

Waituna West Community Meeting held on 13th May 2026

Present:

Committee - Maryanne Shannon, John Williamson, Jeremy Cumming, Marija Hare, Sam Welch.

Council - Sam Hill, Alison Short.

Apologies: Craig Hogan, Hugh Hare, Lyndsay Will, Erin Moar, Greg Shannon.

Minutes of last meeting: - Accepted as read

1st Maryanne Shannon

2nd Marija Hare

Treasurer's Report: - Jeremy Cumming

Balances @ 30/4/26

Community \$2065.23

1st Jeremy Cumming

Hall \$2041.63

2nd Marija Hare

Council Report - Sam Hill: - Copied verbatim-ish.

MDC updates

1. There was the successful Farm Plastic Recycling Drop-Off Event last month. 74 Manawatū farmers diverted nearly 42 tonnes of farm plastics from landfill at a recycling event hosted by Manawatū District Council and Plasback. The event saw a total of 190 Plasback liners of bale wrap and silage stack covers collected. Funded through the waste levy provided to the Council by the Ministry for the Environment, the event was delivered at no cost to ratepayers. Such was its success - there is likely to be another event within the next year. Farmers keen to take part are encouraged to email: infrastructure@mdc.govt.nz to be notified when details are confirmed. [That's a wrap: farmers, town work on plastic round-up](#)

An excellent idea that should have been implemented years ago!

2. Turners Road Extension was confirmed for the long-term Kawakawa Industrial Park project. Stringfellows Civil Engineering Contractors were awarded the contract. This project connects Turners Road through to Kawakawa Road unlocking 24 Ha of industrial land, supporting the Kawakawa Road Industrial Project, and aligning with the Te Utanganui regional freight hub. The three-stage project delivers a 1.2km link between Turners Road and Kawakawa Road in Feilding, along with an upgrade of the Darragh Road / Turners Road intersection. These improvements will further open up the Kawakawa Industrial and Agribusiness Park to industry and developers. [Final Stage of Turners Road Extension Awarded | Manawatū District Council](#)

Alison pointed out that this was already a paper road so just needed proper formation,

3. Awahuri Forest-Kitchener Park Trust was formally ended. But the day-to-day management of the Park will remain largely the same as will the future of the Park in the hands of MDC management and Green by Nature. The Trust have done sterling work in biodiversity, conservation, and recreation in their 12 years and now the Park has moved to a maintenance and protection phase. [End of an Era for Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust | Manawātū District Council](#)

The bike/foot path that runs from Kowhai Park to Awahuri Forest will be extended to make a circular loop back to Town via the Oroua River stop-bank, but decisions have yet to be made as to how the road can be safely crossed at the forest. Maybe it will go under the bridge?

4. MDC announced that they have made 18 formal submissions since January - which reinforces its voice at a national level. [Manawātū District Council Strengthens Local Voice Through National Advocacy | Manawātū District Council](#)

Central Government announcement: "Simplifying Local Government" (5 May 2026)

On 5 May 2026 - The Government announced the "head start pathway" as part of their "Simplifying Local Government" proposals. The government is pushing through Local Government reorganisation, giving Councils a three-month deadline to propose mergers/amalgamation with two or more Councils/Territorial Authorities into larger 'Unitary Authorities' (the "Head Start"/Voluntary Path) or face a centrally imposed restructuring (called "Backstop"/Compulsory Path). Councils are considering their options.

We've been here before and decided yeah – nah. This once again sounds like Govt. hubris where they haven't been bothered to put the time in to finding out what really needs to be done on an individual basis and have lumped everyone into the underachiever class.

School – No report at this time

General –

Maryanne and John attended the Community – Council forum on the 1st of April which put forward some interesting ideas from many participants and gave a rundown of Council operations that affects us. These are all ongoing, and it was stressed that if members of the community know of things that need fixing, i.e. culverts, trees down across roads etc. then Council needs to be informed if they are to get a quick repair done, and this can be achieved best by logging into Council's Antenno website.

It was stated that the Waituna cemetery was due for a face-lift next year .

Hall:

The roof leak down into the kitchen has had a temporary fix with silicone but needs a proper job done when the Hall is painted.

Hall is to be upgraded and painted next summer.

Memorial shed doors have been emplaced to keep the barbeque safe – but temporarily the combo is written by the lock!

Community:

A number of issues were raised, mainly about roads and the effects of the storm that hit in Feb., for which the repairs are still ongoing. With events like this happening more regularly around the country, our local version was timely to remind everyone that we are not immune. Roads were closed, people were cut off, power was out and cell phone towers didn't hold up for too long. It was noted that communications are key at times like this, and while we have an offline enabled radio centred on the school, no one who knows how to use it or lives locally and we need to be able to be in touch with outliers within the district. We also have the as yet unresolved issue of not being able to access the AED located at the school without calling up St. John to get the code – in an area where there is still no cell-phone reception!

With the cemetery upgrade proposed for next year, it was suggested that perhaps a memorial wall could at the same time be put up so that those who have been cremated may have a plaque made and placed so that there is a tangible record of them being a part of the area's history.

Cr. Sam Hall asked us to keep an eye out for any issues we may have around the district, and the following are some that were submitted:

On the Waituna – Tapuae Road – a deep undercut on the seal/drain on the bank-side just up the hill from 187 gateway.



This may not seem very dramatic but vehicles passing on this narrow stretch find the depth a little disconcerting!

- Same road, just up the hill and around the corner at the QEII bush block.



This slip-out has been getting bigger over the past few years and will affect the sealed part of the road in the not too distant future.

- Same road, down in the valley from the first photo. This vine covered tree is falling toward the road and makes this area quite tight.



Dunolly Road, just down from Gratton's corner. This slumped tree stump is known to Council and is on the list!



Beaconsfield Valley Road – There is a slump onto the road between properties 520 & 584 which is redirecting water onto the road.

This last is not a Council Problem but could be directed by them to the appropriate agency – NZTA. Whoever did the patch job on SH54 at the end of Benson’s Road made a pig’s ear of it. It’s basically a sealed pothole. Cars disappear into it and bounce their way up the other side!



Lastly, a congratulations to the Council for winning best National water tasting competition, but sadly missing out on the Aussie section, losing to Katherine, of all places. Crocodiles evidently just add that extra little something!!

Meeting Closed at around 8:30 pm

Next Meeting will be held on Wednesday August 12th @ 7:05pm