



Mayoral Column | 7 December, 2023

CHRISTMAS PARADE

I know everyone is looking forward to Saturday's Christmas Parade and festivities.

The 'Everyone Santa' theme will see a Christmas celebration of costumes, decorations and lights.

Due to the wet weather, we have had to change locations with the floats now meeting outside the Wairoa County Club. The parade will begin at 2pm, followed by a prizegiving and a family concert on the Library Green rather than the Lighthouse reserve. I look forward to seeing you all there.

ALARM BELLS RINGING

Wairoa is reaching a crisis point and we need additional support from our new coalition government.

We continue to be plagued by extreme weather events, and we welcome a visit from Government Ministers so they can see our needs and work alongside us for our recovery and future resilience.

We have around 130 unliveable houses, and our priority remains getting whānau back into their homes. We need funding of \$6-9 million to achieve this and to ensure continuity of work, so we can attract tradespeople here to do what is needed.

We are concerned about our rural and farming community with reoccurring extreme weather events causing slips, dropouts and road closures. Farmers are under pressure with low farmgate prices, compounded by climatic challenges, access and animal welfare issues.

I am worried about the wellbeing of our community – we simply need more support. It is not sustainable to have a growing community of 9,000 plus people and have no aged care facility, no IHC services, no dentist, the list goes on.

It is also unacceptable that Wairoa continues to be isolated due to slips and damage on State Highways. We need the government to step in; this isolation and lack of connectivity cannot be tolerated any longer. Our community is under enormous pressure, and constant state highway road closures are adding to anxiety levels. We cannot sustain state highway road closures every time it rains. We become too vulnerable, and it is costing our whole community. We have lived like this for 10 months, and more urgency is needed.

This week, again, slipping closed SH2 between Wairoa and Napier. This lack of connectivity comes at a considerable cost, with people unable to get home, access health services, stock and other freight services are effectively shut down, and there is a significant inconvenience on people's lives. We are 10 months post-Cyclone Gabrielle; we should have work underway on alternatives, such as overpasses, bridges and realignments, particularly for problem areas like the Waikare Gorge and Devil's Elbow.

SHOUT OUT TO AFFCO WAIROA

Seeing our local Affco plant open its doors to local farmers to showcase its upgrades, processes and cutting-edge technology was great. I had a good look around and was impressed with Affco's investment, particularly in automation and robotics, including automated carting technology, artificial intelligence, and health and safety technology.

Affco Wairoa, led locally by Dean Burgess, the Regional Operations Manager focusing on the Wairoa site, was the first business to support Wairoa immediately during and after Cyclone Gabrielle. Affco was the first to pledge to the Wairoa Mayoral Relief Fund and assisted in other localised ways, from resources to general support.

Our town is fortunate to be supported by a company of the calibre of Affco. Investing in the plant is investing in Wairoa and supports our whānau, communities, and economy. Thank you, Affco.



Mayor Craig Little

MEET THE MAYOR KANOHI KI TE KANOHI

If you would like to have a meeting with the Mayor, call the council offices on 06 838 7309 to arrange a meeting time. He is available to meet with people on Wednesdays.

ULYSSES CLUB OF NEW ZEALAND

Thank you to the Ulysses Club for donating to the Wairoa Mayoral Relief Fund. This club is one of the largest organisations of its kind in New Zealand and supports motorcycle enthusiasts and anyone who likes or rides motorcycles.

Club members decided to raise money for Cyclone Gabrielle-affected communities and invited me to their Rotorua fundraiser. It was a great day, and our Wairoa community appreciates the support of this club. I was the only Mayor of those invited to attend the fundraiser, which encouraged the Ulysses Club to want to do more and come to Wairoa and hold another event – which I hope does happen.

FOR YOUR DIARY PUBLIC NOTIFICATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 12, 1.30pm

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, December 19, 1.30pm



FARMERS ON SKIS

Ki te Whenua Ki te Awa

Wairoa farmers of all ages and abilities are invited to get off farm and come along to give water skiing or wake boarding a go! If skiing isn't your thing - come along and manage the barbeque!
No experience or equipment necessary.

Registrations essential. Scan the QR code
or Text 027 446 7261 for the online registration form
Any queries contact Sue Wilson 027 446 7261



Held fortnightly at the
Wairoa Water Ski Club
5-7pm
Friday 1 & 15 December
Friday 5 & 19 January
Friday 2 & 16 February
Friday 1 & 15 March

Supported by



Barbeque Sponsors

