

MBMA REPORT - 2016 AGM

There has been a bit more activity this year.

Council Monitoring Charges

Those of you who have moorings and have had their two yearly mooring survey undertaken, will have had an invoice from the Marlborough District Council for \$40 for monitoring your coastal permit. Effectively this is for receiving a report from your mooring maintenance provider and filing it!

The Resource Management Act provides for Council to recover no more than *the reasonable costs incurred by the local authority*.

MBMA objected to the manager of the relevant department of Council on the basis that \$40 was not a reasonable cost for the minimal amount of work involved. We were not successful. The next course of action will be to object when Council publicly notifies its charges which it does on an annual basis.

Waikawa Moorings

Most members who have moorings in Waikawa Bay were required to reapply for the resource consents for their moorings as they were due to expire. (Note that not all moorings in Waikawa Bay were affected).

We were hoping that MDC would have sorted the Bylaw out before the existing temporary resource consents for moorings expired. MDC is still pursuing the Bylaw however the appeal to the Environment Court on the Plan change that provided for this was only resolved in August last year.

On behalf of our members with moorings in the Bay, on the 2nd of February, MBMA submitted a group application to limit the cost to our members. We negotiated with Council for a lodgement fee of \$5,000 for the group application which was paid by MBMA rather than each individual paying \$300. We also requested that processing of the group application be put on hold pending implementation of the Bylaw and moving all moorings within the MMA's, thus Council will not be racking up costs in the meantime.

When this issue with the resource consent is all sorted, MBMA will recover costs from the relevant MBMA members who are part of the group application. We are hoping this will be a relatively small amount and certainly less than if you had individually applied.

In the meantime Council has been undertaking its own investigations as to the logistics and costs of reshuffling the moorings in Waikawa Bay and putting most of them on a mooring system that reduces the swing circle. They are wanting to ensure that the project is viable. We hope to have further discussions with them soon on the outcome of their investigations, particularly in regards to potential costs to our members with moorings in the Bay

Marina Charges

While we have managed to hold marina charge increases to a minimum over recent years, it is useful to keep up to date on the national scene so that we have good background information when discussing charges with Port Marlborough.

A couple of years ago we undertook a review of charges and ownership structures of marinas throughout the country and compared that with Port Marlborough charges. MBMA will be going through that exercise again in the coming year to update ourselves.

Marlborough Environment Plan

On 9 July 2016 the Marlborough District Council publicly notified its proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (MEP). This Plan will eventually replace the current Marlborough Regional Policy Statement, Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan and the Wairau/ Awatere Resource Management Plan.

In accordance with the outcome of Plan Change 21, the MEP has removed the marina zoning from the east side of the existing Waikawa marina and included a new area of Marina Zone to the north of the existing marina. The removed marina zone which currently has a number of moorings in it, reverts to Coastal Marine Zone. Moorings will now be able to remain in that area.

The Plan also includes the three Mooring Management Areas into which moorings are eventually to be situated. Relevant rules have also been included in the Plan.

The building blocks for sorting out the moorings in Waikawa Bay are therefore in place. As mentioned above it is the logistics of shuffling the moorings and the costs which have yet to be sorted.

Another important matter in the proposed MEP to many of our members is the introduction of coastal occupancy charges for all structures in the coastal marine area. This includes occupancy charges for moorings, jetties, boatsheds and marine farms. It is something that we knew was coming and had been signalled in the existing plans for a number of years.

The quantum of the coastal occupancy charges for moorings (and other coastal structures) has not been determined yet. That is to be done through the Council's annual plan process.

Your Committee's view is that coastal occupancy charges are inevitable and to a certain extent will provide a better basis for the ongoing use of public coastal space for mooring our boats. i.e there can be less cause for objection if we are paying for the use of the coastal marine area. I think that MBMA would be wasting its time and resources if we wanted to push for not paying anything for coastal occupancy charges for moorings.

At present this will not affect Port Marlborough's marinas, so there won't be any relevant increase in marina charges as a result of the introduction of coastal occupancy charges.

MBMA will be keeping an eye on the level of charges that Council tries to impose and to make sure that this is equitable with others such as marine farmers on an area for area basis and also on an effects basis. We will most likely have to make a submission on the relevant Annual Plan when the charges are announced.

There are new objectives and policies around obtaining a coastal permit for a new mooring or renewing existing moorings. The most relevant of these is to limit moorings to the likes of boating clubs and private property owners in the Sounds. Property owners would only be allowed one mooring. Mooring owners who do not have property in the Sounds will not get new moorings and are unlikely to have existing ones granted when they come up for renewal. Mooring owners without property in the Sounds, but who are in the newly established Mooring Management Areas in Waikawa Bay, will not be affected by this.

Another very relevant matter in the MEP to boaties is the proposed rules regarding discharge of human sewage from boats. The most relevant proposed rule states that *from 9 June 2022, the discharge of human sewage, except Grade A or B treated sewerage, from a ship within 1000m of MHWS*. This means that there will be very few places in the Marlborough Sounds where even holding tanks could be discharged without discharging via a relatively sophisticated sewage treatment plant on-board your boat. It is not a matter that MBMA has a mandate to pick up on, but one which the boats clubs will definitely be submitting on and one which as individuals you should submit on. It could have a major impact on the continued viability of your own boating activity!

The MEP is a complex document. There may be other matters that affect mooring owners and marina berth holders that will come to light at a later stage once the full implications of the proposed Plan are realised.

Financial Situation

MBMA remains in a good financial situation with good reserves set aside for a fighting fund in the event we need to put some serious horsepower into defending or promoting our causes.

Committee

We have been fortunate over the years to have had a strong core of members on the committee who have been working hard for our members.

A number of the older committee members have since moved on and some of the remaining ones have been serving for many years.

We are always keen to have new committee members who may wish to give time and inject new ideas and energy into preserving the interests of berth holders and mooring owners. If you are interested in becoming more actively involved in MBMA, we would love to hear from you.

John Jackson
MBMA CHAIRMAN
(Report written by Paul Williams)