

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### NRKC AGM 10 December 2022

**Question from Anne Warren:** *Why is there contention with Ngati Rongomai and their school?*

Donna - NRKC support Rongomai having their own Kura, but we support their school being established on Rongomai land as once established, it will be the only school able to go up on Rangiteaorere lands. This was confirmed by Ministry of Education. If we sit here and say nothing, it is at our cost.

We offered to cut out two blocks of land on Te Ngae Farm to provide for sports fields and courts. We asked that the name of the school be a neutral name that could be shared between both Rongomai and Rangiteaorere – like Te Ngae, Whakapoungakau, Tikitere or Mokoia.

We need to come to an understanding because both tribes count here. The first school in the Te Arawa confederation was established here on Te Ngae Farm. That is what we have placed before the Crown and that is what the mediation is about right now.

Access in and out of Te Ngae lands is a lot safer than the current site - on the main road, it is a very dangerous exit. We do need everyone to understand that this is not just a case of being stubborn, but Rangiteaorere has a right to the education of its children too.

For the inquiry, what we are seeking to do a joint arrangement with Rongomai so that your mokopuna can go to school across the road from where you're situated but it will have a neutral name. We have sought to appoint half the trustees to the board. We know of the skill and capacity of the Rongomai family. We will not appoint people who cannot work cooperatively with their outstanding leadership, but we need time to be ready ourselves for a school. We have very gifted members in our tribe that can help here. We have asked to appoint half the trustees, and also the principal of the school will be jointly chosen by both sides. We hope to have an agreement acceptable but that's where we are at.

Donna: We have two questions on Health. We will deal with them together.

**Question from Shirley Ulrich:** *What is being done about domestic abuse, drug abuse, elderly abuse, lack of housing etc., how can we tautoko your initiatives, how can NRKC implement strategies with some of these complex issues, who will monitor how will you measure success and failures?*

**Question from Adrian Farrell:** *Given the rising cost of visiting doctors, our whanau are struggling to make appointments and prescriptions especially in Rotorua, are the trustees considering anything that will support our Hapu, a sanctuary for our people, a Maori service that many will be willing to attend given what's happening now.*

Donna: This is a timely opportunity to talk of the work we have been involved with Ministry of Health. All other registered Hapu have gone under the umbrella of Arawa lakes. We NRKC applied separately to have our own data share management with MoH. We are in the throes of piloting our approach.

A lot of care and thought has gone into health and services for our people given many of our people are in Auckland and across the country. We receive data from MoH directly as Ngati Rangiteaorere, that data is held in a confidential database, no one gets access.

We have knowledge of where our families are spread. We bid for the right to run a pilot project with MoH in Auckland. The focus is heavily weighted towards the south-side of Auckland but not exclusively so as we have members in the Auckland area and north shore where our families are.

We are talking, with families about what the effects are they are having with covid and long covid. What we are finding is there are problems with drug and alcohol abuse and so we've chosen to focus not on the clinical side of the abuse but on the rehabilitative side of drug and alcohol abuse which is loosely associated with mental health and suicide, and we have 3 small teams led by whanau, Kaa Kereama and her whanau, Kereama Pene and the Pene whanau in north shore and central Auckland, and with Hapeta whanau.

We've gone in and said that we've developed a questionnaire aimed at getting clear what the needs are that a family has and their willingness to participate in the pilot.

Where we are going with this, that through the data share scheme we are able to get our own families in the Auckland area, to confirm that they wish to participate, to receive and answer the questionnaire, and to prioritize where we focus our efforts.

We are hearing we've hit it. Drug abuse rehabilitation and suicide. How can we best enable our families to access health when they live so far away from the marae. Our desire is to have Hauora on our lands, but our people are living elsewhere, how do families out of Rotorua access these services.

We are trialing telephone health, taking the health into our homes. What we are finding is whanau drop off the medical register when they can't afford to pay. You then have to go to emergency services to get help, you get charged more than if you had your own private clinic, and the service doesn't keep all the records, so it is important the messages of keeping obnoxious drugs out of our body isn't hitting home. They spend a lot of money, but none are reaching the whanau, because they're falling off because they can't pay the bills.

The pilot is called "using phones" The phones provide an ability to ring in and explain what the illness is and to provide a form of service where over the phone you can get the first hint of what needs to be done but if its serious it gets kicked up to the next level.

We are trialing this alongside the NZMC. We have to put in a report as to how this meeting supports this pilot project and we are saying that our families that join in will be a part of an overall health approach which will look at our immunization rate.

For a little tribe we have a low immunization rate for all sorts of illnesses, but we are up there with not getting our children immunized. We will work through it. We find a way to deal with how the medical system chops out our family who can't afford to pay.

That is essentially the answer we are giving to the question, how are we delivering healthy care to families.

On drug dependency and domestic abuse, we are taking advice from the NZMC who have expertise in their field. I know our own will do better when administered health from our own. It may be a case of having to combine external expertise with our own families' members being responsible for their members who are unwell.

Looks like we have a question from the Marae cluster.

### **Lynda Vercoe - Marae Group**

I am here to speak to item 10 – NRKC wanting to amend trust deed to add half trustees to the marae trust. Our trustees have met, and this is our response (in summary);

- The notice set out in public has left trustees and Hapu members confused.

- Trustees are selected by Koromatua whanau, to do this is disrespectful.
- There has been no korero with trustees on amending the deed.
- We need support and meaningful dialogue - hui, opportunities for whanaunga, funding facilitation and putea.
- Fulfill and achieve your own mandate and obligations to Ngati Rangiteaorere.
- We have work to do, the marae was not in good shape. Things are getting better here and with our eastside whanau there is confidence the Marae is in good hands. 100 members support the Marae Trust, and we object to the trust deed being amended.
- NRKC should provide the putea, we shouldn't have to ask. It is your responsibility to Ngati Rangiteaorere. We have attempted to meet on the finances but to no avail.
- With your basket and our basket, together we will thrive.

Lynda Vercoe continues. There are many people here wanting to ask questions. They will ask them one after the other. They will speak on whatever topic they want, not on what you want. First up.

**Kiri Potaka-Dewes:** My issue is the Fisheries board and the elections earlier this year. Serious concern for lack of support for the elections from the NR representative. The numbers were shocking. Return votes were down from previous election. Pikia and Whakaue are not happy with vote numbers. We met with board and challenged the Register. It's corrupted and it happens right across the board. We are calling for a whole new election right across Te Arawa. All the trustees sitting in there are all dubious, highly questionable. We want an independent auditor.

There are other subjects. You've run through a whole series of reports, and you haven't given us a chance to ask questions. That is a corrupt practice. Have some respect for your iwi and your kaumatua. There is no one senior to us here. Have some respect for your kaumatua as well.

**Christine Phillips:** *Regards Ngati Rongomai's grant of \$10 million to build a school, we need to apply for that grant ourselves. The second is the financial report. What has been purchased? We haven't had discussion of what's going on, for instance the \$2 million house up at the lake. Was that house tenanted, did you pay it off, were improvements made, I heard that the block up here with Ngati Rongomai, I heard it was purchased by NRKC. You never spoke to us about this. You need to tell us why. Have the loans been repaid? Is income from Te Ngae farm half of what it was, the old trust got \$130,000, \$60,000 was distributed to our four maraes for improvements, scholarships, it wasn't much but we used to get it. When you took the Te Ngae farm trust to court, I was supportive because I thought that our marae would benefit from it because a lot of the programs negotiated were put on hold but none of these things have happened since 2015 and 2016. Since uncle Bill died, we haven't received the \$10k every year like we used to. The Runanga doesn't represent the people but for some of us it does, why don't we work together. Why only one roopu be in control, why can't we work together? This was the dream of our first settlement but its just got worse. The WOF for this wharekai had not been done for 4 years. What you've done is awesome, but you need to explain it to us properly, explain what your plans are, why you are doing what you're doing?*

**Tiriana Turara** – *my dad is John Te Kiri, and his mum is Sarah. Generally unsatisfied with the way this hui was run. I've had no preparation at all, to know what's going on. Me coming in, where do I fit when the entity looking after our assets is removed and disconnected. Our challenge to the committee is, let's be real and get together. Secondly, what is the name of our marae, is it Mātaikōtare or Waiohewa? My challenge to the Iwi is to get it right.*

**Ngahina Te Kiri:** – *pertaining to financial report, it was stated in 2019 stated \$50,000 was held for the marae trust. Please address that. We have asked several times to handover all records over to the*

*marae. It has not happened in 3 years. No report and no response. We want to know where our money is. Until then the financial report is null and void.*

Ken Goldsmith addressed the issue in his report. The marae owes the NRKC. That amount is now \$91k.

**Margaret Foley** – *the nominees we choose were disregarded. They were chosen by NRKC to guarantee those members to roll over. I move they stand down and a real process is done with real people in 2023. Do you accept the amendment. Section 20 of the NGATI RANGITEAORERE settlement date 2014 states the NRKC is not really an entity that is legal so we're going to take this to court by the way and Curtis Bidois will be representing us in court.*

**Donna:** Are there any more questions? Dr Ken will talk to the fisheries question at the end as this hui is about NRKC, so those questions go first but up-front aunt, you and Christina have always been on the Kaumatua Committee. We are bringing in new ones to join the committee. We do not discount your long service to the tribe and to be members of the Kaumatua Committee.

### **1. Lake House sale and purchase**

I will address the question about the House at the lake. The monetary component will be addressed by Ken Goldsmith. I will begin by saying the reason we brought the lake property. It came on the market. It is the only property surrounding our lake, where building a house, motel or resort could be built and it could have the ability to look into the crater of our lake. This means it would destroy our 100-year vision that when we finish planting our lake crater in native, in 100 years' time and when your descendants go for a swim, when they look up, they will see what their tupuna would have seen 500 years ago. That has always been our vision. The million-dollar plus property was the one block we didn't have control over around our lake. We brought it with our hands on our hearts, we brought the house and 18-hectares of land adjoining.

The house has now been sold, we cut out a fresh new title and with that we made sure no one could ever build with a view to our lake. We had to restrike a fresh new title. We did it, then we sold it for \$1.7 million dollars. So, we purchased it for \$1.1 million dollars, we did well and sold it for a good price, we were able to protect the rim of the lake and the house has now been sold. We brought it for a purpose and achieved that purpose and we also have 18 hectares of land for our tribe to develop. It's lovely to see you, Christina.

### **2. Rongomai School proposal**

Now moving on to Rongomai school – we said to Ministry of Education, don't put it there, put it on Rongomai lands, talk to Ngati Pikiāo, they have many lands in its asset chest. There must surely be a property there that can be acquired for the Kura. We told MoE we will purchase the land block you already brought for Ngati Rongomai. If you ask how, we will say a big prayer and we would propose to pay it off across time. Your sources are true, we do want to buy the block proposed for the school to keep NGATI RANGITEAORERE's lands intact.

Remember, all our shares in land that got sold for the QC in Auckland that defunded our uncle. Ngati Rangiteaorere said we would buy back all our lands in 2014. We haven't got anywhere yet with Ministry of Education, but we have woken them up to the fact there will be a battle if they think they can just bowl over us. The consequences are so severe. We cannot have our own school if Rongomai puts a school there. We will be cut out. We fought hard in the mediation with Ministry of Education, and we tried our best to come up with a solution that is fair to both. We put up two beautiful blocks of lands in Te Ngāe farm, we will make those lands available. Ken Goldsmith will take you through the

blocks and where they are and how we've only now been only able to make them available through negotiations with Te Ngae tenant, timberlands, we're best buddies now.

In 2019 when Rongomai school was first on the table, we weren't in a position to negotiate but now we are. It's going to need all of us together to persuade Rongomai and Ministry of Education, they can't just put a school here in NGATI RANGITEAORERE without our consent. We've put names forward, Te Ngae, Whakapoungakau, neutral names. We can both share in, that's the way we've chosen to go. Your financial questions Christine will be answered by Ken, he will follow me.

### **3. Mataikotare Marae Trust**

Coming back to the Marae Trust and the most contentious issue of NRKC seeking to be able to appoint half the trustees. There are 7 trustees. We are not trying to replace, overwhelm or dominate the current trustees, we're not saying removal. What we are saying though is you can't expect NRKC to pay the Marae bills and not have an understanding as to where this arrangement stops.

We got there by cooperatively talking it through with the previous marae trustees and we got an arrangement where we were all happy with it. But the new trustees are not happy with it, and you don't want to work hand in hand with the NRKC which is why we are having this difficulty, but we haven't sought to deliberately dominate.

You may have forgotten Lynda that we have asked to meet, to talk through this issue, we've asked can we meet so when our requests aren't heard then it doesn't leave us much choice but to go to the court and we will set out our position and we will produce the letters. The big, long gaps and no answers. There are always two sides to a story. We will get there marae trustees, but we have not sought to replace or remove trustees.

What we have sought to do is to nominate an equal number of trustees, so we jointly truly share the responsibility of running the marae with the current trustees running the day-to-day affairs and the NRKC has to look at the finances and budget what it needs to keep the marae functioning. It is unfortunate we have to go in front of the court to have this discussion, but we are asking this hui to support that there should be support to go the Maori Land Court to have that discussion.

### **4. Name of Marae**

Last question from Tiriana, where do I fit and let's be clear about the name of our Marae? Is it Waiohewa or is it Mātaikōtare. You will get to learn that everything about us is complicated but when we do strike on a position, there's no better outfit in town to have covering your back. Your Rangiteaorere family make very solid decisions and very wise decisions. There's are reasons why this little tribe still owns its own lake. Why when we plan, we plan to plant out natives, so that when you take your mokopuna to our beautiful lake, they will see what their ancestors saw 1,000 years ago. It will be like that. These are the sorts of decisions this tribe makes.