

BOT Update: Headlines from the December 2020 Meeting

A full copy of the minutes of this meeting are available from the Main office.

This was our 8th and final full meeting for the school year. It is the time of the year, being the end of Term 4, where we review 2020 and confirm the budget for 2021.

What a busy end of 2020 we had. While our main items of focus this month were the Annual Plan review, the 2021 Budget, a Rogers Charitable Trust update, and a discussion about a turf, a policy update (to provide consistency over the wording on 2 complaints procedures) along with our usual items, we had quite a bit of time on the new “NELPS” as to what they are about (this is a new acronym “**N**ational **E**ducation and **L**earning **P**riorities) and how they affect our charter. These are a flow on from the new Education and Training Act 2020 which replaces the Education Acts of 1964 and 1989 (or as we have known it – Tomorrows Schools). We are starting the transition to the requirements of the new act from January of next year, with our current NEG’s (National Education Guidelines) and NAGs (National Administration Guidelines) being replaced by a new strategic planning and reporting framework for the 2023 school year. Therefore, there will be a few extra “teacher only days” over the next couple of years as the new framework is embedded across the schooling system. We just hope we do not have another “2020 year” series of events to add to these changes!

This caused a longer than usual meeting. The summary is:

- We started the evening welcoming back Jock Ellis, who stood again in our midterm elections, and welcomed new BOT member Sarah Davies who replaced Tracy Findlay who stood down. Tracy graced us with her presence for the start of the meeting so that we could farewell her and thank her for her input over her term.
- We then quickly confirmed our 2 policies (Complaints concerning students (which was held over from last month) and Complaints concerning Staff) so that we could ensure consistency between the processes of those two policies.
- We then walked our way through the 2020 Annual Plan. This is the 2nd review that we do, the first one halfway, to see how we got on meeting the targets we set ourselves back in February. As usual the leadership and teaching team did a pretty good job meeting most of the targets set especially considering the COVID affected year. Obviously, some of the planned action items were missed or only partly completed because of forces outside everyone’s control.
- We had the update on the Multisport turf, which provided us with comparable quotes for the actual surface and fencing but didn’t receive the hoped for roofing outline. The missing information is because it is sourced out of Australia and with their recent COVID lockdowns, had issues providing what we need. We have given them a two-week window to provide what we need before looking elsewhere, because we want this new facility installed during the 2021 school year.
- As part of our usual review of the monthly Financial accounts we considered how we have tracked for this year. This lead nicely into our Budgeting discussion for 2021. According to MOE guidance it is good management for the school to have cash reserves proportionate to

our funding to protect the school in the event of any adverse events. This would be, for example, a significant reduction of pupil numbers, or a need for relieving teachers, again due to a significant event, that would utilise far more than we are allocated by the MOE. Because we have ample reserves in place to provide the said safety net, and we already know that 2020 will end up with a far greater surplus than we budgeted for, we are budgeting a large deficit for 2021 to accommodate the said installation of the multisport turf and a major upgrade of “F Block” (that I covered off last meeting). These are two exciting projects that will further enhance what Te Awamutu College has for the benefit of its students.

- The BOT looked at its charter for 2021-2024, as it’s required to do an annual basis and reviewed it against the NELPs and the charter review that we performed at the end of 2019 (The findings of that review were covered off in a very recent newsletter to the school community).
- The usual, Health and Safety report, Property report, correspondence and last meeting’s minutes were tabled and discussed where necessary. A concern highlighted in the H&S report is that while the MOE said they were going to provide guidelines for a school’s lockdown procedures, they expect each school to develop its own! As the report noted *“Lockdowns can be implemented for a range of different factors/scenarios, so designing lockdown procedures that meet a wide range of different possible scenarios and that are flexible and can change according to evolving scenarios, which everyone can understand and remember, is a significant challenge for schools. This will take some time to develop further.”* Just something else to add to the workload of teaching!!
- An update was provided regarding the independent Trustees of the Rogers Charitable Trust. These Trustees are appointed for a term of two years and their term is now up. It was thought that they might continue for another term to see through the implementation of the recently completed review. However, after due consideration, they have decided that they are not available (both departing Trustees, Noldy Rust and Jo Sheridan, have been Trustees for a good period of time and have done a fantastic job, so we wish them well for their future endeavours), so we needed to consider replacements. These replacements are being advertised in the “Waikato Times” and all being well will be appointed prior to Christmas.
- Tony provided us with a verbal report this month. As has been noted in previous November/December meeting reports, providing a full complement of Staff now seems to be an annual “hassle” due to the lack of teachers available in the workforce so having the Te Awamutu College campus looking as good as it does provides support to Tony in finding quality teachers for our kids. I believe that this year, Tony has reaped the rewards of the funds that we spend on our campus because we have been able to secure teachers, who commented that the facilities helped in their decision-making process.

Our next full meeting will be held Thursday 24th February 2021 at 6.00pm in the Staff Room. As is usual the meetings are open to all so if you are interested in what we get up to, do come along and see and hear what we do; you are most welcome.

Craig Yardley Chairperson

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