



Newtown Residents' Association

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Minutes of Newtown Residents Association Meeting - 21 March 2016

Present: Rhona Carson, Steve Cosgrove, Matt Atkinson, David Wilcock, Evelyn Hopkins, Rick Sahar, Walter Jobstl, Effie Rankin, Jeanie McCafferty, Jane Patterson, Anna Kemble Welch, Martin Hanley, Cr David Lee, Cr Paul Eagle, Steve Dunn, Cheryl Robilliard, Kevin Lethbridge.

Apologies: Peter Frater. Also Kevin for lateness, Jeanie, David, Paul leaving early.

“Newtown Isn’t Rubbish But Its Streets Are”

Jeanie circulated the first draft of a report with this title, about our dissatisfaction and questions about the way WCC is dealing with rubbish, street maintenance, etc, as discussed at February meeting.

Points from discussion:

- Many concerns have been expressed to a number of Council officers, but responses have been poor since work was contracted out.
- Sumps not being cleared - seem to be particularly full around the bottom of Mein Street, which will increase pollution and cause flooding.
- What constitutes general maintenance? We believe the FixIt app should be for exceptional issues, rather than regular on-going maintenance.
- People weary with using FixIt. Many reports not responded to, inefficiencies – eg a phone call about a reported drainage problem came from Christchurch, caller had no local knowledge. The Green Team who responded to a request to remove green waste finally did so but went right past rubbish that also needed clearing to pick up a few prunings.
- Graffiti is cleaned immediately, but rubbish removal takes much longer.
- Anecdotes about contractors appearing (after a long delay) with far too many staff for a simple task.

David Wilcox suggested we need to focus on the questions of process, and why things are not being fixed.

Key Council officers are Kevin Lavery (Council CEO), Anthony Wilson (Chief Asset Manager) and Adrian Mitchell (Waste Operations Manager).

Agreement to invite Kevin Lavery to a meeting to discuss the issues. We will ask for a meeting with him in person, and ask him not to delegate.

Newtown Festival

Initial Festival Report from Martin Hanley (Festival Director)

- New record for number of performances in one day (15 hours).
- Wide range of contractors worked together well.
- 435 stalls - including some sites that had more than one
- Smartphone and Computer access to the Festival programme worked well this year
- Now have worked out how to make a searchable list of all stalls and stages
- Thanks to all the NRA members who helped on Fair day
- Decorated fences for Fair day in Donald McLean Street: admired, to be encouraged.

- Special thanks to Tim Kirby, who programmes traffic lights. He arranged before the Fair to program the Hall Street lights to avoid Mein Street queues.
- Great Newtown Garage Sale 12th March - 30+ garage sales this year
- Expecting that the Festival will break even this year financially
- Stall bookings coming in for next year - 48 so far. \$3500 paid so far
- Funding application to the Council for next 3yr contract funding due on 3rd April, for a meeting of the Economic Growth and Arts Committee on 26th April.
- Setting up a Trust is being worked on.
- Future responsibility for Health and Safety, with new Act - very large body of work. May need to fund an expert to check stallholder compliance and other issues.
- Circus entertainers were really impressed that Council officer checked the compliance (which was correct).

There will be a Review Team meeting in the near future to discuss this year's Festival and the funding application.

Rhona suggests a meeting, possibly between April and May meetings, after we know the outcome of the funding round, for those particularly interested in discussing the establishment of a Trust for the Festival.

Rick moved a vote of thanks to those organising the fair. Passed by acclamation.

Newtown Residents' Association Budget

- Jane has made a skeletal outline of a budget. She wrote this on the whiteboard.
- Projected NRA income \$1876, Projected Expenses about the same.
- February meeting agreed to buy a banner (teardrop)
 - Rhona is asking the Festival graphic designer to adapt the NRA logo for this.
- In the past we asked for funding for honoraria for officers.
 - Martin/Jane moved that we could pay an honorarium for the newsletter (up to \$100 each newsletter) and Keep Newtown Clean co-ordinator (up to \$200 per event)
 - Passed unanimously
- There was a suggestion that we could move the monthly meeting location. This will be thought about.
- Agreement that a 'Meet the Candidates' meeting for the local body elections would be a good use of funds.

Keep Newtown Clean Discussion

- Perhaps the sausage sizzle income could go to the KNC co-ordinator
- Some previous income (held by David W as original convenor of KNC) has been allocated to fixing the barbecue. Any money remaining can be passed on to NRA.
- It was noted that some people appear to find the Keep Newtown Clean name negative. Posters have been defaced with comments about 'gentrification'.
- We are going to think about a new name, perhaps a new focus - original need for cleaning graffiti not so urgent, contractors are doing a good job. Perhaps a broader 'Action Day'.

There is ambivalence about the spread of band and other private posters on lampposts etc - they are unsightly, get torn and tattered, and removing them has been one of the KNC activities but could be a reason some might resent KNC. It would be good to have community poster display boards - the poster bollards were originally intended for this but now contracted to Phantom. This has been discussed before - meeting reiterated support for trying to get some bollards returned to community ownership.

Neighbours' Day on 19th March

Rhona thanked those who contributed to the Saturday Tea Party at St Thomas's for Neighbours Day. An enjoyable event, thanks and congratulations to the team from St Thomas's who hosted it.

Newtown Free WiFi

David W reported that there is now free WiFi outside his shop. David is encouraging more retailers to move their Internet to Netstar, who will add free WiFi to their shops too. There is also a web site that David is developing, listing Newtown businesses. A beta release will be soon after Easter.

Meeting ended at 9:15

Next meeting Monday April 18th, 7.30pm, at the Newtown Hall, 71 Daniell St.