

Mayoral Column

September 2015 (ISSUE 23)



Amalgamation – the decision is now up to you. Voting papers for our community to have their say on amalgamation have been delivered. It is so important you vote and post back your voting forms in the return envelope. You need to post no later than the 10th of September for it be received in time for the 15th September close period. Make your vote count and encourage your whanau and friends from Wairoa and across Hawke’s Bay (Napier, Hastings and Central Hawke’s Bay) to vote. If you haven’t received your voting papers and believe you should be entitled to vote, contact James Baty (06 838 7309) at Council to complete a special vote. You can also do a special vote if your voting papers have been spoiled or if

you’re address on the roll is incorrect. This decision is now in your hands, it’s important you ‘Tick & Post’ and make sure the electoral officers address is showing in the window of the return envelope.

Alpha One, the new system for lodging online building applications and consents has gone live on Council’s website. This has been a huge undertaking by the Regulatory Manager and her Building Control team and I am delighted to see the improvements being implemented to simplify and improve services to our community. All you will need to do is go onto council’s website to see the new portal and it’s really easy to navigate.

Council’s draft walkway and cycleway strategy is now out for public consultation. Submissions close on the 22nd of September. We are interested in your views and welcome submissions. The draft strategy can be inspected at council offices, the library, the i-site or it can be downloaded from council’s website. Please read the new strategy and let us know what you think. Councillors have already discussed this strategy and one of the points raised is, how can we improve walkway and cycleway safety on our bridge. These types of ideas are relevant and I’m sure our community will have other ideas and points that need to be considered in this strategy, so I do encourage you to have a read of the draft strategy and tell us what you think.

The ‘GoRoam’ app, to assist our community in reporting animal control issues is ready to be released to the community. Releasing it to the community will allow council to work through any further issues to improve the app. This new initiative has the potential to become a powerful reporting tool for our community and is a first for the country. I’m so pleased with the developments coming out of council to improve services to our community and to make things like this app available will allow council to be much more responsive to the needs of our community.

Nominations for the Wairoa Trustpower community awards have closed and I am so pleased that a number of groups have been nominated for these awards. Our volunteers are the heart of this community and it is great that we are able to celebrate and recognise all of those who were nominated. Judging will take place soon with a community event for those nominated for the awards to be hosted in late September. Can I congratulate and acknowledge not only those groups nominated for the awards, but all of our volunteers who work tirelessly for the benefit of our community.

And for one final time – voting forms for amalgamation have been delivered, make your vote count, ‘Tick & Post’.

FOR YOUR DIARY

COUNCIL MEETINGS

22 September
27 October

COUNCIL FORUM

08 September
13 October

MAORI STANDING COMMITTEE

11 September
16 October

Meetings and Forums are held at the Queen Street office council chambers, and are open to the public unless otherwise specified.



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App goes live

The Wairoa District Council's 'Go Roam' smartphone application (app) is ready to go live.

A demonstration of the app was presented to councillors at their council meeting last month.

The app is designed for anyone who has a smartphone to be able to report animal control issues directly to Council. These issues could include aggressive dogs, dog attacks or wandering stock on roads.

Wairoa District Council Geographic Information Systems Officer, Russell McCracken, who has lead the development of the new application says now anyone in the Wairoa district who has a smartphone will be able to report animal control issues. The app is a user-friendly and efficient way for the community to communicate with Council and for Council to receive detailed information to help address issues.

A member of the community faced with a wandering or dangerous dog, could enter their contact details, a photograph and/or a description of the dog, and dispatch an alert to Wairoa District Council. Geodata captured by the phone, providing the precise location of both the user, and where the actual event occurred, along with a photo identifying the animal, will be received by Council Animal Control Officers. The system is linked to Council's databases, and officers will quickly be able to cross-reference information to assist with identifying the animal. Community members who report issues will also be informed that a response is in progress.

Wairoa District Council Chief Executive Officer, Fergus Power, says every member of our community who carries a smartphone now has an enormously efficient protective device at their disposal - one which will make reporting issues about animals and enforcement action many times more effective

"Take for example a member of the public who comes across a wandering horse or cattle beast on SH38 (the route to Lake Waikaremoana). They can still use the system even if there is no mobile phone reception."

"The phone retains the geodata relating to the event, and as soon as the phone comes into a reception zone, the event is transmitted to Wairoa District Council, with photo/geolocation data identifying the precise location of the problem, and allowing officers to respond and protect the safety of the public."

"The applications of this new app could be quite broad, anyone in the Wairoa district who has a smartphone could potentially report graffiti, vandalism, fallen trees and other issues - all of which will reinforce the approach of council in delivering quality service to the community", says Mr Power.

Wairoa District Council Animal Control Officer, Paul Dorrestein, says the new app is a really cool development for our community, but it's important to know that with the release of the app to the general public, that we'll now be able to look at a 'user testing' phase.

"We've been able to do a whole heap of testing out in the field to work through some of the bugs and gremlins, but it's not until we get the public using the new app that we'll be able to really look at where improvements need to be made."

"I think a good month of testing with the community, our users, should give us some really good insights on where to make the necessary improvements and to clarify how this app works in terms of our actual jurisdictions. For example, we get calls because people have discovered a seal on their property, we would usually refer this type of enquiry to the Department of Conservation, or if there are feral goats on the road, this is not within our jurisdiction and not covered under our local authority bylaw, but we will need to see how this app works in referring these types of enquiries onto the right organisations."

"I'm quite excited to see how our community engages with this new app, it will become a really powerful reporting tool for our community and for us and will also allow us to capture data and information that we wouldn't have been able to capture previously", said Mr Dorrestein



To download type in "GoRoam"
- into the playstore of your Android device
or
- into the store of your Windows phone device

When you start the App for the first time after install:

- Make sure you are connected to a Data plan
- WIFI is turned OFF
- Once your Personal Information is loaded you can turn on WIFI

Wairoa excellence recognised

Wairoa District Council Geographic Information Systems Officer, Russell McCracken, has been selected to represent Hawke’s Bay Local Authorities Shared Services (HBLASS) at the prestigious FOSS4G Conference in Seoul, South Korea next month.

Mr McCracken is Chair of the GIS shared services portfolio for Hawke’s Bay councils and the Directors of HBLASS have acknowledged his efforts for leading and developing a valuable shared service for the region.

Mr McCracken says “It was great to receive a commendation from Craig Waterhouse, Chairman of HBLASS, who said he wanted to express his personal thanks for the progress I and the team have made so far with the GIS project.”

“Mr Waterhouse also said that the project’s success will open up so much more within the five councils”, said Mr McCracken.

The annual ‘Free and Open Source Software for Geospatial – FOSS4G’ Conference is the largest global gathering focused on open source geospatial solutions. FOSS4G brings together developers, users, decision-makers and businessmen from around the world. Through six days of workshops, presentations, discussions and code sprint, FOSS4G participants create effective and relevant geospatial products, standards, networks and business opportunities.

Mr McCracken says that he was “pretty shocked” to be asked to represent HBLASS at the FOSS4G conference.

“Our region will move increasingly into free and open source software (FOSS) and this will again benefit the people of Wairoa and Hawke’s Bay.”

“We know the cost of software licenses can be really expensive, so it’s important that we look at innovative ways of improving service to our community, but doing it in a way that is affordable to our ratepayers through cost savings.”

FOSS is computer software that can be classified as free and open source, that is, anyone is freely licensed to use, copy, study, and change the software in any way, and the source code is openly shared so that people are encouraged to voluntarily improve the design of the software. This is in contrast to proprietary software, where the software is under restrictive copyright and the source code is usually hidden from the users.

Mr McCracken says this is the largest international conference of its kind and he will be able to see and learn about some of the newest developments and meet and talk to

experts working in this space.

“I think the work we’re doing through HBLASS and developing closer relationships with Councils across Hawke’s Bay has been and continues to be really valuable.”

“Whilst I have been acknowledged for the progressive development in GIS for Hawke’s Bay, recognition must also be given to all of my colleagues across the Hawke’s Bay councils, working to improve services, and reduce costs to our ratepayers through shared services initiatives.”

“I’m really honoured to be asked to represent HBLASS at this conference. It’s all pretty exciting really, and I’d better make sure my passport is up-to-date”, Mr McCracken said.

Wairoa District Council Chief Executive, Fergus Power, said “I’m so pleased for Russell. His knowledge, skills and abilities in leading the GIS project for HBLASS cannot be underestimated. What the HBLASS GIS team has achieved is remarkable. This level of data integration and access has never been achieved before in New Zealand. We are very fortunate to have this level of expertise at Wairoa District Council and it is great that Russell is being funded by HBLASS to represent the Hawke’s Bay region at this world-renowned conference.”

“These opportunities for our staff will likely occur again as the region increasingly recognises the fact that we have many high-performing ‘can do’ experts in several fields working at Wairoa District Council.”

“I have no doubt that Russell will find the experience extremely valuable, and I’m excited about all the new knowledge, information and contacts that Russell will bring back to the region and to Te Wairoa, leading to even greater efficiencies and cost savings”, says Mr Power.



Russell McCracken

Wairoa bursts onto world stage

The Wairoa District Council's Visual Identity Project has attracted attention across the ditch, with Wairoa District Council Economic Development officers, Ros Thomas and Katie Bowen, being invited to present at next week's 'Future of Communities: Power to the People' conference in Melbourne, Australia.

The conference is Australia's only national community engagement conference and focuses on building community health, resilience, connectedness and inclusion and encouraging communities to find issues to challenges from the inside out and to take responsibility for their own future.

Internationally acclaimed community engagement expert Peter Kenyon, who facilitated the first stage of Wairoa's Visual Identity Project earlier this year was so impressed with the approach taken by the Wairoa District Council Economic Development team to engage the community that he extended an invitation to present at the conference in Melbourne, even offering to pay all expenses so that the work happening in Wairoa can be shared more widely.

Mr Kenyon says it was a privilege to be part of the team. He acknowledged the vision of the Wairoa District Council and Te Matarae o Te Wairoa Trust in instigating the Visual Identity Project and praised the work of Mrs Thomas and Mrs Bowen.

"I also want to acknowledge the generosity, interest and passion of local residents of the Wairoa district in sharing their ideas and dreams", Mr Kenyon said.

Mrs Thomas says we're really pleased with the approach we took during the first stage of the visual identity project. It means a lot that people like Peter Kenyon recognised the work we're doing and has encouraged us to share some of our experiences to a much broader audience, particularly to

communities like Wairoa facing similar challenges.

"I think there will be some really good projects that we can learn from too while we're at the conference, and also meeting people who are doing similar work to us. It's all about sharing best practice."

"Whilst presenting the work we've done through the visual identity project, we've also been invited to be on expert panels to discuss small communities and community engagement. This is really positive for the Wairoa district. The work we're doing here is being recognised internationally and that's something we can all be proud of", says Mrs Thomas.

Wairoa District Council Chief Executive, Fergus Power, says he was not surprised by the acknowledgment of the Economic Development team.

"Wairoa is rapidly becoming recognised for its capability - not just within the region or New Zealand, but internationally."

"The Wairoa community can be justifiably proud of the calibre of Council staff and contractors", he said.

Mayor Craig Little expressed pride in the fact that an international mega-city was turning to Wairoa for assistance. "Sometimes, we just don't give ourselves enough credit for the wonderful work undertaken within this Council. It's a pleasure when others recognise our strength, and seek our assistance. It's a real achievement for Ros and Katie and I couldn't be prouder of them", he said.

Stage two of the Visual Identity Project is currently underway. This stage will build upon the information gathered during stage one at the community expo and surveys earlier this year to create a unique visual identity for the Wairoa district that can be used locally, nationally and internationally.

Whakatauki / Proverb

*No te makariri I hua ai, koina I iti ai.
If it fruited in Winter, that is why it is so small.*

A reference to scarcity of food, especially for special occasions or events, during the cold months. However one should not be offended by the remark as winter affects everybody in the same way.

