

Date: Thursday 20 May 2021
Time: 3.00pm
Meeting Room: St Chads Church and Community Centre
Venue: 38 St Johns Road
Meadowbank

Ōrākei Local Board

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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May 20th, 2021. OLB Open Agenda, St Chads Church and Community Centre.

Mr Chair, ladies and gentlemen of the Orakei Local Board, I thank you for this opportunity to speak at this Public Forum, as Chair of the Eastern Bays Songbird Project.

I'd like to take this brief time to firstly express our sincere appreciation for your on-going financial support, then to brief you on current and future 'stretch' activities, and finally to share my perspective of current issues as Chair with you.

We were incorporated as a registered society on 16 August 2017 so we are approaching the end of our fourth year of continuous operations. I invite and encourage you all to attend our AGM on Wednesday the 8th of September to hear the summary of the past year's activities and a presentation by Professor Rachael Fewster based on all our data accumulated to date.

Our activities depend on the patronage of the OLB for 65% of our funding, with the balance from other tied funds received from Council directed at specific activities. We sincerely appreciate the nature of the funding from the OLB which allows us to direct activities as and where needed, and finance the 'public-facing' activities particularly the regular trap handout events.

Our financial year mirrors that of our funder, the Council. In the year to date from 1st July 2020 we spent a total of \$86,000 including GST, the majority of which was spent on Salaries and Contractors, of which we have four, all part-time.

This year we have added effort towards invasive plant control and education in areas where they threaten native plants constituting a habitat for birds, and have complemented this with several seedling handouts. I see this function expanding in future.

The Eco-Corridors Report was concluded in September last year and is a milestone in its field and a roadmap for our work in the Eastern Bays. In the

coming months we plan to run trap handouts tailored specifically to zones identified in the report.

This year we also greatly expanded our capability for communications, appointing Ms Jan Power to the Management Committee in this role.

This is a good example of the OLB's funding being leveraged many times over by the additional input provided at no cost by volunteer activity.

Our 'stretch' activities include the expansion of trailer-based trap handouts in to adjoining suburbs still within the OLB territory.

Our third stretch activity this year is the implementation of a comprehensive monitoring program to allow us to identify and record predator types and frequencies across the zone as an indicator of our effects as well as to direct our energies. Project Coordinator Michelle tells me this monitoring program will set a standard in its field among groups such as ours, and already there is great interest to see how it is done.

My final comments concern the timing and ongoing security of tenure of our funding.

It may not be the OLB's problem, but for the past two years funding allocated by the OLB in July or August hasn't reached our account from Auckland Council until December 2019 and January 2021 respectively.

This isn't ideal and if funding were to be continued this year, it would be appreciated if we could possibly receive it closer to the time of its allocation, by whatever means.

Related to this I request that the OLB give consideration to putting our funding on a 'frame' basis, subject to performance, of say three years. That way we could adopt a more expansionist policy safe in the knowledge that we can meet our commitments beyond a July-June year.

Many thanks for your much valued support,

Mark Booth,

Chair EBSP.