#### SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### **20 FEBRUARY 2013**

#### **AGENDA ITEM E1**

#### REPORT FROM HER WORSHIP THE MAYOR

## **Purpose of Report**

To update Council on activities and issues which have arisen since my last report to Council.

#### Recommendations

Her Worship the Mayor recommends that Council:

1. Receive the information.

### 1. Sandy Bay

Doug Harris and Sara Murphy have advised that they wish to lease Sandy Bay to Council rather than sell the land at this stage. A separate paper is included in matters for decision.

#### 2. 100 Year WWI Commemorations 2014-2018

Nothing further to report at this stage. Next meeting 12 February.

#### 3. Governance

The Wairarapa Governance Working Party continues to take up a great deal of time and energy. It continued to meet through the Christmas/New Year period. We have also continued to meet with the public and arranged groups such as Federated Farmers and Chamber of Commerce.

## 4. Featherston Supermarket

I met with Bernard Tehan and Alan Pollard and they assured me that Trust House was committed to developing the Featherston supermarket site. It would be a different style to that originally proposed as the supermarket 'world' had changed with the opening of Fresh Choice in Greytown.

# 5. Relay for Life

SWDC has a team entered in Relay for Life.

# 6. Other Representation and Meetings Attended

Date	Meeting/Engagement	Date	Meeting/Engagement
28/12/12	Governance WP	30/01/13	Featherston Community Board
08/01/13	Governance WP	30/01/13	Sport Wellington
15/01/13	Governance WP	30/01/13	Greytown Community Board
16/01/13	Federated Farmers	30/01/13	Bruce Pepperall Civil Defence
17/01/13	Pirinoa Public Meeting	03/02/13	Woodside Rail Trail opening
18/01/13	Funeral	10/02/13	Iwi Meeting
19/01/13	Wings Over Wairarapa	11/02/13	Governance Hutt City/Upper Hutt
22/01/13	Western Working Party	12/02/13	Governance WP
22/01/13	Governance WP	13/02/13	National Council Conference Committee
22/01/13	Relay For Life	13/02/13	WRS
23/01/13	Councillor briefing on governance	13/02/13	RTC
25/01/13	Trust House	13/02/13	Martinborough Lions
28/01/13	Martinborough Community Board	14/02/13	Citizenship Ceremony
29/01/13	Governance WP	15/02/13	Farewell lunch

# 7. Correspondence

Date	Inwards Correspondence	
12/12/12	From Dr James Veitch, The Wairarapa Union District Council/The Presbytery of the Wairarapa to Mayor Adrienne Staples	
7/12/12	From Jill Moon to the Mayor and Councillors	
6/12/12	From Guy McGregor, Taharoa Farming Ltd to Mark Allingham	
17/12/12	From Kenneth Hindson to Mayor Adrienne Staples	
Date	Outwards Correspondence	
1/2/13	From Mayor Adrienne Staples to James Veitch	
19/12/12	From Mayor Adrienne Staples to Jill Moon	
19/12/12	From Mayor Adrienne Staples to Guy McGregor	
19/12/12	From Mayor Adrienne Staples to Kenneth Hindson	

# 8. Appendix

Appendix 1 – Inwards and Outwards Correspondence

Prepared By: Her Worship the Mayor, Adrienne Staples

# **Appendix 1 – Inwards and Outwards Correspondence**

# THE WAIRARAPA UNION DISTRICT COUNCIL THE PRESBYTERY OF THE WAIRARAPA

Chair: Dr James (Jim) Veitch 181 Paierau Road, Masterton.

12 December 2012

The Mayor

South Wairarapa District Council

19 Kitchener Street

MARTINBOROUGH



Secretary: Margaret Griffiths

Dear Adrienne,

#### Re The Featherston Japanese Prisoner of War Camp

I wish to follow up a recent conversation in which I raised with you the question of the commemoration next year of the 1943 incident at the camp in which forty eight Japanese prisoners died and seventy four were wounded with one New Zealand casualty and I think six wounded in a camp of around eight hundred.

As you will be well aware, next year will be the seventieth anniversary of the incident and we in the Presbytery-UDC and in the Martinborough parish are wondering what special commemoration might be possible.

As I mentioned at the time we talked about the incident, there is now a better understanding of what happened and why, and perhaps the time has arrived when the official view of the incident can be viewed in a fresh light and perhaps the Government invited to express public regret on behalf of the people of New Zealand for our part in the incident.

The Japanese Government did not accept at the time the official New Zealand view of the incident. The two versions are perfectly understandable with the benefit of hindsight. But times have changed and seventy years has now passed and the commemoration next year gives us all an opportunity to look back and perhaps for the New Zealand Government to offer the apologies of our people to the Japanese Government

In the church we are very aware that local feelings have prevented anything like an expression of regret or an apology to be given in the past but it is our belief that it would now be possible for these steps to be taken.

There is sensitivity on both sides, but the recent action of a Japanese family to commemorate the death of a family member in the Christchurch earthquake by gifting a house for Japanese students to continue to use is a sign of the generosity and goodwill that exists between Japanese and New Zealand peoples. Of course the cherry blossom garden at Featherston is already one of those generous signs brought to us from Japan.

There is an additional reason for the interest of the UDC in next year's ceremony and it is based on our discovery of the significant pastoral work undertaken by the Rev Hessel Troughton, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, who immediately on hearing of the incident resigned his parish appointment and offered his services as chaplain to the camp's prisoners. He and his wife had been missionaries in Japan from 1934 to 1939 and understood Japanese culture and spoke the language fluently. Within a few days of the incident Hessel walked unescorted, at his insistence, into the camp where dispirited and angry prisoners were waiting some response from New Zealand authorities. He was subsequently given the credit for diffusing the potentially dangerous situation that existed for some weeks following the incident. He stayed two and a half years in the camp as its chaplain before becoming the minister at Greytown in April 1946.

We, as a Presbytery/UDC, would wish to commemorate Hessel's contribution in a particular way next year (perhaps with a plaque if that would be acceptable to the Council), before his contribution is lost sight of, and it is more than possible that members of his family would join us. It would be appropriate for the plaque or some such similar instrument of remembrance to be dedicated at the time of the ceremony

In thinking about these matters we also wonder if the Tapu has ever been lifted at the site of the incident and believe that the local IWI and its kaumatua may be invited to take this significant step if there are no records of this being done at the time. And even if it has been done perhaps the lifting can be done again in the presence of Japanese Government representatives and as a preparatory ritual that leads into the ceremony in the garden.

Not knowing what has happened in the past nor what is currently being planned for next year we would like to suggest that when the names of the Japanese dead are read out along with the name of the New Zealand casualty that Shinto, Buddhist and Christian prayers might be offered. If an official expression of regret or apology is to be offered it would be appropriate for this to be made by a Government Minister or perhaps the Governor General, and would need the prior approval of Cabinet I imagine, and for this to happen we would need to have it on the Cabinet agenda for the first meeting of the new year with the Prime Minister briefed. I presume Chris Finlayson would be the Minister to approach for assistance along with Member of Parliament, John Hayes. I do not believe that this would be a major matter as the Te Ara Encyclopaedia of New Zealand has a succinct article on the Featherston Prisoner of War Camp. Of course, the Ambassador for Japan would need to be informed as soon as possible if a change to the normal programme on the day is being envisaged and have his understanding and approval.

It is our understanding that an event such as this is in the hands of you and your Council and we do not wish to be in the road at any point or stage. All that I have written above is by way of suggestion. The UDC would however be happy to support the Council in creating a ceremony with some or all of the elements noted above.

I would be happy to discuss with you any of the points made - in particular we would be keen to know if some recognition of the Rev Hessel Troughton could be made and be referred to officially in the ceremony commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the incident and it would be absolutely superb for an expression of regret or an apology to be made to Japan on this occasion.

I intend to be actively writing about the incident over January and no doubt there are documents in the possession of the Council that would be worth reading and for access I would need to be granted permission. I would hope to have something brief and succinct written for the occasion especially if we are able to recognise the work of Hessel Troughton. I have discussed the contents of the letter with Mate Higginson on a number of occasions and he has been supportive of the UDC and Parish approaching you and your Council on this matter.

With good wishes

Sincerely

James (Jim) Veitch

Wairarapa Union District Council

And the Presbytery of the Wairarapa

P.O.Box 148, Featherston

The Mayor and Councillors Wairarapa District Council Kitchener St, Martinborough 07 DEC 2012

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to express my concern about the new section of the Featherston Cemetery.

A shelter belt of exclusively native trees was planted on the northern fenceline of the cemetery in the autumn of this year. The trees in this belt are dead and dying, because native trees will not grow in shingle. Nor would the trees planted ever have grown tall enough to provide meaningful shelter. I believe that pines or Leyland cypress must be added to this belt to provide proper shelter. Once this has become established, its possible some specifically chosen natives could be introduced

As I have family ties to the area from the 1850's, along with many others, I would like to see a tribute paid to the historic aspect of the cemetery, by planting some deciduous trees to provide some blossom and autumn colour. This is no disrespect to native trees. I believe they are at their best in their natural bush surroundings, and are not suited to public planting, especially in our climate. All evergreens year round seem a very grim prospect. Of course this planting would have to be introduced when the shelter situation has been addressed..

I hope that by bringing this matter to the attention of the Council now, that these problems can be addressed sooner rather than later. Would it be possible for a small group of ratepayers to work in consultation with Council?

Yours faithfully, Moor

Taharoa Farming LTD Wharepaku RD4 Masterton

6.12.2012

Mark Allingham

Dear Mark

On the  $28^{th}$  September a meeting was held at Whakarua Road to discuss the ongoing problems with flooding of this road. Those present:

lan Richards- South Wairarapa District Council
David Boone- Greater Wellington Regional Council
Scott Andrews- Greater Wellington Regional Council
Stu Nicol- farm owner
Guy and Lachie McGregor - effected farm owner
David McLaren- effective farm owner

Proposal- To clear willows on Stu Nicols property at Whakarua Road. These willows are blocking the creek and causing major and frequent flooding of the road.

All agreed that something had to be done, however the big question was who is going to pay. David Boone said he would see if GWRC could subsidise the project. On the 18<sup>th</sup> October David confirmed that GWRC would subsidise the project for up to 30% of the total cost with certain provisos (copy of David's email included). On the 19<sup>th</sup> October I organised another meeting at the site with Stu and Peter Nicol, Graham Reidy (Ex GWRC river engineer) and myself.

We agreed that there are three sections of the creek that need to be cleared in order to alleviate the flooding.

Section 1- approx 400m below the road bridge. Graham estimated that there is about 1.5m of fall over the length.

Section 2- approx 500m above the road bridge. It is necessary to go this far in order to stop water flowing onto the road 100m above the bridge.

Section 3- Approx 300m from just above the tight bend in the road down to Stu Nicols farm bridge.

We hope the digger will be able to extract the willow roots and all, however any trees that prove difficult to extract and are not impeding the flow of the creek may need to be cut off at ground level and killed.

Most contractors charge \$140 per hour for a 20 tonne digger. However Dave Hooper is available at \$130 per hour and Tony Burden (the chainsaw operator) at \$38 per hour.

Graham estimated 15 x 10 hour days= 150hrs at \$170 per hour= \$25,500 + \$500 cartage= \$26,000

The people who will benefit from this are the McGregor's and McLaren's who own the farms at the end of the road along with all other contractors be it, trucking, postal, shearing, emergency services.etc.

The Nicols will gain immensely as all flooding is occurring on their land. They will have better access to their farming operations, less chance of livestock being caught in flooding and they will be able to fix their road fences so that stock aren't always on the road as they are now. In the last year they have used our woolshed to keep sheep dry for shearing. It would be a major concern if we were stuck with 900 of Nicols sheep in our shed and the road was flooded. In the past we have lent Stu a horse because he was unable to access his farm with a 4WD motorbike.

The SWDC is another that will gain. David McLaren said he use to be able to walk under the road bridge. As you can see by the photos, the water level has not dropped below the bridge beams. It is fair to assume that if the silt build up is allowed to continue the road bridge will be engulfed.

While we don't expect to stop all flooding if we can get the normal water level back to 1-1.5m below the bridge beams we should still have access in all but a major flood.

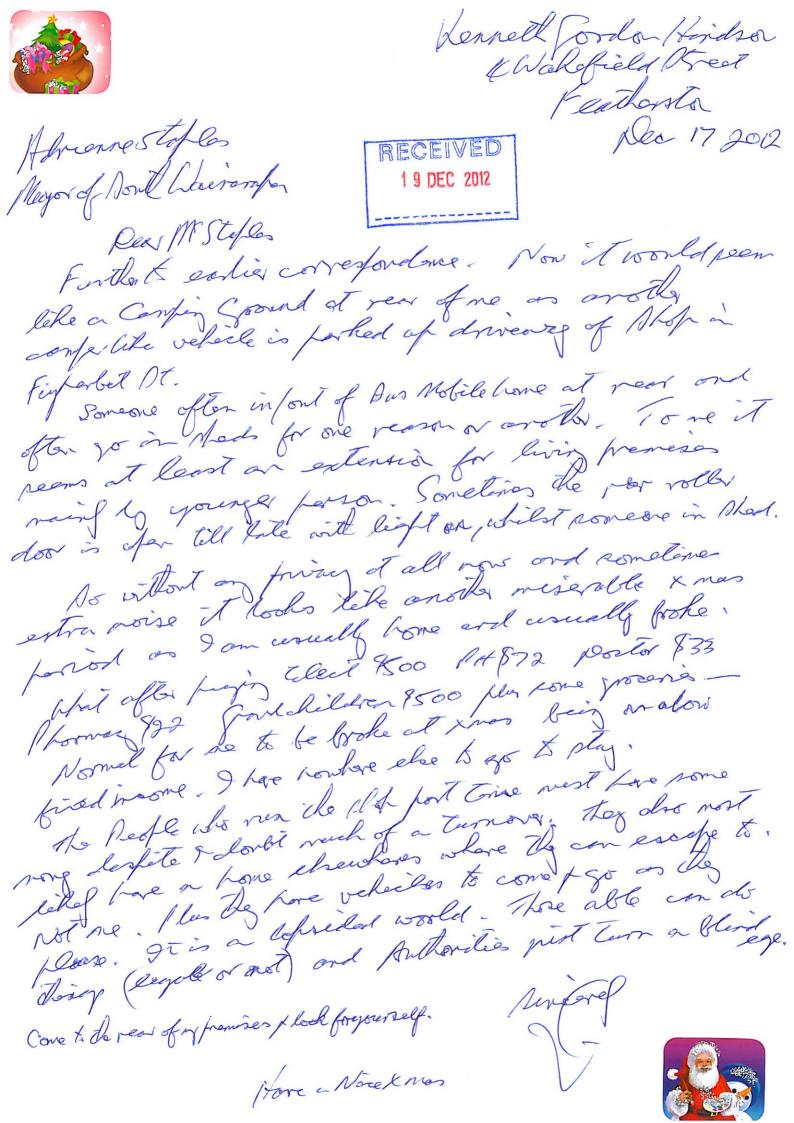
I urge the SWDC to see that the removal of the willows is the most cost effective solution to what may become a health and safety issue if nothing is done. I ask that the council seriously consider a 30% contribution to this project. I am prepared to meet with Council if and when required.

Yours Sincerely,

Guy McGregor

Director Taharoa Farming LTD

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# Office of the Mayor Adrienne Staples



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1 February 2013

Dr James Veitch 181 Paierau Rd Masterton

Dear Jim

Thank you for your letter concerning the  $70^{\text{th}}$  commemoration of the 'Featherston Incident'.

Firstly I wish to apologise for my tardy reply. Your proposals are not something that I felt I had authority to agree to without referring to councillors for discussion. Unfortunately due to the timing over the Christmas period, this is the first opportunity I have had to get everyone together to discuss this matter.

Council acknowledges that time has passed since the incident and also that at the commemoration ceremony held last year, there was an appreciable change in the atmosphere and feeling toward the reason that had brought us together. Nevertheless this change is very recent and we have serious concerns that any attempt to upscale the occasion will have a detrimental effect and not actually achieve anything.

While most if not all of those actually involved in the 'Incident' have passed away and survivors of WWII are rapidly diminishing, their families still remain. In many instances it was actually those families who were most vocal against the Japanese garden and memorial. Time have given us a grudging acceptance of The Garden but that is all. We feel that if any escalation of the commemoration service was planned we then the matter should be discussed with the Featherston Community as a matter of courtesy. Obviously that takes time and it was not appropriate over the Christmas period.

Two other matters raised in your letter are the Rev Hessel Troughton and access to Council archives.

We would be happy to acknowledge Reverend Troughton and therefore would like to invite you to the wreath laying to briefly speak on his role and to say a prayer. A

more permanent record of his contribution would best be included in the proposed interpretation panels which are planned for the new shelter in the garden. We would work with you on the words to be included but unfortunately these will not be in place for this year's commemoration.

With regards to access to the records surrounding the controversy over The Garden. These are public records and can be viewed here at council. Please contact Barbara Gavan who can arrange for these to be brought out of storage for you.

I appreciate that this will not be the response you had hoped for. Even though time has passed it is still a volatile subject for the Featherston Community which still requires tact. I am happy to discuss the idea with locals and also with government at appropriate times with a view to perhaps progressing the concept in the future.

Yours sincerely

Adrienne Staples

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19 December 2012

Mrs J Moon P O Box 148 Featherston

Dear Jill

Thank you for your letter received 7 December outlining your concerns regarding the tree planting in the new Featherston Cemetery area.

I understand that the meeting you had with Carl Nesbitt from City Care and Helen McNaught our property officer was worthwhile and you have all agreed a way forward. If you have any further concerns regarding this matter can you please contact Helen direct.

 $I^{\prime}d$  like to take this opportunity to wish both you and Campbell a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

Adrienne Staples

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19 December 2012

Mr G McGregor Taharoa Farming Ltd Wharepaku RD4 Masterton

Dear Guy

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter received 7 December concerning the flooding at Whakarua Road.

I have referred the matter to our Roading Manager Ian Richards for advice and will arrange for him to contact you.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

Adrienne Staples

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19 December 2012

Mr K Hindson 4 Wakefield St Featherston

#### Dear Mr Hindson

I am sorry that you consider we are turning a blind eye to wrong doing by your neighbours. Our officers have been to the premises and they are not carrying out any activity that is illegal. As I have pointed out in previous correspondence, we are limited as to what control we have over people's activity on their own property. For us to take action they must be in breach of either a District Plan rule or by-law and these people are not as far as I am aware. I will have our officers check again just to make sure.

I do appreciate that at Christmas time it can be very difficult, especially financially if you are alone. I see that you have bought presents for your grandchildren so I do hope that they come and visit you.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

Adrienne Staples

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