



District Council

**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 29 CIVIC AVENUE, GORE ON  
TUESDAY 15 MAY 2012, AT 7.40 pm.**

**PRESENT** His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks, JP), Crs Bolger, Beale, Davis, Gover, D Grant, P Grant, Highsted, Redhead and Sharp.

**IN ATTENDANCE** The Chief Executive (Mr Stephen Parry), the General Manager, Corporate Services (Mr Russell Duthie), General Manager, District Assets (Mr Paul Withers), Parks and Recreation Manager (Mr Ian Soper), Roading Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), Communications Co-Ordinator (Mrs Sonia Gerken), Senior Asset Management Officer (Ms Sarah Dowling), HR/Administration Manager (Susan Jones) and 11 members of the public in the gallery.

**APOLOGIES** Crs Dixon and Watt apologised for absence.

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**1. NEW ZEALAND CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY (47.2)**

His Worship conferred New Zealand citizenship on John Patterson, a British citizen.

He read the relevant declaration and was presented with a New Zealand kowhai tree.

His Worship extended best wishes on behalf of the Council to Mr Patterson.

*The meeting adjourned at 7.46 pm and resumed at 7.50 pm.*

**2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Highsted, seconded by Cr Davis, THAT the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Gore District Council, held on Tuesday 3 April 2012, as presented, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a true and complete record.**

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr P Grant, seconded by Cr Beale, **THAT** the report of the meeting of the Community Services Committee, held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be accepted as an accurate and complete record.

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Gover, seconded by Cr Sharp, **THAT** the recommendations contained within the report of the Community Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be ratified.

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Davis, seconded by Cr Highsted, **THAT** the report of the meeting of the Operations Committee, held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be accepted as an accurate and complete record.

Clause 6 – Report from Animal Control Contractor (34.4.1)

The Council *noted* the deletion of the words “*of a high number*” at the end of the second paragraph.

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Davis, seconded by Cr Gover, **THAT** the recommendations contained within the report of the Operations Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24 April 2012 as amended, be ratified.

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Bolger, seconded by Cr Beale, **THAT** the report of the meeting of the Regulatory and Planning Committee, held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be accepted as an accurate and complete record.

Clause 1 – Update on District Plan Changes

The Council *noted* a spelling correction in the third paragraph. “*Aggravation*” should have read “*aggregation*.”

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Bolger, seconded by Cr Beale, **THAT** the recommendations contained within the report of the Regulatory and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be ratified.

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Cr Bolger, seconded by Cr D Grant, **THAT** the report of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee, held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be accepted as an accurate and complete record.

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Highsted, seconded by Cr Gover, THAT the recommendations contained within the report of the Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24 April 2012, as presented, be ratified.**

3. REPORT FROM YOUTH COUNCILLORS (50.47.1)

Youth Councillors Caroline Morton (Chairperson), Jacqueline Syme and Maxine Wilson were in attendance and reported on recent activities and events that it would be involved with during Youth Week.

4. REPRESENTATION REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSION RECEIVED (33.16.3)

A memo had been received from the Chief Executive about the revised representation proposal which, apart from a boundary adjustment between the Kaiwera/Waimumu and Waikaka wards, advocated the retention of the present electoral structure and numbers of Councillors and had been duly advertised on two separate occasions.

One submission had been received to the proposal, from Mrs Laurel Turnbull on behalf of herself and 11 other electors. A copy had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chief Executive advised the Council should hear the submission and then reserve its decision in order that a report on the proposal could be provided for a deliberative meeting. The Council needed to give public notice of its final proposal by 1 June 2012.

- ‡ Mrs Turnbull presented her additional submission and said the majority of people did not understand how local government worked. Mataura people did not understand why they could not vote for all Councillors. A copy of the additional submission is attached hereto and forms part of these minutes.

His Worship asked if there would be support from people in Mataura standing for a combined ward or was it not an issue.

Mrs Turnbull thought there may be more chance for Mataura people to be elected.

*The Youth Councillors departed the meeting at 8.09 pm*

Cr P Grant asked whether she was concerned that Mataura could end up with no representative.

Mrs Turnbull said it did not concern her. She felt all Councillors worked for the good of Mataura and the Community Board was in place to advocate for the Mataura community.

In response to Cr Beale, the Chief Executive said the Community Board would still be retained.

Cr Davis asked if all Mataura residents were aware of the submission and the implications.

The Chief Executive said it was publicly available via the Council agenda, but it was not available through cross submission as with resource management matters. If someone was aggrieved at the Council's decision, they would be entitled to put forward an objection to the Local Government Commission.

Mrs Turnbull advised there had been an article in the Ensign about the proposal.

His Worship said it would give the Council cause to stop and think about the proposal.

Cr Bolger thought it was a very clever submission but was concerned whether people understood the sophistication of it and what it could mean. He commended her for it.

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Redhead, seconded by Cr D Grant, THAT the Council reserve its decision on the submission and meet in the near future to consider it.**

**2012/42**

5. MATAURA COMMUNITY BOARD REPORT (46.36.2)

A copy of the report of the ordinary meeting of the Mataura Community Board held on 16 April had been circulated with the agenda.

In response to Cr Davis, the Roading Manager advised work on the Carteret Street footpath would likely commence in the next financial year.

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Gover, seconded by Cr Bolger, THAT the report of the meeting held on 16 April be received,**

**AND THAT the recommendations contained within the report be ratified.**

**2012/43**

6. POMONA STREET STREETScape – PROGRESS REPORT (3.32.1)

A report had been received from the Roading Manager updating the Council on progress on providing an outcome to the request from some of the residents of Pomona Street for the Council to remove all of the existing grass verges and replace them with chip seal.

Several options for the streetscape configuration were available and concept diagrams for two of the options had been circulated with the agenda.

A revised letter to property owners in the street had been tabled at the meeting.

In response to Cr Gover, the Manager said some properties that had multi parking spaces, had removed the grass verge in front of their properties themselves, following approval from the Council some years ago.

Cr Beale felt the options presented fell short of correcting the overflow parking problems caused by events held at the Calvin Church on Robertson Street.

The Manager said both options 2 and 3 did not eliminate the possibility of parking on the kerbside.

Cr Highsted asked what the cost differences were between the options.

The Manager advised there would be little cost difference between option 2 or 3. If the grass plots were removed, the street would need to be sealed to the kerb side which would add quite a significant cost with resealing every 10 years.

Cr Beale found it difficult to accept the comparison between Redmond Street and Pomona Street.

The Manager said the strategy was attempting to change behaviour and encourage motorists to use other streets.

His Worship said he had some questions around the parking and how it should be treated particularly when events were on at the Calvin Church.

He was not sure how practical it would be to not have people parking in Pomona Street.

Cr Gover wondered about the parking with option 2 that eliminated parking altogether, and option 3 to her was a mishmash that made the streetscape strategy a nonsense.

Cr Highsted suggested getting a further report exploring parking issues and with costings on the options. He was reluctant to stall the matter but felt he did not have enough information to make a decision.

Cr Beale thought most residents in the street would want it sealed kerb to kerb.

His Worship was not satisfied in his mind that the three options presented were the only ones. He would like to see more work done on other options.

Cr Davis asked if there had been any recent discussion with Calvin Church about parking.

The Manager said the consent for the church redevelopment was done under the former District Plan so its parking provision complied with the requirements of the day.

His Worship agreed with a suggestion from Cr Davis that it would be worth having a discussion with the church before a decision could be made. He said there was a need for more information around the parking pressures associated with the church particularly.

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr P Grant, seconded by Cr Beale, THAT the report be received,**

**AND THAT the matter be referred back to the Operations Committee once further information has been obtained about options to alleviate the pressures caused by parking in the area.**

**2012/44**

7. 2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
(51.3)

A memo had been received from the Chief Executive advising that the annual conference of Local Government New Zealand would be held in Queenstown from 15-17 July. A copy of the conference programme had been circulated with the agenda.

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Gover, seconded by Cr Highsted, THAT the Council delegation to attend the 2012 Local Government New Zealand conference in Queenstown comprise His Worship the Mayor, the Chief Executive, Cr Davis and Cr D Grant.**

**2012/45**

**RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Gover, seconded by Cr Redhead, THAT His Worship the Mayor be the presiding delegate at the Annual General Meeting of Local Government New Zealand, with Cr Davis, being the alternative delegate.**

**2012/46**

8. LETTER OF APOLOGY FROM COUNCILLOR WATT (46.18.1)

A memo had been received from His Worship the Mayor referring to comments made by Cr Watt at the previous Council meeting when remuneration paid to Council Chairs had been discussed. He was sure those who had been at the previous Council meeting would be aware of the situation that had been created. There had been a discussion around remuneration and a new determination issued by the Remuneration Authority for consideration. Cr Watt had raised the issue of the difference in remuneration between a Councillor and a Committee Chair which was a right and proper debate to have, and one that should be had from time to time. However, the debate tended to move on from that and became an accusation levelled at particularly the Chairs of being paid “hush money” to work in cahoots with Council staff. The comments and insinuations caused offence and disturbed Councillors and himself. He had asked Cr Watt to front up and show some examples of his accusations as he had said he had witnessed that happening within the Council. After the meeting, he had spoken with Cr Watt on a couple of occasions and they had had email exchanges. His interpretation and Cr Watt’s interpretation were somewhat different from what had been portrayed in the media.

His Worship said Cr Watt had been unable to substantiate his comments so he had asked for a written apology.

A copy of a written apology from Cr Watt had been received, and had been circulated with the agenda.

His Worship added that Cr Watt had suggested that when the vote had been put, he had not asked for anyone against the motion. He had subsequently reviewed the recording of the meeting, and it was quite clear that the yay and nay had been put. Cr Watt therefore had had an opportunity vote against the motion and he had chosen not to.

Cr Bolger was disappointed at Cr Watt's accusations. He was in a position that he needed to respond. The suggestion that Chairs protected the staff and were paid additional money was not right. He felt it was an insult to Mr Hasler. It ignored the point that the Chairs had investigated the Roding Department and its operation and the Roding Department was run extremely well. Mr Hasler was tremendously committed and the Council was very fortunate. There was no way he would criticise staff just because someone wanted to see him do so. It seemed strange that those who criticised Chairs were not around. He regularly ran into other Chairs either at the Council office or at other meetings in Invercargill. It could be twice or three times a week. He never saw Cr Watt and suggested that after just 18 months in the job Cr Watt, rather than complain about his remuneration being too low, should turn up for a few more meetings and a few more workshops. He would accept Cr Watt's apology but he hoped that it was not so much weasel words and reminded him to be a good and useful Councillor and not criticise everyone and everything just because one may wish to. He asked the Chief Executive for the benefit of the press and those in the gallery, where was the background to the Council's remuneration setting and compared with other authorities.

The Chief Executive said the Council had a time honoured process that preceded his time at the Council that apportioned the Chair and Councillor positions. In late 2004 when His Worship was elected, it was decided to create an additional Chair position and the extra remuneration for that position would be obtained from the Chair pool. The remuneration paid to Councillors was unaffected by the decision to appoint another Chairperson. In terms of other Councils, the practice was varied. At Clutha, there was a premium of 87.5% between Chair and Councillor positions. In Central Otago, depending on how it was interpreted, it could be as high as 285%, Invercargill City was 62.5%, Kawerau was 74% and South Taranaki District was 75%. There were other Councils that had similar apportionments between Councillors and Chairs. Like anything, statistics could be selectively extracted to suit a particular argument. What Cr Watt tabled was correct, but the Chief Executive's comments related to Councils closer to home showing a similar margin of premium to the Gore District remuneration structure.

Cr Gover said Cr Watt was surprised at the way his comments were taken. He did start by saying "it could be seen ..." but that was not picked up. She did not agree with what he had said and it was necessary that there was an apology.

Cr Highsted agreed with Cr Bolger. He found some irony in the fact that Cr Watt was not in attendance at the meeting. His apology was not signed, and to him it was the bare minimum. He took a different view to

Cr Gover. To justify a comment about what a third party may say was not the way to conduct business. He believed that hiding behind a third party context was inappropriate and unprofessional. If meetings were run in that manner, it would be a complete circus. The Council had an apology, but it was a qualified apology.

Cr Davis said it was a pity Cr Watt was not at the meeting to respond. She was taken aback at the comments made, but what upset her most was the assertion that there were dodgy dealings going on. That had been thrown at the Council in past years by previous Councillors who were no longer around the table. Cr Watt was not prepared to explain his comments. He had been asked to table his evidence but did not, and had still not done so. It called the whole Council into disrepute. She appreciated the apology but hoped to put the matter behind the Council and move forward.

Cr Sharp had the utmost respect and admiration for Mr Hasler. He had had four years with him. He was pleased that the Mayor had come to an amicable agreement with Cr Watt.

Cr Gover said Cr Watt was overseas with his wife on a trip that had been planned long ago, which explained his absence from the meeting.

His Worship took the point that the apology was not signed, however, the intent was there from Cr Watt to put the matter behind him. He hoped when he was back and read the minutes of the meeting that he understood the feeling of animosity that his comments had caused. There were Councillors around the table who did a lot of work and it was disheartening and sole destroying when someone made comments as had occurred.

**Cr Davis moved THAT the Council receive and note the letter from Cr Watt.**

**The motion was seconded by Cr P Grant.**

**Cr Sharp moved as an amendment, THAT the Council receive and accept the apology from Cr Watt.**

**The amendment was seconded by Cr Gover.**

**The Amendment was put and it was carried.**

**The Amendment then became the motion, was put and it was carried.**

**2012/47**

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Cncl\Mins\15.05.12

9. REPORT FROM COUNCILLORS (46.12.9)

Cr Beale reported on assisting the District Arts and Heritage Curator recently at the East Gore Art Centre and advised the press from Muka Studio was due within the next week. There were bookings to use it about two years ahead by notable artists throughout the country.

His Worship said the Youth in Local Government conference had recently been held in Southland, with the conference awards night held in Gore and hosted by Cr Redhead. The conference showcased what a good place Southland was to live and had been very well supported.

The meeting concluded at 9 pm