PART B
SUPPLEMENT

Council

Wednesday, 30 March 2005
Commencing at 5.30 pm

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

WAITAKERE CITY COUNCIL

SUPPLEMENTARY ATTACHMENTS TO THE MAYORS REPORT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN, WAITAKERE CITY, ON WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2005, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.

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THE MOON IN THE DUNEDIN CITY

Mates, I hear people say,
in Dunedin,
the moon is huge and bright,
and fills the sky,
with orange and yellow light,
and that these people's joyful voices,
convey delight and amazed,
at what they have in this lovely city,
of Dunedin.
So I came with passion and,
with dreams that kept me alive,
and stood by the Cathedral,
and tried to see,
what it is that excites their smiles.

The New Zealand Community Boards' Conference - Dunedin, 3 - 6 March 2005

I attended the conference as a delegate for the Waitakere City Council with six others from the Council including Mr Charlie Inggs and five Community Board members. The Conference consisted of a series of keynote addresses, workshops and the award of various best practice presentations.

About the City

As a result of the discovery of gold in Otago, Dunedin became New Zealand's premier city in the 1880's. Today the city has the largest number of Victorian and Edwardian buildings in New Zealand. Home to New Zealand's first University, Dunedin today has in excess of 20,000 students annually, including many from other countries.

Accommodating a population of about 130,000, Dunedin boasts being the eighth largest city in Aotearoa.

By day, the Octagon in the heart of Dunedin is a hive of activities, with cars and people coming and going from every direction. I was surprised to find that parking is only 50 cents for two hours and there is no minimum charge.

About the Interview

It was here late on Friday morning that we visited His Worship, Mayor Peter Chin. Aged 63, he is a solicitor and belongs to the third generation of Chinese New Zealanders.

The first Chinese across the Tasman came in 1856 - sixteen years after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and Dunedin is the earliest Chinese settlement in New Zealand. I have travelled most of the country and nowhere is the Chinese community so highly - valued and widely respected as in Dunedin.

Mayor Chin is shorter and looks much younger than his photo suggests. When asked about his success as the first Chinese Mayor of the city, he paused for a while, then chuckled.

"Transparency and consultation with the people. Forget you are Chinese and work for everybody. The city is now negotiating with Shanghai, China, for a Chinese Garden. We are looking forward to a trading deal with Shanghai but now it is too early to mention it. That requires a lot of patience and time."

I remember the reception at the Otago Museum the previous night, the Mayor started talking Cantonese to me at his first sight of me. That caught everybody by surprise.

About the Countryside

I spent some time on the outskirts of the City on Thursday evening. I followed the footpath signs and symbols that point the way. Several hours were spent on negotiating many and varied stiles, gates and bridges, walking across daisy-clouded meadows, standing with picturesque riverbeds, chatting to farmers with their Scottish accents as thick as a winter fog.

A stroll on the ancient fields and muddy tracks on the City's countryside is always an amusing experience.

About the Conference

All local authorities in this country are members of Local Government New Zealand and it is Local Government New Zealand's role to represent the national interests of the sector. Community Boards are now recognised by local Government New Zealand as an integral part of the sector, through the New Zealand Community Boards' Executive Committee which now has advisory status on Community Board matters.

The first Community Boards' Conference was held in Christchurch in March 1997 and has been held every 2 years since then.

The Dunedin Community Boards hosted this year's conference with the full support of the Dunedin City Council. The other attendees from Waitakere City were:

- Mr W Bainbridge (Henderson Community Board)
- Mrs G Marshall. (New Lynn Community Board)
- Ms G Maurice (Massey Community Board)
- Mrs C Shepherd (Waitakere Community Board)
- Ms S Davies (Waitakere Community Board)
- Charlie Inggs (Democracy and Governance Team Manager)

The theme of the conference was "Board Games" and the organising committee thought that this was particularly appropriate - not simply because of New Zealander's love of sport, but the international pride taken in playing the game well. To both new and old Elected Members, it is a good opportunity to network with others attending and gain some new skills to "win a game" for your community. About 215 Community Board Members and Councillors attended the Conference.

The organising committee provided a balanced programme of workshops and keynote speakers for both new and experienced Elected Members. The Conference provided the opportunity to network with other elected Members as well as learning from the keynote speakers and work sessions which included workshops on:

- Chairing of Meetings and Code of Conduct;
- Emergency Services working with Community Boards;
- Induction and Role for New Community Board Members;
- Making a Submission to the Local Government Commission;
- Making of Submissions to the RMA / Environment Court by Community Boards;
- Training of Members wishing to sit on Resource Consent Panels;
- Consultation and Significant Projects by Community Boards with reference to the 2005 Best Practice Awards;
- Facilitation and Partnerships for Community Boards with reference to the 2005 Best Practice Awards.

Keynote speakers included:

- Basil Morrison (President of Local Government New Zealand), Eugene Bowen (Chief Executive Officer Local Government New Zealand) and Yvonne Palmer (Chairperson Community Boards Executive);
- Murray Smith MP (United Future Party - Sponsor of the Local Government (Use of Community Boards) Amendment Bill;
- Jim Harland (CEO Dunedin City Council);

- Anne Carter (Department of Internal Affairs);
- Jonathan Salter (Local Government New Zealand Legal Advisor);
- Neil Brown (Civil Defence Emergency Management Manager, Dunedin City Council);
- David Benson-Pope (Associate Minister of the Environment);
- Kerry Marshall (Local Government Commission);
- Cr Leah McBey (Otago Peninsula Community Board);
- Nick Smith (National Party Spokesperson on Local Government);
- Peter Hodgson (Minister of Transport).

Active participation and questioning was encouraged. The 2005 Best Practice Awards were presented at a dinner held on the Thursday evening, which also allowed participants time for networking and sharing experiences.

Observations:

- Some Community Boards are struggling with their local city or district councils for existence. It was good to hear the successful story of the Selwyn Central Community Board, North Canterbury;
- The availability of discretionary funding to some Community Boards, e.g. North Shore City Council with 1.2 million dollars;
- The Local Government New Zealand website www.lgnz.co.nz provides a lot of useful information updates;
- Opinions on the Code of Conduct for Community Board members were generally negative and unenthusiastic with a belief that it is unnecessary, the swearing-in ceremony and standing orders are considered sufficient;
- In 2006 a National Community Board Forum will be held in the Hutt Valley and in 2007 the Conference will be held in Auckland organised by the Zone Executive Committee.

Points to Consider:

- Local discretionary funding provided in the Budget for the operation of the Community Boards and their projects;
- Regular meetings between the Board Members and the Mayor or the CEO;
- The need for closer co-operation and co-ordination between the Community Board and the Council;
- The role of the Council to look after the Community Boards needs to be elaborated and more specific;
- The need for the Community Board to be more action driven and less report driven.

We returned to Auckland on Sunday afternoon. The sun dazzled and sprigged like a splinter in the corner of my eye. Farewell, Dunedin. You have my footprints and affection.

“I shall meet Mayor Bob in the coming Mayoral Forum and thank you for coming and your kind words,” said Mayor Chin, always in a relaxed and unrushed manner as usual.

Cr M F Peter Chan, JP

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