional Council have the authority to change the existing use rights.
- Q Is the Rotorua Waste Water Treatment Plant operating over its capacity.
- A Andy Bell – the WWTP is not over its capacity. It has the hydraulic capacity. It is the nitrogen removal which is difficult to comply with – within the treatment plant and the land disposal system. The nutrient removal is down so close in tolerances to what is physically possible to do, that it is difficult to get there. The plant is one of the best in New Zealand for removing nutrients – but the tolerances in our consent from the Regional Council are so constricted, it is very difficult to achieve. The plant has been compliant for the past 12 months.

- Q How can information from RDC and BOPRC be better disseminated to the public.
- A Andy Bell said that they would take that on board. A stakeholder engagement group was formed about 8 months ago, with representatives from the Rotoma/Rotoiti area in which to channel information to the communities. However Council would look at this process and improve going forward.
- Q Why is the BOPRC continuing with OSET as a backup when the Ministry of Health does not recommend it.
- A Terry Long said that Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service view was that all communities should be on reticulated waste water. However the Regional Council accept that not every community is able or willing to have a reticulated scheme. There has to be a backup – OSET.
- Q What do we need to do – as a community.
- A Terry Long – the plan cannot be changed – there are deadlines. The Council understand that but they will be flexible in the way in which they communicate and the way in which they expect compliance.
- Iwi is very much involved in keeping the lake clean and trying to obtain subsidies for Rotoehu. They want the best outcomes for the 3 communities – Rotoma/ Rotoiti/Rotoehu.
- Q There is uncertainty around the process – the changing views of the community. Two years ago the Rotoehu Community voted not to be in the scheme and now some appear to have changed their minds.
- A Ian McLean said that from the consultation hui that had been held, some of the Rotoehu residents had wanted the opportunity to reopen the waste water scheme for their area.
- Q What are the nutrient mitigation payments.
- A Terry Long said that some residents said that they did not want to be compelled to get an aerated system. Mr Long said that he supported that. Where there is a holiday home which is used intensively for 6 to 8 weeks – it makes sense to provide an alternative. This would see the Regional Council imposing a financial charge on a property with a consented septic tank which discharges nutrients. It is in the Council's plan but will not be taken up for 2 years. Mr Long gave an example that a 3 bedroom home with a septic tank will have a one off cost of about \$4000.00. These fees would be used to create floating wetlands or riparian plantings.
- Q What are the capital and operating costs.
- A Glenn Snelgrove said that there is a requirement under the Local Government Act that if your house boundary is 60 metres from a reticulated scheme you must connect. As Rotoehu is not included in the scheme there are no calculated costs but the capital cost for Rotoma is \$14950.00 inc.gst and an annual cost of \$412.00 inc gst – this is the same fee for all properties lake or city. The capital cost can be added to your rates – at about \$1200.00 inc gst per annum.
- Q Are you going to do a survey of the preferred waste water system that Rotoehu residents want.
- A Andy Bell said that he would like to get an indication from today's meeting of the interest in a scheme. If there was a positive response Council would research the options and come back to the community with the results – that would be the first stage.
- There are 2 issues – affordability –are subsidies going to apply to Rotoehu. There are septic tanks and reticulated systems. What are our options – but we need to move forward. We need a community view.
- Q Is there going to be a vote taken.
- A Glenn Snelgrove said that two years ago the community voted not to be involved in a scheme. With the Rotoma/Rotoiti scheme now in process some of the Rotoehu residents wanted to revisit the original proposal which included their community – in the consultation process. Mr Snelgrove said he would ask those present if they wanted the Council to look at options, feasibilities, give a broad understanding of costs and look at subsidies and then give feedback/information and engage with the community.
- Q Can we look at gravity fed system.
- A Yes the Council will look at this.

- Q What happens if a new system is installed and you already have a compliant and consented eco-friendly OSET model.
- A Glenn Snelgrove said that he has compliant on site treatment model but on his consent it says that if a reticulated scheme goes through you must connect.
- Q From the 1 December 2014 residents need to start looking at the BOPRC OSET model. If the community decides to enter into consultation with RDC over a proposed waste water scheme does that stop the Regional Council from implementing the OSET plan.
- A Glenn Snelgrove said that if there is meaningful dialogue with the RDC and the community is looking at a reticulated scheme or a variation then the Regional Council will not enforce OSET until the end of those discussions. For example with the lapsed consents at Lake Rotoma, but because the community is engaged in earnest discussions around reticulation, the BOPRC is not enforcing its process around expired consents.
- Q What is the cost of a resource consent .
- A Terry Long explained that if you choose to have an aerated waste water system you will need to apply to the RDC for a building consent - you do not need a resource consent. If you want a different type of system you will need to apply for a resource consent. There is a deposit of \$776.00 with a final bill at the end totalling about \$1000.00 – this includes the deposit. The processing time is 20 working days. There might be some upgrading needed. There are some guidelines that enshrine the 1982 standard. Therefore if it was compliant then – you should get a consent – for \$1000.00. However there are about 25% of the Lake Rotoehu properties that do not meet that standard. A site and soil evaluation would need to be done – looking at the areas available for disposal. Depth to ground water would need to be investigated. For some properties there might be a great deal of work to be done to get a consent.
- Q What happens if residents vote to not consider options from the RDC and they have noncompliant systems on their properties.
- A Terry Long explained that there are communications to go out about the timeframes and the BOPRC expect to engage with the communities within the next 6 months. Depending on the solution determined there might more time – and depending on the complexity of the individual situation. There are 5 lake catchments so the communications will be broken down to manageable numbers.
- Q What are the consequences if you do not upgrade, or get a consent.
- A Terry Long said that there will have to be some enforcement – but there are a lot of steps to get there.
- Q How long does the consent last for.
- A 10 years - but the Regional Council can impose a 2 year consent if there is an inadequate system. The higher the risk the shorter the consent term.
- There are four properties that have aerated systems – so they do not need to do anything as they are a permitted activity. However if there is a reticulated system you must connect. Consent for a post 1982 compliant system that has been well maintained and is structurally sound - \$1000.00. A drain layer may need to examine the tank – which could cost approximately \$1000.00
- Q There was a subsidy available from MOH for Lake Rotoehu.
- A Glenn Snelgrove there was never a subsidy available for Lake Rotoehu. It was the vote of the Rotoma community to share their subsidy with Rotoehu.
- Ian McLean said it is not impossible that there will be no subsidies, however there has to be an indication that there will be a scheme so the MOH can be advised.
- Q that if the vote indicates to go ahead with investigation into the potential of a scheme, that the “yes” is not binding going forward.
- A Glenn Snelgrove said that it would not be binding and the statement asking those present to vote would be worded appropriately.
- The minutes of the meeting will be sent to the residents.

Chair Glen Snelgrove asked those present to vote that the community of Rotoehu ask the Rotorua District Council to look at options for a reticulation waste water schemes – including the gravity option – including costings and funding for further consultation with this community. Glen Snelgrove asked for a show of hands.

Results – Yes – 44

No - 3

Abstaining - 3

3. Conclusion

Mr Snelgrove thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting Closed at 2.45
