

Council

**Wednesday, 19 December 2007
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT
WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY ROAD, HENDERSON,
WAITAKERE, ON WEDNESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2007,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

The Year in Review

We've made it to the end of election year 2007. Well most of us did anyway. I've said my congratulations and thank you all, so I won't repeat myself here but I do just want to say thank you to Darryl Griffin and the elections team, in particular Frances Harrison from Public Affairs who oversaw a major voter awareness campaign. This included public meetings and hui, some excellent posters featuring the likes of actress Robyn Malcolm, paid advertising and significant unpaid media coverage. Sadly the majority of 'punters' still didn't get their papers into the mailbox. I would have thought that if nothing else two high profile mayoral candidates might have sparked some voter interest but it was not to be. I was disappointed, yet again, in the low voter turnout. At 37.7 percent we were up about two percent on the 2004 election and we bucked the national trend which in general saw voter numbers dip but it simply wasn't good enough. We all have theories on why that was - from general apathy to people being happy with how the council is going to the voting system being too complicated. But they are just that - theories. I have searched the internet and there is very little research on the issue, particularly in New Zealand, so I am pleased our staff are undertaking some research into why people didn't vote. They're doing a survey across the city to find some answers and over the next three years we can work to ensuring more people exercise their democratic right.

M1-M2 And that's not the only issue. We need to address the fact that local authorities across the country tend to be dominated by white, middle aged or older men. Hey, I'm one of them. I don't know what the answer is to that issue either but if we are truly to be reflective of our communities those communities need to be mirrored in the faces around the council table. Clearly it's a different story in the United States. In Ohio they breed their politicians young. Attached at pages M1 to M2 is an article from the Los Angeles Times about a 19 year old who almost became mayor. As a consequence, a law change is being mooted to ensure older people with more "life experience" are elected. Oh for an injection of youthful exuberance and enthusiasm in local government in this country.

In simple terms 2007 has been a stunner - a bit like 2006 really.

Well to be honest, it didn't actually start particularly well. In February, the High Court decided in favour of Colleen Dicks and our insurers decided to appeal the decision which was certainly not a good look in the media. It was a difficult time but we got through it and the good news that month was that Waitakere would host the 2007 Netball World Championships. And what a success it was too. More than 35,000 people went through The Trusts Stadium and city over the eight days. Westfield West City reported increased foot traffic of up to 3000 people a day with retailers describing it as a very good retail week indeed with a significant increase in trading. The media coverage was simply outstanding. The event really did put Waitakere on the global map and my thanks go to the Stadium Chief Executive, Simon Wickham and his team, as well as the Council team who were instrumental in securing the champs.

Early in 2007 it became very apparent just how big the film studio under construction was going to be. I devoted my March Mayoral Report to this city's film industry and for the first time it also became very apparent just how much it was worth to Waitakere. \$100 million a year in fact. I think we were all impressed and the official opening by Prime Minister Helen Clark later in the year was equally as impressive.



Certainly a highlight on the 2007 conference calendar was the ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability Accelerate Now conference in Melbourne. I received incredibly positive feedback to my presentations from mayors and councillors from all over New Zealand and Australia who attended the conference. People clearly saw that Waitakere was leading the way in terms of sustainability but we all agreed there was still work to be done to save the planet.

In May I received a phone call from the Prime Minister's office asking me to be part of her delegation to Samoa to attend the state funeral of the Head of State, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili 11. The service was very emotional and there must have been 3000 people there. Following the two hour service we all followed the casket to a massive tomb and after a thundering three-gun salute the great doors were opened and the casket taken in.

May also saw a Youth Council representative join us at the formal council meetings and its minutes on the full Council agenda. I felt this was a way to encourage the next generation to take an interest in local government and I also think it's given us a bit of insight into our youngsters.

Also joining us was Allie Eagles' heritage painting. The seven metre by two and a half metre work is almost certainly the largest water colour painting in the world. More than 30 contemporary descendants of early settlers appear in the painting as their settler ancestors and there are literally dozens of objects, small and large, which evoke those times. It's a work of great beauty and meaning which will delight the residents of Waitakere for many years to come.

Hobsonville stole the media limelight in June. We announced we were buying 15 hectares of land to expand the marine cluster with the aim to make Hobsonville the Southern Hemisphere capital of super yacht building. The land is being developed by Waitakere Properties Limited and I look forward to the creation of many new local jobs and spectacular success.

I am particularly proud of two major initiatives we carried out this year. Declaring ourselves a City for Peace and hanging the Declaration of Human Rights in our Council Chamber foyer. We were the first council in the country to do the latter and Chief Human Rights Commissioner Ros Noonan challenged other councils to follow our example. These initiatives might seem 'airy fairy' to some but they are actually very smart thinking.

A city has to have vision and it has to embrace diversity. It has to think about the future and plan for it. I think we do that exceptionally well in this city in that regard and I think that was highlighted by the visit to Waitakere of Peter Sellars who I fondly dubbed the Patron Saint of Waitakere. Peter is a world renown cultural philosopher and he was in New Zealand to contribute to the MAU forum. He is known for his mastery of festival and opera production and his unique view of the importance of the arts globally. His presentation at Council was an inspiration, a vision of the world of creativity as a core part of our humanity and the source of healing in the widest social context. Peter clearly saw and shared my vision for a creative city and everyone who attended the 'audience' with this wonderful man was simply blown away by his passion, intellect and vision.

In the middle of the year I visited our Chinese sister city Ningbo to sign agreements that will hopefully enhance our education and film sectors and add enormously to the potential of the Waitakere economy. The delegation also visited Shanghai and Beijing where we focused on film opportunities.



August saw Prime Minister Helen Clark open our stunning new film sound studio, the country's largest. Production was already underway in the studio before the official opening and the studio is living up to our, and the film industry's, expectations. Movies we have shot here and are shooting include 30 Days of Night, a huge box office hit that will open here in January next year and Korean film Laundry Warrior. These movies are bigger than Ben Hur with \$US30m of funding each. At the beginning of the year the Narnia film used our studios for part of the second Lion Witch and Wardrobe series. We certainly are getting the big picture!

The following month we launched our own version of the government's national campaign for action against family violence. Thanks to funding from The Trusts we were able to produce billboards and newspaper advertisements and my sincere thanks go to former All Black and league legend Va'aiga 'Inga' Tuigamala and Outrageous Fortune television star Robyn Malcolm for standing beside me to declare family violence is "not OK in Waitakere". My thanks also to Dr Pita Sharples, my co-chair of the Mayoral Taskforce against Family Violence, and to taskforce members. Everyone is very committed to this initiative and this is another case of Waitakere leading the way in terms of social policy and conscience.

Towards the end of the year the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance Issues was announced and its investigative process started. I've said this before and I'll say it again - it is vital Waitakere takes a leadership position on this issue early next year because the results will affect us all - as citizens, as local government officials and as politicians. And so I want to use this vehicle to announce we will host a conference about the future of local government and Auckland's future direction. It will be held in March and it will be called simply 'The Future of Auckland'.

By taking some action we are preparing for the future rather than having it written for us. The two-day conference will bring together the best minds available throughout New Zealand and will also draw on best practice examples of governance reform in major cities throughout the world. It will not attempt to solve anything other than to broaden the debate and let some actual facts enter into public disclosure rather than having the voices of the usual suspects dominating the airways which the commission is underway. The conference will include break out sessions so that particular interests can be work-shopped intensively. I would like the results of this conference to form our submissions that our Council, and others from the region, make to the commission. This conference will draw on the collected experience of us all and I sincerely hope it will have your full support. To that end I am formally recommending here that we do it.

M3-M4 Last week I spoke at the excellent youth offending forum attended by around 200 people - a huge turnout. The forum at The Trusts Stadium was organised by the Waitakere Youth Court Judges and aimed to help identify what services are available to work with youth offenders in Waitakere, to create opportunities for agencies to meet and to consider where there were any gaps and how these might be filled. I think every sector was represented and there was a real sense of commitment in the room. While I couldn't stay for the whole day I am sure there was a good deal of information shared and that we will see the benefits of the discussion very soon. I have attached at pages M3 to M4 a paper prepared for the attendees by Principal Youth Court Judge Andrew Becroft which makes very interesting reading.



Another story last week that certainly made interesting reading was the *New Zealand Herald's* story about the Ombudsman's report into the aerial spraying campaign over Waitakere. Mel Smith said officials in charge of the spraying of the city did not pay enough attention to the effect on public health and his report sure does vindicate our stance on the issue. He found shortcomings in the actions of both the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Ministry of Health that he said needed to be recognised so they were not repeated. From the moment the campaign was mooted we as a Council and our community were opposed to it, from a public health point of view and we regarded MAF's attitude as violating human rights. And guess what? We were right. Getting information or honesty out of the ministry was an absolute nightmare. We pushed and pushed to find out what was in the spray but commercial sensitivity was cited as to why we couldn't get that vital information. How utterly ridiculous. Commercial sensitivity taking precedence over the health and well being of human beings? Outrageous. Let's just hope the government departments involved have learnt their lesson in this regard. And in moving past this report I would like to know who is looking out for the people who were affected by the spray. Who is looking after their ongoing health concerns.

In 2007 we won so many awards there's too many to mention. But I will just make note again of our Local Government Premier Creative Places award and being a finalist in the Thies Riverprize for Project Twin Streams. Neither of these accolades came easy and they are true testament to the hard, and successful, work we do. The applause for Waitakere Central can still be heard now, more than a year after we moved in. The final Oscar (well at the time of writing) was our win in the Public Sector Award at the Energywise Awards. A congratulatory letter from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's chairman Roger Sutton says the Waitakere team is doing some great work on a wide range of projects and that we are setting an example for others to follow. Mr Sutton was also pleased with Councillor Penny Hulse's appointment to his board and congratulations on your selection Councillor Hulse.

M5-M12

And a great many Westies won awards over the year as well and my congratulations to all of them. Again, there are simply too many to mention but I do want to pay tribute to home town heroes Waitakere United who travelled to Japan to play in the world club (soccer) challenge in December. More than 30,000 people turned out to watch our boys play a team from Iran. With more than \$500,000 up for grabs the team were wonderful ambassadors for this city and indeed the country even though they didn't win. At pages M5 to M12 is an extract from the tournament programme.

Congratulations also to Cameron Douglas of Sunnyvale who received the internationally recognised title of Master Sommelier following the Master Sommelier Diploma Exam in London. Cameron also received the American Chapter's John Unger Memorial Scholarship and was awarded the United Kingdom's Laurent Perrier Grand Siecle trophy for passing the exam with the highest aggregate marks. Cameron is a senior lecturer at AUT where he is in charge of the Wine and Beverages Programme. He is also a consultant to a number of Auckland's top restaurants, the wine writer for Hospitality Magazine and a member of the wine judging panel for Cuisine Magazine among other publications. Congratulations Cameron, that's a huge milestone and accomplishment.

And while on the topic of wine one of my final duties for the year was attending the Fredatovich family's celebration of 70 years of winemaking in New Zealand at Langtons on Lincoln. It was a very special occasion which the family used to launch Distant Land, a new brand. Congratulations and thanks to the Fredatovich family for the past 70 years and the future. Sadly Peter Dick Fredatovich had died earlier in the year aged 80. Peter was the eldest child of Peter and Lukrica Fredatovich from Hvar in Croatia. Peter and his father established the Lincoln Vineyards in 1937 and retired in 1988.



I would like to thank each and every councillor. I think we make a great team. I would also like to thank Chief Executive Officer Harry O'Rourke and the directors for their support and advice over the year as well as each and every staff member. Thanks also to my personal assistant Vanessa Sherer for her much appreciated commitment and hard work as well as Fiona Cunningham for her strategic advice and support. Have a happy and safe holiday season.

Passing Parade

Elizabeth Lawton, affectionately known as Lizzy from Laingholm passed away on the last day of January, aged just 47.

Madge Carrie, endearingly called Piha Nana, died on February 9.

Celebrated swimming coach Winifred Lawrence who died after a life devoted to competing and coaching.

Joseph Marinovich on February 23 at the age of 81.

We lost one of our sons with the death of New Lynn Community Board member Bill Buchanan on April 16.

This year also saw the passing of former Glen Eden Borough Councillor John (Jack) de Vere.

Henry Gillam at the age of 93 at Edmonton Meadows Rest Home.

In June little Louis Schmidt-Peke died after a tragic accident at Hoani Waititi Marae and Michael Hetaraka was tragically killed in an industrial accident at Pinepac's timber yard in Whenuapai

Seventy seven year old Hamiora (Sam) Mangakahia Waiti died the following month.

Don Selwyn, from Massey, a central figure in New Zealand film, theatre and television.

Glenda Pauling died in August at just 54 years of age. Glenda was one of those women who dedicated her life to her community.

One of the west's great activists, Rae Westbrooke of Glen Eden, died the same month.

On November 13 Ernie Pepperell died aged 86. He will be warmly remembered for his 50 years of volunteer work to Auckland rugby.

Those that passed away at Ons Dorp were:

Nel Bosman, Nan Teehan, Johanna Blind, Ellie Ploeg, Ralph Boyd, Ronald Khin, Mate Ivceovich, Keith Morrison, Emile Francis, Teun (Tom) de Jong, Riet Maarschalkerweerd, Mabel Sampson, Marinus Treffers, Wim de Haan.

The world will miss the likes of:

Luciano Pavoratti, Evel Knievel, Ingmar Bergman, Boris Yeltsin, Anna Nicole Smith, Tommy Newsom and Deborah Kerr.

Questions

Of course no December Mayoral Report would be complete without one or two questions so this year you've got three. I expect your answers early in the New Year.

- Do we really need a second harbour crossing now we've got the hideous Glen Eden Railway overbridge?
- Have you actually ever seen anyone using it?
- Could we set up a bungee jumping operation there?



So you want a cheer up?

And last but not least - Cardiff's South Wales Echo ran this article which would cheer anyone up.

Heads must roll over pole dancing for kids classes

Phillip Nifield, South Wales Echo

PLANS to hold pole dancing classes for children as young as 11 have led to Cardiff council achieving "international infamy".

Conservative councillor Dianne Rees, who made the remark, called for "heads to roll" over the decision to put on classes at the council-owned St David's Hall. The classes have since been withdrawn following protests from parents.

She told the council last night: "How could the council have permitted St David's Hall to put dancing for 11-year-olds on their programme when pole dancing is an integral part of the sex industry?"

"It has no place in children's lives and cannot be seen by any sensible adult as innocent fun and a good way to keep fit."

Councillor Rees asked for guarantees that "*nothing of this sort*" would be repeated in the future.

Councillor Nigel Howells, executive member for sport and leisure, agreed that pole dancing had no place in a programme for children.

He said: "*The two pole dancing workshops offered this autumn were planned as taster sessions in the kind of pole acrobatics seen in circus shows like Cirque du Soleil.*"

"As the content of the sessions were intended to be of a circus nature, they were not labelled adults only.

"Clearly, there were errors of judgement in the inappropriate branding of the workshops and the naivety in the belief that it would be understood these were acrobatic or circus events."

Councillor Howells went on: "*In order that we can be confident that the salutary lesson of this error of judgement is taken seriously, we are undertaking a review of the procedures relating to the planning and programming of activities for children and young people offered by culture, leisure and parks.*"

"This will ensure that good practice is maintained throughout, and will identify any necessary relevant training for staff concerned."

Both Councillor Howells and council leader Rodney Berman - who said he was not involved in authorising the controversial classes - told the meeting that it would be inappropriate to discuss the issue of possible disciplinary action against staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Report of the Mayor be received.



2. That Council supports hosting a two-day conference, 'The Future of Auckland', to discuss the future of local government in Auckland, with particular regard to the Royal Commission on Regional Governance.
3. That Council officers report back to the Policy and Strategy Committee on options for hosting a conference on 'The Future of Auckland'.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE

