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Grey Power Wanganui Inc
PO Box 4197
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Grey Power Wanganui Inc Newsletter

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From the Mayor



Season's greetings to you all

I am honoured to assist in wrapping up the year with this Grey Power newsletter. I hope that despite this being a particularly wet year, you've had a good one. I've now had just over twelve months in my job as Mayor. For the most part it has been great with the occasional crisis!

Some of the highlights of my year have included; building a strong team from all the Councillors, seeing the NZICPA open at Whanganui Airport, getting even closer to our funding target to rebuild the Sarjeant and meeting many new faces who have moved to the district.

I was proud to work hard with Councillors and our staff to deliver a 2% rates rise for this year. I know everyone at Council is absolutely committed to keeping rates increases as low as possible. We know our ratepayers on fixed incomes struggle to meet increases in costs. There is a move around the Council table to focus on needs, not wants.

I'm heartened by the growth I see in Whanganui. We've had so many new citizens we've had to hold two extra ceremonies this year, and the number of Aucklanders and Wellingtonians I have met recently who have relocated to our greener pastures is astounding! More homes are being built, and there's a buoyancy in the local economy. *Continued on page 3*



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Christmas Message from the President

It is so good to have winter over, the rain this year has been never ending. I found myself counting the days until spring. I think you reach a certain age when the winters seem harder to get through and last winter was a bad one, coughs and colds lingered but through all that your committee worked on behalf of you in between time off after catching those bugs.

I am thrilled to announce that the committee has approved a Life membership to our Cynthia Adams. There could be no more deserving of the honour than Cynthia. Read about it in this newsletter.

We have given our members another big issue in this newsletter, after we had the promoters of the velodrome and council representatives attend a full committee meeting to answer questions regarding its proposed building operation. This was in answer to some concerns our members put forward to us regarding future costs and impact on rates. We were very appreciative that they took the time attend and answer our questions. Read the full rundown of the meeting further on in this newsletter.

Your committee is working towards sharing with our members more of the matters arising in our various portfolios, negative or positive. The way we can do that is in the newsletter, or at our public meetings. If you have ideas regarding other ways we can inform you please feel free to email me.

Another meeting was attended by our Health Portfolios officers Caryl and Anne, with Julie Patterson CEO of the DHB her last, before retiring from her job. We learnt that our letter to the Chairperson of DHB requesting that we have a representative on the Board or on the Disability and Community board has still to be considered. It was not even replied to as it was a Board decision, not a management issue. They did bring it up at the DHB board meeting 15/09/2017, however we have not had a formal reply by the time this newsletter went to print, so once again it is a waiting game.



At base level we have been in talks with Webquest regarding an easier way to send out hundreds of newsletters at a time. Webquest have installed a data system for this to happen. The editor and future editors of the newsletter need to be able to deal with this effectively and efficiently. With having such a large membership base we are looking at every Executive job, either redefining, or altering so we do it more efficiently. We need the right technology to take us through future years and to try and make all the positions on committee easier and time efficient. Committee members are volunteers and cannot be expected to give unlimited time to the organisation. Please bear with us if there are any teething problems.

Members of the executive committee attended a Zone meeting held in Palmerston North where we put forward and had approved, a remit to have a representative on behalf of the elderly on the Disability and Community Board or Health Boards. This remit will now go forward to be considered at Federation level, but that will not happen until the next AGM conference in April 2018.

Vern (Local Issues portfolio) and I attended a meeting with Mayor Hamish which was successful in opening the lines of communication between Grey Power and the council. A big part of our work involves different areas of the council and it is important that we have a direct line to go through when needed.

With Christmas around the corner I hope you all attend our Xmas function which is for members only this year and which the committee have been working hard to prepare for. It's a great way to relax have fun and catch up with each other. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a very healthy 2018.



From the Mayor.. cont from page 1

Looking forward, our next six months will be taken up with developing our long term plan. It is a major piece of work. This looks at what we want to be doing for the next decade and allows us to forecast major projects. Our focus will be on our core business and ensuring that these are maintained at a level necessary for a district of our size. However, we want to hear from groups and individuals about what they want to see in our community. I'm eager to see us be a city that supports our senior residents by keeping them connected and active. I want to see a network of infrastructure across this city for residents with limited mobility and I'm particularly eager to partner with developers and have many more people living in the inner city.

The Mayor and Councillors are elected to lead, however I genuinely believe that the community responsibility doesn't stop once the votes are counted. I am also not naïve enough to believe all the wisdom in the community resides at 101

Guyton Street. I encourage you to submit to our long term plan when you see it come out for consultation, because I'm determined that we as a cil get it right, and that we provide a balanced view.

When it comes to central government, I will continue to lobby to decentralise government and bring jobs to Whanganui, and I will lobby to see action on legislation that provides rates rebates to those in retirement villages now we have a new government. I hope the new government will also examine the rating system when reviewing the tax system as they have promised.

From now into April Whanganui seems to burst with events. I hope you enjoy all that this community has to offer over summer. I wish you all a wonderful festive season filled with friends and family and an excellent new year in which you are blessed with good health and great weather.

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In the last newsletter we profiled the Officer Holders Now some Committee members
(more in next issue)



Committee Member (Local Issues): Graham Adams
Graham has been President, Treasurer and the driving force of Wanganui Grey Power for many years. He has experience on the National Body of Grey Power, in local body politics and is currently an elected member of the DHB



Committee Member (Public Meetings): Anne Taylor
I am pleased to be involved with Grey Power, and looking forward to being an active member. I am involved with a variety of voluntary organisations from gardening to management.



Committee member (Council Issues): Marie Gorinski
It is my first time as a board member, and the experience will give me valuable insight into the organisational dynamics of an organisation with a strong membership base in New Zealand of 65,000 members. Volunteering with Grey Power Wanganui will provide direct contact with other local volunteer professionals who share the passion of advocating on behalf of older people. It is not just about the 'now', it is also about the future, to pave the way for change as everyday lives of older people in New Zealand.



Committee Member (Local Issues): Vern Hill
I joined Grey Power because I believe gender balance is important on a committee
Having served on a number of committees I bring to the organisation my experience at all levels and look forward to helping progress the organisation.



Velodrome Questions Answered



Our investigation of this project seems to have created a stir. Since the meeting (Oct 17) there has been a photo & article in the Chronicle followed by a major article promoting the project in the Saturday Supplement :48 Hours.

The Velodrome project is an exciting prospect for Wanganui but concern has been expressed whether running costs will add to our rates which for most of us are high enough now. Grey Power is always concerned about matters that could lead to increased costs for the large number of members on fixed incomes. Your committee asked those most involved with the project to meet us and discuss the issues. Promoters of the project, Leigh Grant and Bob Smith responded to our invitation along with Councillor David Bennett and from the Council, the General Manager Property: Leighton Toy. The District Council will be ultimate owners and manager of the facility.

Here is what they had to say:

What is the project all about ?

Wanganui has a world class wooden velodrome valued at \$7.1M. It was built 20 years ago and despite the advice to get it covered within five years of construction this never happened. There were moves in the past to achieve this but they came to nothing. Now, due to the enthusiasm and drive of Bob Smith and Leigh Grant, the covering looks like a reality. \$12.5M is the base cost and around \$10m has been assured so far. With the recent offer by Government to contribute \$6M, the project has gained credibility and corporate sponsors who expressed some interest in the past are now open to negotiation. Bob, Leigh and their team are following these leads and are confident the remaining \$2.5 to \$3 M will be raised.

They have formed a charitable trust to raise the money.

The Government contribution was subject to the condition that the building will be suitable for other sports and events in addition to cycling. Hence the original project which just included a cover over the present structure has been extended to the provision of facilities that will replace the Snell pavilion (offices, kitchen, toilets, meeting room, showers, bar, reception, storage, space for a future cafe, etc) and preparation of the track centre so it is suitable for events and other indoor sports including an inline skating track. The structure does not have walls. The Trust that is promoting the project is examining the feasibility and necessity for enclosing the stadium and walls could be the object of further fundraising.

Any cycle track restoration required after 20 years exposure to the weather will be included in the capital expenditure.

Will it duplicate facilities we already have?

There is a strategy of not duplicating current facilities. Court sports are already well catered for and they have not been targeted. Events expected to attract numbers beyond the capacity of the Memorial Hall, concert chamber and Opera House but require the guarantee of a covered stadium are expected to use the venue. Promoters of such events will be required to provide stage, extra seating, portaloos etc as necessary.

Cycling Use Cycling NZ have committed to use the facility as a "Regional Cycling Hub". They will provide one or two full time coaches, ensure National and

International cycling events are allocated to the Wanganui Velodrome and use the venue for elite squad training. They will contract to do this and pay appropriate rent.

There was little comment regarding the local cycling club apart from the assurance that they would still be able to have club rooms at the velodrome

Management

This will be a WDC asset and the council will be responsible for day to day management. The Trust would prefer a separate Board to operate the velodrome with an independent manager and specialised staff. The most important position will involve the marketing of the facility. In the words of Leigh Grant "If you get the right people it can't go wrong".

Several events have registered an early interest ranging from a concert to a conference to an International bridge competition. An event manager would be expected to attract and sign up events like this to ensure the velodrome pays its way. Leighton Toy from the council indicated that the Council already have an events management team and he expected they would do the job. Leigh and Bob both thought a dedicated person would be better as the range of events we have seen in the last few years at Council facilities has not been spectacular. It was thought possible that the events and marketing person could handle Cooks Gardens as well. The marketing person would need to have considerable independence from Council to allow wide ranging negotiations

Operational Costs and effect on Rates

As the capital cost is fully funded there will be no interest charges although the WDC council contribution of \$1m will be borrowed and the interest charges on this will ultimately be a running cost of the velodrome. Cycling and Inline Skating will pay a contracted rent and user charges by individuals and groups will be part of the income. No contracts have yet been negotiated.

An indicative business plan is before Council at the moment and they are expected to examine the plan

closely in the next month. Expected operational income and expenditure has not yet been examined but will be in time for public consideration around late March. The aim is for the velodrome to be self supporting and no burden on rates. Councillor David Bennett noted that a similar situation in Hawkes Bay led to a Council rejection of a velodrome. Leigh Grant pointed out that theirs was a different situation with a \$25M structure built from scratch to be catered for. Mr Grant also emphasised that this was a **regional** facility and is supported by Palmerston North and even Wellington.

A committee member pointed out that in the past, Council have underwritten some events in Wanganui and have had to pay out significant sums when they ran at a loss. Mr Toy indicated that it would be a very rare event indeed for such underwriting to occur for a velodrome event.

There is expected to be regular income from sponsors. Several sponsors have indicated contribution to the capital cost in return for advertising hoardings. Their payment covers three years only. After that, payment will be to the operational costs. A similar deal will be made with the 'Naming Rights' sponsor. Discussions are underway at present with such a sponsor.

Structure and Cost Overruns

The council are undertaking a peer review of the structural plans and the quantity survey. There was some confusion over whether this meant that they may reject the innovative roof structure, which had been intensively researched some years ago. It seems more collaboration is required here.

Conclusion:

The concern for our members is not the project itself. There is great value for the city in this 'events centre'. There will be no interest costs hanging over our heads which is great and it will stimulate business in town. This still does not give assurance that there will be no effect on rates. Hopefully the yet to be completed business plan will reveal all. The Trust expects the facility to be staffed at all times so salaries will be a major component of costs. It all revolves around the management and marketing. We will need much better than we have seen for other council facilities.

Subscriptions

Membership year: 1st April - 31st March

New Memberships: After January 1: subs will be for the new 1st April year
Up until December 31 subs will be for current year

Renewing memberships: Please pay before 31 March

If subs are not paid by 1 June the membership is terminated

Renewals after that date are treated as new members.. new numbers etc.

Terminated members do not receive newsletters (NZ or Wanganui) and your GP Electricity will change to Pulse Energy.

2017/18 subs remain at \$15 single and \$25 double. Post to Box 4197 or at greypowerwanganui.co.nz

Our Last Meeting



The candidates' meeting was well attended and all candidates gave a good account of their policies. Good questions from the floor and well controlled by Craig Hanford and Vern Hill.

Comments from members were complimentary and no one complained about no afternoon tea
Huge contributions for the food bank.

Thank you !

Cynthia Adams becomes life member of Greypower Wanganui



Cynthia joined Greypower in 2003, joined the committee the next year and by 2005 was secretary. She took on the onerous task of membership secretary in 2008 and has been doing that for the past nine years. While husband Graham has been the Wanganui face of Greypower for the past ten years, Cynthia has been the workhorse, toiling in the background. Keeping track of over 2000 members, subscriptions, new membership cards each year and keeping the NZ Federation up to date with all the data requires meticulous accuracy and tenacity. Her computer skills have also been invaluable to Graham who had responsibility for the newsletter.

Your committee unanimously voted her life membership and have been busy recruiting another person to take on the membership secretary role, giving Cynthia a well earned rest. Thank you Cynthia!

Email addresses: If you received this newsletter by email we obviously have your email address.

If not, please send an email to the newsletter editor at jimcall@xtra.co.nz. Not only will you receive your newsletter by email, you will also receive other news and notices of interest.

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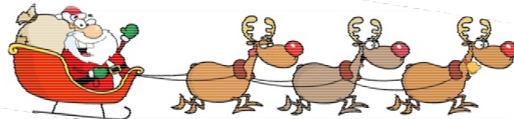
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You can attempt to negotiate with the landlord. If there is no progress there you should try and find out what rents people are paying for comparable properties. You can then ask the tenancy tribunal to check that your rent is fair.. www.tenancy.govt.nz/disputes/tribunal/ and you may make progress. Note that Landlords may not ask for an increased rent within six months of the last increase.



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