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Presidents Report

At our recent planning meeting Mayor John Laws and councillors commented that The Omaha Residents association is by far the best represented and best supported group of this type in Rodney if not in the country. It was a real thrill that over 100 people turned up to this years planning session, a record number.

It was nice to hear such comments and to think that this is how the Council sees us. From our point of view the reason is clear.

Omaha is a special place to all of us who come here whether as holiday makers, weekenders or permanent residents. Support for the community is just so much stronger and with it the desire to see that the facilities and ambiance continue to improve.

A membership of 1106 allows us to speak for Omaha with a united voice and our requests are taken very seriously as a result. This is in comparison with many larger communities where initiatives are backed by a very small group and where there is little evidence of broad community support.

2006 has been a year of progress but not without the type of delays and frustrations that probably characterise the activities of organisations such as ours in dealings with local authorities.

In this newsletter we have reported on progress toward meeting the environment targets we set at the 2005 meeting and which were confirmed at the last Annual general Meeting.

Our major issues at present include seeing the completion of the causeway walkway barriers and bridge clip-ons. We had pressed very hard to have this completed by the end of the year. While this will not happen we are confident the end is in sight.

The second outstanding is the tidying up of the LIM report issue that arose following the release of the Tonkin Taylor report. It is disappointing that we had to involve our solicitors in addition to the various engineering experts to compel the council to admit they were in error. The matter is covered fully in the newsletter.

The news about the planned Omaha Park development only reached us recently. We have asked our councillors to keep us in the picture and expressed the view that our principal concern has to be the ability of the local infrastructure (particularly the roads) to cope with a virtual doubling of the population coming to this area.

During the year the committee, and I mention Peter Jackson particularly, have established contact with the various Council officers responsible for works at Omaha. I am sure that while projects have not been completed as quickly as we might have hoped they would have been rather further behind had it not been for the constant pressure we have brought to bear.

It was very satisfying to see the collection of recycling material moved to the same day as the normal rubbish collection, a sensible and long overdue outcome.

The accounts show that we have made a small loss for the year. This is entirely as a result of incurring some \$5500 of legal costs on the LIM report issue. We believe it was necessary given the number of resident's initially affected but I have to say that had the council been more ready to discuss the issue and to consult with interested parties (as they had originally undertaken) it would not have been necessary. We have asked for a reimbursement of our costs but have had no response at time of writing.

The newsletter cost of production is now almost entirely covered by advertising revenue and we believe that the same will apply to the website. Please use the web when you need information on local services supplies or entertainment. There were some further one off costs with work to the member database and to the web site. We do not expect these will repeat in 2007 and recommend the present levy of \$25 per property remain unchanged.

Lastly let me acknowledge the work done by the 2006 committee. This is a highly professional and motivated group who have spent considerable time and efforts on Residents matters.

To all residents may I extend on behalf of the OBC committee a happy Xmas, a prosperous New Year a safe holiday and many happy hours at Omaha.

Greg Stenbeck